

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 24, 2012

Hon. Eric K. Shinseki  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

Last week, our offices were informed that the Department of Veterans Affairs Western New York Healthcare System (VAWNYHS) has decided to realign health care services provided by the VA Warsaw Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) to the VAWNYHS Batavia campus starting on March 3, 2012. As this clinic serves veterans in and around Allegheny, Livingston, and Wyoming Counties, we have heard from a number of our constituents regarding this matter. We respectfully request an explanation describing how you arrived at your determination and ask that you reconsider your decision to close the VA Warsaw CBOC.

Based on information provided by the VA, as well as the Wyoming County Community Hospital (WCCH) where the VA leases space to run the Warsaw CBOC, it does not appear this closure offers significant cost savings. According to the WCCH, the current lease for the Warsaw CBOC is \$1,050.60 per month and WCCH is prepared to extend this agreement for at least six months without increased costs to the VA. Since the VA does not plan to cut any staff as a result of this closure, the extent of savings is relatively modest.

In addition, under the announced realignment plan, the VA will be offering bus service to transport veterans free of charge to the Batavia campus five days per week, four times daily. Factoring in the cost of this service makes the net cost savings even more negligible.

For more than ten years, the local veterans community advocated for the establishment of this clinic to make certain veterans had greater access to primary care services. The decision to close this clinic will result in diminished access and less convenience for area veterans. We are concerned that an unintended consequence will be veterans forgoing primary medical treatment, which could lead to untreated illnesses. Offering more access to primary care lowers health care costs.

We believe that our area veterans should have greater access to primary care, especially if the cost to the VA is not overly burdensome. Once again, we respectfully ask you to provide us with a detailed explanation as to how you arrived at your decision. We also ask that you reconsider closing the VA Warsaw Community Based Outpatient Clinic.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



Kathleen Hochul  
Member of Congress