

Honorable Brad Wenstrup

Chairman, Health Subcommittee

House Veterans Affairs Committee

Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Chairman Wenstrup

The National Association of Veterans Affairs Physicians and Dentists (NAVAPD) strongly supports your amendment to H.R. 1058 "Role of Podiatrists in Department of Veterans Affairs." All the provisions of your amendment, which establishes clinical oversight standards, modification and clarification of pay grade by adding podiatrists to the Physician and Dentist schedule are long overdue.

Over the years NAVAPD has been a leader in working with VA management to obtain equal pay, clinical oversight standards, and utilization of physicians and dentists skills in management positions. (Larry can you add some dates about testimonies 2005?)

I am heartened to see that VA, in their White Paper on Podiatry Pay, recognizes the importance of podiatrists in providing veterans healthcare and that the utilization of podiatric services has been increasing citing a 21% increase from 2015-2016.

At your suggestion, NAVAPD is pleased to include podiatrists in our membership and will be reaching out to the Department of Veterans Affairs podiatric community soon. I also want to applaud your continuing efforts to improve hiring and retention problems in VHA and look forward to working with you and your staff during the 115th Congress.

Regards,

Samuel V. Spagnolo, MD

President, NAVAPD