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August 23, 2023

Cory Price, Director
West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System
7305 North Military Trail
West Palm Beach, FL 33410

Dear Director Price,

On behalf of the Indian River County Veteran's Services and as Chairman of the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners, I am writing you to extend our full support for the advocacy efforts of the Board of Directors of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Indian River Chapter. We share their concerns and align ourselves with the sentiments expressed in their recent letter regarding the pressing issues with Veteran Healthcare in Indian River County.

The issues raised in the letter by the MOAA Indian River Chapter regarding the state of Veteran Healthcare in our county deeply resonates with us. As highlighted in Congressman Posey's July 24, 2023 letter, "the lack of adequate VA Services and the consistent poor reviews from the VA contractor are matters that demand immediate attention and resolution." We firmly believe that the wellbeing of our veterans should be of paramount importance, and their access to quality care and services should never be compromised.

The acknowledgment of positive changes with the addition of dedicated veteran physicians and full staffing at the Vero Beach Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) is significant. Their commitment to veterans' needs and the subsequent achievement of the highest rating in Indian River County indeed exemplifies the kind of care and attention our veterans deserve. However, the recent resignations and the subsequent departure of experienced staff members from the CBOC have raised concerns about the continuity of quality care.

Indian River County and our Veterans Services Office is dedicated to helping and serving veterans in our community and we are deeply concerned about their welfare and the challenges they currently face in accessing healthcare services. We stand in full agreement with the MOAA Indian River Chapter's call for transparency, accountability, and immediate actions to address the situation. The issues surrounding the management of the Vero Beach CBOC, as well as the broader contracted CBOCs cannot be overlooked, especially considering the \$25.3 million-dollar contract involved.

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Furthermore, we share the concerns highlighted by the Indian River Chapter of the MOAA regarding the accessibility of essential services for our elderly veterans. The difficulties associated with traveling to West Palm Beach for eyeglasses, dental care, and dermatology pose unnecessary hardships on those who have dedicated their lives to serving our nation.

In light of the aforementioned concerns, we kindly request your attention to the following:

- Clarification on the feasibility of bringing the Vero Beach and other local CBOCs back under the VA system.
- Insight into the plans to expand services for veterans in Indian River County.
- Information on the proposed establishment of a multi-specialty clinic to cater comprehensively to the needs of our veterans.

Indian River County and our Veteran's Services Division is fully committed to supporting our veterans in any way possible. We stand united with the MOAA Indian River Chapter and support their call for action. We greatly appreciate your dedication to the veterans we collectively serve, and eagerly anticipate your response outlining the measures that will be taken to address these pressing concerns.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Together, we can ensure that our veterans receive the care and support they rightfully deserve.

Sincerely,

Joseph H. Earman, Chairman
Indian River County Board of County Commissioners

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