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ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

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August 24, 2018

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
 Secretary
 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
 810 Vermont Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie,

I write with great concern about the deteriorating and rudderless leadership of the Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) program. The resignation of the Chief Health Information Officer, the program's top leader, comes only three days after the resignation of the Chief Medical Officer. As a result, at most half of the program's senior leadership positions are occupied, and its rank-and-file positions are only sparsely filled, primarily with detailees. This comes at a time when VA is making the most pivotal decisions as to the design of the Cerner EHR system to be implemented, as the program's previous leadership team declared that a "go-live clock" will begin on October 1, 2018 and culminate in the implementation of the system at its first site in March 2020.

I know the EHR Modernization is one of your highest priorities. It is mine as well, as chairman of the subcommittee dedicated to its oversight. It would be a tragedy for the program to be undermined by personality conflicts and bureaucratic power struggles before it even begins in earnest. In fact, despite several requests, I was not even able to meet with the EHRM leadership team before these departures. I am dedicated to pursuing a constructive oversight agenda to encourage VA to make the right decisions, but any engagement is difficult without stable leadership. I urge you to identify a permanent Chief Health Information Officer immediately who possesses the requisite medical and technical knowledge and demonstrates managerial competency for such a large EHR transition. I also urge you to select a Chief Medical Officer from within the Veterans Health Administration; it is crucial that this person commands the respect of the VHA workforce, as he or she must represent its views in the extremely sensitive task of redesigning clinical processes.

Additionally, please provide a detailed organizational chart of the Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization listing each federal position (executive, supervisory, or non-supervisory) and full-time contractor position and indicating the name of each position's incumbent or its vacant status by the close of business on **Friday, September 7, 2018**. Do not alter the documents in any way, including but not limited to application of redactions or a water mark, and do not provide them in a format that disables printing. The deliverable opened by this request will not

be closed until the subcommittee is sufficiently satisfied with the response provided. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to have your staff contact Mr. William Mallison, Majority Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization at (202) 225-1900 or william.mallison@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Banks". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

JIM BANKS
Chairman
Subcommittee on Technology Modernization

JB/wm