

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

May 19, 2026

Vice Admiral Darin Via  
Director  
Defense Health Agency  
7700 Arlington Boulevard  
Falls Church, VA 22042

Dear Vice Admiral Via:

This letter expresses concern regarding the Defense Health Agency's (DHA) changes to the Health Care Survey of DoD beneficiaries (HCSDB). The HCSDB is important because it provides critical, standardized feedback from beneficiaries on their health care experiences, helping to identify gaps in access, quality, and satisfaction among patients in the Military Health System. We understand that the DHA may be considering discontinuing or pausing this survey without clear plans to replace it. Suspending this survey risks losing access to important information that helps us give the best care to TRICARE beneficiaries, who are deserving of no less.

The HCSDB is an annual, large-scale survey that targets roughly 300,000 TRICARE beneficiaries. For more than 30 years, the HCSDB has provided Congress and the Department of Defense (DOD) with critical insights into access to care, patient experience, and overall Military Health System performance. This data has been an important tool for understanding beneficiary behavior, identifying barriers to care, and informing efforts to improve access and support to military family readiness. The HCSDB has also informed Department-level decisions regarding Military Treatment Facility capacity and restructuring, including considerations related to downsizing and realignment. The survey data and associated analysis is also directly relevant to the DOD's efforts to improve utilization of Military Treatment Facilities and advance care reattraction goals. Understanding why beneficiaries choose purchased care over Direct Care is critical to managing costs and improving access within the Military Health System.

While encounter-based tools such as the TRICARE Patient Experience Survey (TPEX) provide valuable insights into individual care interactions, they do not currently serve as a direct replacement for the broader population-level analysis and longitudinal trend data provided through the HCSDB. Any future consolidation or transition effort should be implemented through a clearly defined strategy that avoids gaps in data continuity and oversight capability.

The most recent survey cycle includes a significant volume of beneficiary responses related to barriers to Direct Care that, if left unanalyzed due to a lapse in survey actions, would represent a missed opportunity to inform ongoing policy and operational decisions. To ensure continuity of oversight and program evaluation, we strongly urge DHA to maintain ongoing data collection and analysis through an interim task order or equivalent mechanism until a replacement or alternate plan is established.

Maintaining continuity in HCSDB survey actions is essential to preserving transparency in TRICARE performance matters, since it provides vital insight that helps ensure we can continue

delivering the best quality healthcare and services available, and also ensures the Department can continue to meet congressional expectations for oversight and reporting. We urge you to take steps to ensure there are no gaps in data collection and analysis given the ramifications for Military Health System providers and beneficiaries.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



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Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



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Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



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Mark Alford  
Member of Congress



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Patrick Ryan  
Member of Congress



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Derek Schmidt  
Member of Congress