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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

KEITH B. ASHDOWN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GABRIELLE A. BATKIN, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

April 29, 2015

VIA U.S. MAIL & EMAIL (Catherine.Gromek@va.gov)

The Honorable Richard J. Griffin
Deputy Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Deputy Inspector General Griffin:

Pursuant to its authority under section 12(e) of S. Res. 73 (114th Congress), the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is investigating matters relating to allegations of veteran deaths, retaliation against whistleblowers, a culture of fear among the employees, and the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General's healthcare inspection concerning the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Tomah, Wisconsin (Tomah VAMC). To assist the Committee with its investigation, please provide the documents requested in the attached subpoena by May 13, 2015. In order to expedite the production of documents that are responsive to the enclosed subpoena, the Committee requests that you submit responsive material as it becomes available.

Although you have offered an *in camera* review of documents of an unspecified nature and number, your offer constrains the Committee's review to only those documents that fall within narrow limits as outlined in your February 25, 2015, letter.¹ As the Committee has made clear, these broad constraints are without statutory or constitutional basis and unacceptably impede the Committee's investigation.² Nonetheless, as previously communicated,³ the Committee is mindful that responsive material may contain veteran-specific medical records. To address the particular sensitivities of specific documents that may contain veteran-specific medical records, the Committee is willing to accommodate the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General by accepting appropriate redactions of veteran-specific health information or by accepting an *in camera* review of veteran-specific health material.

¹ Letter from Richard J. Griffin, Dep't of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector Gen., to Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Gov't Affairs (Apr. 24, 2015).

² Letter from Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Gov't Affairs, to Richard J. Griffin, Dep't of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector Gen. (Mar. 11, 2015).

³ See, e.g., Letter from Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Gov't Affairs, to Richard J. Griffin, Dep't of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector Gen. (Apr. 20, 2015); Letter from Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Gov't Affairs, to Richard J. Griffin, Dep't of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector Gen. (Mar. 11, 2015).

The Honorable Richard J. Griffin

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If you have any questions relating to this subpoena, please contact Kyle Brosnan or Brian Downey (Senator Johnson) at 202-224-4751 or Brian Papp (Senator Carper) at 202-224-2627. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Johnson". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "R" and "J".

Ron Johnson
Chairman

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas R. Carper". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Thomas R. Carper
Ranking Member

Enclosure