

December 6, 2017

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
412 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
825A Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Isakson and Ranking Member Tester:

On behalf of managers and supervisors currently serving our nation in the federal government and whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I am writing to urge the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee to support the passage of the Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran Transition Improvement Act of 2017 (S. 899). This bipartisan legislation, sponsored by Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI) and Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS), would extend the existing disabled veteran leave category for federal employees to eligible employees within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) with a disability rating of 30 percent or higher for the purposes of receiving medical care related to their service-connected condition.

S. 899 is also cosponsored by Ranking Member Tester, who led the Senate effort with Sen. Moran to create disabled veteran leave as a new leave category for federal employees under the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act, which was signed into law in 2015. The final bill that was signed into law covers approximately 85 percent of the federal workforce, but does not apply to the VA medical positions specified in Section 7401(1) of Title 38 U.S. Code which include physicians and nurses. S. 899 helps correct this oversight and provides parity with their counterparts in other federal agencies.

America's disabled veterans who continue serving our nation and their fellow veterans in the VA as medical professionals deserve to have access to disabled veteran leave they have rightfully earned with their sacrifices. Swift action by Congress is necessary so that new disabled veteran employees, who have already given so much in service to our country, do not have to choose between getting a paycheck and getting the care they need during their first year on the job. FMA is grateful for this commonsense legislation. Thank you for your work on the committee and your consideration of our request. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact FMA's Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford at gstanford@fedmanagers.org or (703) 683-8700.

Sincerely,



Renee Johnson
National President