



# *AIR FORCE SERGEANTS ASSOCIATION*

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January 8, 2010

Senator John McCain III  
United States Senate  
Russell Senate Office Building  
SR-241  
Washington, DC 20510-0303

Dear Senator McCain,

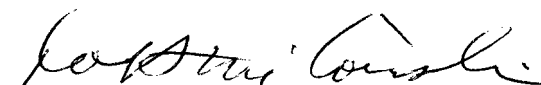
On behalf of the 125,000 Air Force Sergeants Association's members, we want to express our concern for H.R. 3590, the "*Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*." This association represents the *Total Air Force* enlisted corps—active duty, retired, and veteran members of the Air Force Active Duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command and their families, and we want to ensure their voice is heard.

The Senate passed version of H.R. 3590 (S1728) does not include language that explicitly protects VA healthcare or TRICARE. Last August, President Obama stated that TRICARE and Medicare would not be affected by the changes in the national healthcare plan. In agreement with the President's intention, the House version contains language stating that "nothing in this subtitle shall be construed as affecting any authority under title 38, United States Code, or chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code."

AFSA believes that servicemembers have earned their current VA healthcare and TRICARE coverage by virtue of their selfless service and significant sacrifice to a grateful nation. With National Health Reform being voted on, AFSA opposes any effort to integrate TRICARE and VA health care systems in any proposal that Congress may develop as part of national health care reform. These two programs are integral to military readiness and serve the unique needs of servicemembers, military retirees, veterans, wounded service members, Guardsmen and Reservists, their families and survivors.

We ask that you support this endeavor and work to insert this important language into any final legislation that is passed and sent to President Obama for healthcare reform. You have our assistance to help this legislation move forward, and we look forward to working with you on this and other matters of mutual interest.

Sincerely,

  
JOHN R. "DOC" McCAUSLIN, CMSgt, USAF, Retired  
Chief Executive Officer

Serving the *Total Air Force* Enlisted Corps  
And Their Families since 1961