

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0508

May 17, 2016

The Honorable Robert McDonald
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW, Mail Stop 00
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary McDonald:

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring that all veterans receive the care and benefits they need to succeed. We were grateful to have you join the congressional celebration on March 2 to honor the contributions of women veterans to our country during Women's History Month.

We are writing to request that you work with Congress as we debate providing essential services to women and men who are dealing with fertility issues as a result of combat injuries caused by explosive devices used against our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As a result of the House-passed Fiscal Year 2016 Appropriations Act, the Department of Veterans Affairs staff indicated to our offices on April 20, 2016, that "inclusion of IVF in the medical benefits package is consistent with VA's goal to restore the capabilities of Veterans to the greatest extent possible and to improve Veterans' quality of life."

We could not agree more. According to the VA, nearly 4,000 veterans would be eligible for IVF treatment. These women and men sacrificed a great deal for their country. We should not expect them to sacrifice their hopes of having a family.

As Congress begins work on appropriations for Fiscal Year 2017, the time to act is now to lift the ban on IVF for veterans. We ask that you express your support to Members for overturning the ban on IVF and to make any recent findings public.

We look forward to continuing our work together to ensure that all veterans receive access to timely and quality health care. We appreciate your time and consideration.

best regards,


NANCY PELOSI
Democratic Leader


RICK LARSEN
Member of Congress