

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 18, 2016

Robert A. McDonald
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20420

Subject: Assisted Reproductive Technology Coverage under the Veterans Health Administration

Dear Secretary McDonald,

We write to urge the Department of Veterans Affairs' swift adoption of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) coverage, specifically, In Vitro Fertilization treatment (IVF), as a covered benefit, authorized in the Continuing Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017. With over 1,500 veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan living with injuries¹ resulting in infertility and the cost of IVF averaging more than \$12,000 for just one cycle², this law marks a crucial step forward in providing veterans with the care they both deserve and need.

As you know, the new law addresses a longstanding gap in veteran health care services. In creating parity with the existing Department of Defense policy providing IVF to those with service-connected infertility, the new law specifically references Department of Defense guidance that clearly lays the framework for program guidelines and procedures for veterans. We therefore encourage the Department of Veterans Affairs to promptly issue a final rule eliminating the prohibition on IVF in the current regulations and to release a new memorandum and guidance.

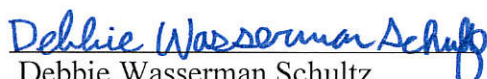
It is imperative our veterans receive, and can easily access, care that is reliable and consistent year-to-year. We urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to explore all options for building access on a national scale. Further, the promulgation of the final rule, memorandum, and guidance should reflect Congress's intent to provide permanent coverage and continued access to this important service.

As Members of Congress, we remain determined to uphold our unwavering commitment to care for our courageous veterans who have risked their lives to protect our essential freedoms and our families. In providing this coverage through the Veterans Health Administration, we affirm this commitment, ensuring our veterans will not have to face insurmountable debts in their efforts to grow their own families and, to the extent possible, enjoy the lives they imagined before injury.

We again urge the Department to issue its final rule swiftly, and ensure that veterans are provided consistent and reliable coverage for these critical health care services.

We are grateful for your consideration and look forward to continuing our work together to care for our nation's veterans and their families.

Sincerely,


Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress


Julia Brownley
Member of Congress


Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

¹<http://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/Congress-Passes-Bill-to-Help-Wounded-Veterans-Start-Families>

²<https://www.asrm.org/detail.aspx?id=3023>

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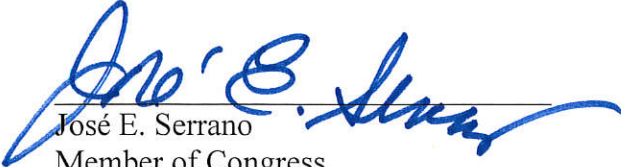
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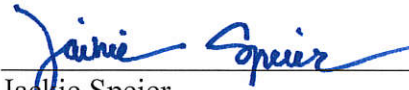
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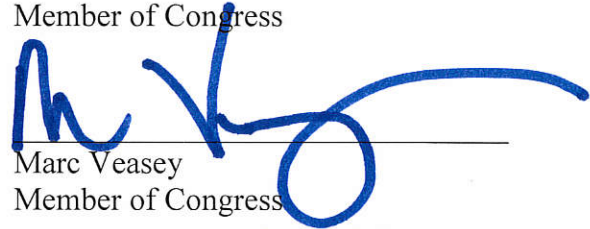
Mark Takano
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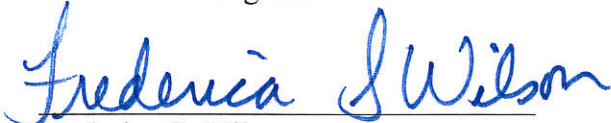
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