

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 11, 2018

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

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

As Florida's panhandle begins the response and recovery process following major Hurricane Michael, we respectfully request you to direct your department to do everything in its power to ensure our affected veterans are taken care of in the aftermath of this catastrophic storm. Florida is home to more than 1.5 million veterans, many of whom are over the age of 65 and rely on VA programs and facilities in their day-to-day lives. Recognizing the magnitude of this storm, we urge you to authorize increased outreach efforts and benefits assistance, to the maximum extent possible, for impacted veterans.

Having these programs and facilities available will be vital to ensuring the health and safety of our veterans, and we support the VA's discretion in continuing operations at various medical centers and outpatient clinics. We also write to express gratitude for measures the VA has already implemented to provide increased flexibility for veterans impacted by the storm, such as the Pharmacy Disaster Relief Plan.

As you begin to assess the damage sustained to Veterans Health System facilities in the Florida panhandle, we also urge the department to deploy VA Mobile Facilities to assist veterans in areas where clinics remained closed. We stand ready to assist the department, and look forward to working together to provide veterans affected by Hurricane Michael with needed relief to recover from this disaster.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator



Bill Nelson  
U.S. Senator