

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

February 7, 2025

The Honorable Doug Collins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Collins:

On February 3, 2025, the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees were provided a message from Acting Secretary Todd Hunter to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) staff regarding communications from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to compensate civil servants to resign from the federal government. Specifically, in the message, he stated, "I am informing you that the offer is valid, lawful, and will be honored by VA." The message did not provide additional information to support that assertion.

To date, VA has not provided any further justification of the lawfulness of these offers, which were modeled after resignation offers sent by Elon Musk to Twitter employees in July of 2024. Mr. Musk subsequently reneged on at least \$500 million in severance payments. VA has not sought any additional authority or appropriations to support the OPM-offered deferred resignation sent to over 471,000 employees currently employed by VA. As you are undoubtedly aware, VA is operating on a Continuing Resolution, which funds the Department at Fiscal Year 2024 levels. And given that VA reported at least 40,000 vacancies as recently as last week, it appears disingenuous VA could support a mass resignation of staff that would not result in significantly reduced access to care across the country and harmful results for veterans and their families.

Therefore, we request that you provide, by close of business on **February 11, 2025**, complete and unredacted copies of the following:

1. All memoranda, analyses, documents, or other material that supports or describes the legality and validity of the deferred resignation offer and of backfilling any positions for personnel who opt-into the offer, including materials that may have been provided to VA by OPM, the Office of Management and Budget, or other executive branch entities;
2. All memoranda, analyses, documents, or other material that describes the estimated cost of paying employees not to work for several months and the funding mechanism through which these resignations will be paid, including any specific budget accounts that have been identified for this purpose;
3. All memoranda, analyses, documents, or other material that describes the occupations or positions that VA will exempt from the offer and why they are exempt;

4. All memoranda, analyses, documents, or other material that describes the impact of this resignation offer on VA's staffing vacancies, including positions that are intended not to or unable to be filled in the near or long term, broken down by occupation, estimated cost of loss of the position, and estimated cost of fulfilling the duties of the position through outsourcing, contracts, or other means;
5. All memoranda, analyses, documents, or other material that estimates and analyzes the risk and cost of potential litigation that may arise from the use of deferred resignations; and,
6. A complete list, by occupation and geographic location, of the total number of employees who have replied to the OPM emails as of 12:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on Thursday, February 6, 2025.

All materials should be provided in a searchable format. No watermarks should be added, nor should any print functionality be disabled.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark Takano
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs



Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs