

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 4, 2026

Dear Secretary Collins,

We have serious concerns about your recent cuts to essential home health care services for veterans, and we urge you to reverse them. Our country's veterans answered the call to serve and defended our freedoms. They should have access to the care they have earned and need to live in dignity. Your cuts directly threaten that, particularly in New Mexico and Texas.

Veterans receiving home health care through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have serious disabilities and conditions. To put it simply, the Homemaker/Home Health Aides (homecare) services provided to these veterans are not luxuries. They are nothing less than lifesaving services for disabled and elderly veterans. Homecare providers ensure veterans take the right medicines, are fed a hot meal every day, receive fresh clothes and clean sheets, and assist with many other activities for daily living. These providers ensure that veterans are cared for and not forgotten. Without them, many veterans would have nowhere to turn.

The decreased payment rates issued by the VA on November 25, 2025, however, are making it untenable for existing homecare providers to retain adequate staff in New Mexico and Texas. Under these new rates, which differ by locality, New Mexico's reimbursement rate fell from \$16.75 to \$13.50 – a nearly 20% decrease. Similarly, certain rural regions of Texas received a 43% cut to home health reimbursement¹. These are the only two regions facing such significant changes.

These cuts are on top of the disproportionate impact to homecare providers in our states. That's because the VA's reimbursement rates do not include time and money spent for commuting. And homecare providers in the impacted areas of Texas and New Mexico often must travel long distances through rural and remote areas to deliver care to veterans in their homes.

Impacts from the rate cuts are already being felt. Since the new rates went into effect on January 1, 2026, homecare providers in our states have had to lay off staff. That is undoubtedly resulting in less veterans receiving the care they have earned and deserve, particularly given that our states have high numbers of elderly veterans requiring high levels of care².

Given our concerns, we request answers to the following questions:

1. What methodology did the VA use to calculate the reimbursement rates for these two regions?

¹ <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/revenue-ops/Fee-Schedule.asp#:~:text=The%202026%20VA%20Fee%20Schedule%20is%20effective%20for%20services%20from%20January%201%2C%202026%2C%20to%20December%2031%2C%202026.>

² https://www.data.va.gov/dataset/VetPop2023-Urban-Rural-FY2023-2025/rcxd-k8v8/about_data

2. Why are these two regions disproportionately facing significant decreases to home health reimbursement, as compared to other regions?
3. Does the VA plan to adjust these rates before the end of 2026?
4. What steps is the VA taking to ensure continuity of care to veterans receiving home care services in these regions?
5. How many veterans in New Mexico and Texas have lost or been unable to receive needed home care services since the new rates went into effect?

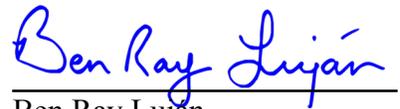
This administration decided to drastically cut reimbursements for home health providers in New Mexico and Texas. That decision was unacceptable and irresponsible. In addition to answering our questions, we urge you to reverse the reimbursement rate cuts and return these rates to 2025 levels immediately.

We look forward to your response.

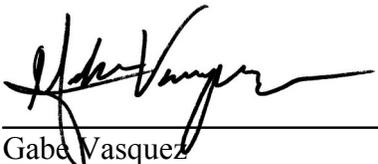
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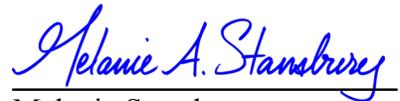
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



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Melanie Stansbury
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