

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2025

Ms. Karen Flaherty-Oxler
Director, Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center
3900 Woodland Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Ms. Jennifer Harkins
Director, Coatesville VA Medical Center
1400 Black Horse Hill Road
Coatesville, PA 19320

Dear Director Flaherty-Oxler and Director Harkins:

We are writing to learn how President Trump's recent hiring freeze on federal employees is impacting the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers and our community of veterans in Southeastern Pennsylvania. We would greatly appreciate your response to the following questions by February 13, 2025.

1. Are the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers affected, or likely to be affected, by the hiring freeze?
2. On January 23, 2025, the VA released a memo on hiring freeze guidance, which included a list of positions exempt from the freeze. Are any positions that the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers were planning to fill excluded from that list? If so, what positions are the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers now unable to fill? Please also describe how many positions are affected.
3. The VA memo on hiring freeze guidance implements a new "request for exemption" requirement to hire positions subject to the freeze. Do the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers intend to submit requests for exemption for every position that they are no longer able to hire? How will this new requirement make it easier or harder for the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers to fill positions?
4. Do the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers have contingency plans to address critical staffing shortages during the hiring freeze? Are there long-term plans being considered to mitigate the impact of the hiring freeze?
5. Do you expect that this hiring freeze will affect the Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers' ability to provide direct VA care for eligible veterans?

Thank you for your continued service to our nation and the veterans of Southeastern Pennsylvania. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress