

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 23, 2012

Dr. Jonathan Woodson
Assistant Secretary of Defense (HA)
Tricare Management Activity
5111 Leesburg Pike
Skyline 5, Suite 810
Falls Church, VA 22041-3251

Dear Dr. Woodson:

The men and women of our Armed Services deserve the very best medical treatment our country can provide. Their sacrifices are the reason we have the freedoms we all enjoy today. That is why I am dismayed by recent news reports that TRICARE Prime will be cut for many of the military families and constituents I represent not only in Reno, but also throughout the northern part of the state.

Reports have indicated that the incoming contractor for the TRICARE West region, United Healthcare, does not plan on providing TRICARE Prime services. This action will cause more out-of-pocket expenses and longer drive times for many military families and veterans throughout Northern Nevada. I am very troubled by these changes and am concerned that these alterations are not being made in a transparent manner. If changes are made, I hope you will notify those affected immediately.

In order to better understand the timeline regarding these changes, I would like to know the following:

Has the Pentagon reached a decision to cut TRICARE Prime providers in Northern Nevada? If so, is the Pentagon waiting to announce this decision? Why? Do you agree that such cuts will cost more money and/or result in longer drives for care to those currently enrolled in TRICARE Prime?

Active duty service members, guardsmen, retirees, reservists, and their families rely on these benefits that they've earned. If the Pentagon is moving to cut these benefits, I am requesting that you explain these changes without delay.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



DEAN HELLER
United States Senator