



May 1, 2015

The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.  
2407 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Bishop:

On behalf of the Senior Executives Association (SEA), I would like to thank you for your strong opposition to Amendment No. 2 to the Military Construction-Veterans Affairs appropriations bills (H.R. 2029) offered by Rep. Keith Rothfus that would prohibit the VA from paying a performance award under section 5384 of Title 5.

As you rightly pointed out, an across-the-board, one-size-fits-all approach to SES awards unfairly penalizes the dedicated VA Senior Executives who are working hard and well to find solutions to the VA's problems. And despite ongoing challenges, progress is being made, as you noted.

Furthermore, this amendment, if approved by both chambers in a final version of the MilConVA appropriations legislation, would make it more difficult for the VA to attract and retain Senior Executive leaders, as well as to encourage rising GS-14 and -15 employees to consider joining the Senior Executive Service (SES) ranks at the VA.

We understand the need for accountability at the VA, and for all government employees, and absolutely support holding individuals accountable for wrong-doing if they are found to have occurred following an impartial investigation that provides for due process.

Nonetheless, SEA has strong concerns about the ongoing attacks against the SES corps at the VA, and the deleterious effects it will have on the ability of the agency to attract and retain the leadership it needs to serve veterans in the future.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance as you work toward ensuring a strong VA that meets the needs of our veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol A. Bonosaro".

CAROL A. BONOSARO  
President