



July 17, 2014

**The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chairman
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States Senate**

**The Honorable Jeff Miller
Chairman
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives**

**The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States Senate**

**The Honorable Mike Michaud
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives**

Dear Chairman Sanders, Chairman Miller, Ranking Member Burr, and Ranking Member Michaud:

On behalf of the American Herbal Products Association (AHPA), I am writing to express strong support for expanding complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) options to our nation's veterans. Specifically, I am requesting that the recently convened Conference Committee to finalize legislation to improve veterans' health care access include the provisions of H.R. 4887, "The Expanding Care for Veterans Act," which was introduced in the House of Representatives by Representative Julia Brownley on June 18, 2014.

AHPA is a national trade association that represents the herbal products industry. AHPA is comprised of more than 300 domestic and foreign companies doing business as growers, processors, manufacturers, and marketers of herbs and botanical and herbal products, including foods, dietary supplements, cosmetics, and non-prescription drugs. AHPA's mission is to promote the responsible commerce of herbal products.

AHPA members are supportive of initiatives that support research, education, and delivery of CAM for veterans, which is what H.R. 4887 would accomplish. Specifically, the measure requires the Veterans Administration (VA) to conduct research and develop a plan for inclusion of CAM; carry out a program for 3 years to "assess the feasibility and advisability of integrating [CAM services] with other health care services" provided by VA medical centers; and study any barriers that exist to receiving and administering CAM services in VA facilities.

While the VA is to be commended for taking initial steps to make CAM more widely available to veterans, reports have shown that more and more veterans are going outside the VA health system to use complementary and alternative medicine therapies to treat pain and mental health conditions while reducing their dependence on narcotics.

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H.R. 4887 is a good step toward expanding access to CAM for our nation's veterans. I once again ask that you strongly consider including the provisions of this legislation in the final VA health care access and accountability measure currently before your Conference Committee.

Thank you for your commitment to improving the health care system for U.S. veterans, and for serious consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael McGuffin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Michael McGuffin
President, American Herbal Products Association

Cc: Sen. John Rockefeller
Sen. Patty Murray
Sen. Sherrod Brown
Sen. Jon Tester
Sen. Mark Begich
Sen. Richard Blumenthal
Sen. Mazie Hirono
Sen. Johnny Isakson
Sen. Mike Johanns
Sen. John McCain
Sen. Tom Coburn
Sen. Marco Rubio
Rep. Doug Lamborn
Rep. Phil Roe
Rep. Bill Flores
Rep. Dan Benishek
Rep. Mike Coffman
Rep. Jackie Walorski
Rep. Brad Wenstrup
Rep. Corrine Brown
Rep. Mark Takano
Rep. Julie Brownley
Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick
Rep. Tim Walz