SOVA
Campaign to Stop the Privatization of VA Healthcare
PLAN OF ACTION, SPRING 2020

1. GET HOUSE MEMBERS TO CO-SPONSOR H Res 701
   • TO SHOW THEIR SUPPORT FOR VETERANS AND VA HEALTHCARE

2. RALLY VETERANS AND OUR ALLIES FOR A NATIONAL DAY OF PROTESTS AT VA HOSPITALS, FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2020
   • STAND AGAINST THE MISSION ACT ON ITS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF PRIVATIZATION OF VA HEALTHCARE

3. HELP SOVA RAISE $15,000 TO TAKE VETERANS’ VOICES ONTO SOCIAL MEDIA
   • TESTIFYING ABOUT THEIR VA HEALTHCARE AND WHY PRIVATIZATION THREATENS TO DISMANTLE OUR VHA
1. GET ALL HOUSE MEMBERS TO JOIN THE 12 HOUSE MEMBERS BELOW WHO ARE ALREADY CO-SPONSORS OF H Res 701

Raul Grijalva (D-AZ, 3rd)  
Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ, 2nd)  
Mark Pocan (D-WI, 2nd)  
Mark Takano (D-CA, 41st)  
Alan Lowenthal (D-CA, 47th)  
Steve Cohen (D-TN, 9th)  

Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC, At Large)  
Mike Thompson (D-CA, 5th)  
Gwen Moore (D-WI, 4th)  
A. Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY, 14th)  
Adriano Espaillat (D-NY, 13th)  
Ayanna Pressley (D-MA, 7th).

Last year a group veterans worked with Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ, 3rd) to write a statement of principles “expressing support for policies that maintain a robust, fully-funded and fully staffed” VHA and oppose policies that “jeopardize care for veterans by moving essential resources to the for-profit private sector.” On Nov. 14 Grijalva turned that statement into House Resolution 701 and wrote a “Dear Colleague” letter urging his fellow House members to Co-Sponsor H. Res. 701.¹

This is the third Congress where Rep. Grijalva has introduced such a resolution with the support of veterans. It has served as a vehicle to rally Congressional supporters of the VHA and those who oppose privatization of VA healthcare. So far in the 116th Congress eleven House Members have signed on as Co-sponsors of H. Res. 701 including Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA, 41st) the Chair of the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

The 25 SOVA activists who attended the SOVA Conference in Washington on Feb 9-12 met with 33 House members or their staff and urged them to Stop Privatization of VA Healthcare and Co-Sponsor H Res 701. As a result of our advocacy, two House Members -- Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY, 14th) and Rep Adriano Espaillat (D-NY, 17th) -- became Co-Sponsors of H Res 701 while we were in DC. Immediately upon our return to our homes, a third House Member – Rep. Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA, 7th) -- joined our team of eleven.

Co-Sponsors of H Res 701. Before we left Washington, SOVA activists agreed to launch a national campaign to get as many of the 423 House Members who are not Co-Sponsors to become Co-Sponsors of H Res 701 and use it as a yardstick to measure whether proposed legislation affecting the VHA should be supported or opposed. Please help us!

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- **Send your House Member an email** urging her or him to stand against privatization of VA healthcare by becoming a Co-Sponsor of H Res 701. Go to the SOVA website and find the link to send a message to your House Representative, fill in your zip code and an email will be sent in your name. Link to our website -- [http://saveourva.org/](http://saveourva.org/)

- **Circulate a petition in your Congressional District** urging your House Member to support veterans and stand against privatization of VA healthcare by becoming a Co-Sponsor of H Res 701. Go to the SOVA website and under TAKING ACTION find a sample petition.

- **Birddog your House Member** to encourage her or him to **SUPPORT VETERANS** by becoming a Co-Sponsor of HR 701. It is an election year, and all House members are very eager to win the support of veterans. Let them know that they need to become Co-Sponsors of H Res 701 in order to win veterans’ support.

- **Urge you House Member to support legislation** to reverse VA Sec Robert Wilke’s using the MISSION ACT to outsource veterans’ healthcare to for-profit, private sector and Urgent Care doctors. Such legislation is being written and will be available soon.

- **Urge your Member of Congress to attend June 5th Protests** and speak out for the VHA and against privatization of VA healthcare.
Lobbying Team 2 Meeting With Rep Mark Takano, Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs
2. RALLY VETERANS AND OUR ALLIES FOR A NATIONAL DAY OF PROTESTS AT VA HOSPITALS, FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2020

● STAND AGAINST THE MISSION ACT ON ITS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF PRIVATIZATION OF VA HEALTHCARE

Since it took effect on June 6, 2019, VA Sec Robert Wilke has used the MISSION ACT to undermine the VHA by sending millions of veterans away from VA healthcare to for-profit, private sector and Urgent Care doctors. PRIVATIZATION OF VA HEALTHCARE AND THE DISMANTLING OF THE VHA IS BEING ENABLED BY ROBERT WILKE AND THE MISSION ACT! Last year, SOVA activists and our supporters protested when the MISSION ACT went into effect. This year we are planning nationwide protests on June 5th to stand against the MISSION ACT'S privatization of VA healthcare. We urge all veterans and our supporters to join us at the nearest VA hospital on June 5th.

New York City          Jamaica Plains, MA                   Minneapolis                                  San Diego

PROTESTS AGAINST THE BEGINNING OF THE MISSION ACT’S PRIVATIZATION OF VA HEALTHCARE WERE HELD BY SOVA ACTIVISTS AND SUPPORTERS AT MORE THAN A DOZEN VA HOSPITALS ON JUNE 5-6, 2019, AND AT MANY MORE VA HOSPITALS SPONSORED BY VA UNION MEMBERS

● STOP THE MISSION ACT’S PRIVATIZATION OF VA HEALTHCARE
● FIX VA HOSPITALS, FULLY FUND & FULLY STAFF VA HOSPITALS
● IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF HEALTHCARE THAT SERVES WOMEN, NON-CIS & OTHER UNDERSERVED VETERANS
● SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF VA WORKERS & STOP UNION BUSTING AT THE VHA

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

● Reach out to VFP members, nearby VFP Chapters and veterans to educate them about privatization of VA healthcare and urge them to join SOVA in protesting on June 5.
● **Reach out to veterans at VHA hospitals** to educate them about privatization of VA healthcare and urge them to join SOVA in protesting on June 5.

● **Reach out to our allies** – in VA unions, VSOs, Medicare for All Groups, Progressive Community Groups -- to educate them about privatization of VA healthcare and urge them to join SOVA in protesting on June 5.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW YOU CAN JOIN US CONTACT http://saveourva.org/ or Email saveourvahealthcare@gmail.com

3. HELP SOVA RAISE $15,000 TO TAKE VETERANS’ VOICES ONTO SOCIAL MEDIA

● **TESTIFYING ABOUT THEIR VA HEALTHCARE AND WHY PRIVATIZATION THREATENS TO DISMANTLE OUR VHA**

Over the past decade, social media has become a fully integrated part of nearly every aspect of daily life for most Americans. SOVA activists are playing catch-up in our use of social media as a tool to reach the millions of veterans who use VA healthcare and others who support our Campaign to Stop the Privatization of VA Healthcare. In October, 2019, SOVA established its own Website and we are continuing to develop it.

While we were in Washington at the SOVA Conference, we videoed nearly a dozen veterans who depend on the VHA for their healthcare. They told their stories celebrating VA healthcare as life-saving and explained why privatization will lead to dismantling the VHA. Now we need to raise $15,000 to enable us to continue collecting veterans telling their stories and editing their powerful stories so we can post on the SOVA website and other social media platforms like FACEBOOK, TWITTER and INSTAGRAM.

**Help Us Get the Stories of VETERANS out to the world on social media explaining why we need to SAVE OUR VA!**
Help Get The Voices of These Veterans On Social Media: Ellen Barfield (Baltimore), Skip Delano (New York), John Ketwig (Virginia), Maurice Martin (Oakland), Jan Ruhman (San Diego), Dan Shea (Portland), Jackson Shepard (Fresno)

HELP US RAISE THE $15,000 WE NEED TO EDIT AND POST THEIR STORIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

MAKE A DONATION NOW!

Please give a generous tax-deductible donation. GO TO http://saveourva.org/ TO SUPPORT SOVA’S NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE PRIVATIZATION OF VA HEALTHCARE