

"The United States is not meeting its obligation to these injured veterans."

Burlington, VT -- Rep. Peter Welch has asked Chairman Henry Waxman to open an investigation into reports of "appalling and unacceptable reports" of outpatient care for our veterans at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in *The Washington Post*.

Welch has also planned a visit to the Veterans Administration Colchester Outpatient Clinic for Monday at 2 p.m. The local visit is intended to serve as a frame of reference for reforms that will be required at Walter Reed.

The *Washington Post* report can be found [here](#) .

The letter is as follows:

February 21, 2007

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-0001

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Like many of our colleagues, I read of the appalling and unacceptable reports of outpatient care for our veterans at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in *The Washington Post*. The reports coincide with the President's budget proposal that would cut funding for veterans. This all occurs at a time when thousands of veterans will be returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and

the need for services will only intensify.

I urge you to open an investigation of the disturbing conditions reported at Walter Reed and the overall readiness of the Veterans Administration and Department of Defense to provide essential services to the veterans who will be returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

All of us in Congress, regardless of our position on the war in Iraq, support our troops. In fact, many of us have had the opportunity to visit our recovering troops, humbled by their patriotism and impressed at the inpatient care they receive at Walter Reed and Bethesda Naval Hospital.

It is clear from these reports on outpatient care that the United States is not meeting its obligation to our injured veterans.

Furthermore, this brings to focus that the President's budget is not committing the financial resources necessary to maintain the veterans services required.

We have an obligation to our troops. They reported for duty when called. It is now our country's obligation to provide them with the services they need.

I believe the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform can play a valuable role in providing the accountability necessary to make the required changes happen.

I look forward to working with you and the Committee on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Peter Welch

United States Congress

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