The Honorable Seileen Mullen  
Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs  
Defense Health Agency  
7700 Arlington Boulevard  
Suite 5101  
Falls Church, VA 22042-5101

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary Mullen,

We write today to express our concern with proposed pharmacy network changes that will cause undue hardship on TRICARE beneficiaries seeking to access care at local community pharmacies. Under a new contract, Express Scripts, the Cigna-owned pharmacy benefit manager that administers the TRICARE benefit on behalf of the Department of Defense, instituted pharmacy network changes that will drastically reduce pharmacy access. The retail network will be reduced by almost 15,000 pharmacies impacting 400,000 TRICARE beneficiaries.

It appears that most of the pharmacies excluded from the network are independent community pharmacies located in underserved rural and urban areas. In addition to independent community pharmacies, major retailers like Wal-Mart will not be in network as options for patients, which may leave some beneficiaries particularly in rural areas with no option at all. On top of that, Cigna/Express Scripts decided to make these changes effective Oct. 24, 2022 after receiving a waiver from the Department of Defense, surprising and confusing patients and pharmacies.

We are also concerned that Cigna/Express Scripts is not treating pharmacies equally. The company has offered more favorable contract terms to some pharmacies and offered other pharmacies contract terms that reimburse well the below acquisition cost and do not include a dispensing fee to other pharmacies. This presents conflicts of interest questions as Express Scripts may be utilizing a government contract and taxpayer dollars to undercut their own pharmacy competition.

We request that DOD provide insight into the reasoning behind these contract changes and request that DOD closely monitor all actions by Cigna/Express Scripts to ensure that access is protected for beneficiaries moving forward. It is unacceptable for our active duty servicemembers, military retirees, and their families to have such limited access to pharmacy care. These servicemembers, retirees, and their families who have sacrificed so much for their country deserve to have dependable medical benefits, including access to the local community pharmacy of their choice. We look forward to your response detailing how the Department will address these troubling issues.

Sincerely,
Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

Andy Kim  
Member of Congress

John B. Larson  
Member of Congress

Cynthia Axne  
Member of Congress

Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress
Chrissy Houlahan  
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Steve Cohen  
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Joe Courtney  
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Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress

William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

Élissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress