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April 19, 2016

The Honorable Linda A. Halliday  
Deputy Inspector General  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave NW  
Washington D.C. 20420

Dear Deputy Inspector General Halliday:

I write this letter to you to request and gain information regarding one of the Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals in my congressional district. Specifically, the Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center in Leavenworth, KS, and the various news reports concerning a former physician assistant accused of committing sexual battery and other crimes against at least seven of his patients at the VA.

Currently, there are at least three lawsuits pending against Mark Wisner in the U.S. District Court for Kansas and one of the victim's attorneys strongly believes that more victims will come forward to allege more abuse and misconduct. My question is simple: how was Mark Wisner able to stay at the VA as a physician assistant for so long without the VA administration knowing and/or taking the necessary steps to protect patients from this abusive physician assistant? Also, are there not safe guards in place, such as annual background checks, or questionnaires, that may help to uncover behavior such as this?

Mark Wisner used his position to prey on vulnerable veterans. In 2015, he surrendered his medical license in Kansas and signed a consent decree with the Kansas Board of Healing Arts, in which he admitted to committing illegal acts through inappropriate sexual contact with patients and overprescribing medications.

The charges against him are heinous and show a great need for more effective oversight by VA administrators of the doctors and physician assistants charged with caring for our veterans. It is disturbing that this was able to continue for some time and I believe that a full investigation into Mark Wisner's qualifications for and ability to carry out his necessary tasks at the VA. Also, within that investigation, the question of leadership must be called into question.

The veterans demand and deserve only the best and most compassionate care. We owe them the best doctors and physician assistants and those at the VA who approve candidates must take every precaution and leave no stone unturned regarding a candidate's background. I appreciate your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Jenkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynn Jenkins, CPA  
Member of Congress