



DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS
JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

November 30, 2017

Secretary Daniel J. Zimmerman
Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs
201 West Washington Avenue
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Secretary Zimmerman:

Thank you for your prompt reply to our letter dated November 13, 2017 relating to the request submitted to the Joint Committee on Finance for the extension of 8.0 FTE project positions in the Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP). We have read your letter and feel that it addresses our concerns about the department's funding request. Consequently, we have decided to withdraw our objection to the request.

In May, the Democratic members of the Joint Committee on Finance introduced a motion that would have extended the VORP program using GPR funding, but the motion was defeated on a party-line vote. While we appreciate the recent efforts to extend VORP through legislation, we question whether this could have been better accomplished through inclusion in the budget bill, either by the Governor or by the Joint Committee on Finance. In addition, funding VORP only as a pilot program through 2019 is not the best possible solution. We believe the program should instead be supported through continued funding. Regardless, we look forward to a seamless transition in services for our most vulnerable veterans.

Thank you again for your timely response to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Sen. Lena Taylor
4th Senate District

Sen. Jon Erpenbach
27th Senate District

Rep. Chris Taylor
76th Assembly District

Rep. Katrina Shankland
71st Assembly District

CC: Sen. Alberta Darling, Joint Finance Committee Co-Chair
Rep. John Nygren, Joint Finance Committee Co-Chair