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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

October 18, 2012

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Dr. Jonathan Woodson  
Assistant Secretary of Defense (HA)  
Tricare Management Activity  
5111 Leesburg Pike  
Skyline 5, Suite 810  
Falls Church, VA 22041-3251

Dear Dr. Woodson:

Our nation owes the best care possible to the men and women who wear the uniform. We owe our freedom to them. This is why I am very concerned about reports that the incoming contractor for the TRICARE West Region, United Healthcare, does not plan to continue the current TRICARE Prime service area along the Interstate 5 corridor that has been provided by the current contractor, TriWest. I understand that United Healthcare plans to offer Prime to beneficiaries living within 40 miles of a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) only.

Since there are only two MTF's in Oregon—both Coast Guard clinics on the coast—this change would eliminate the Prime option for the thousands of TRICARE beneficiaries in Oregon who rely on it for medical care.

I also fear that, with the elimination of the Prime option, the network of providers who support this option may no longer be able or willing to provide services to TRICARE beneficiaries. My constituents have informed me that they prefer the caliber of care and ease of obtaining in-network services provided by their TRICARE Prime primary care managers over the services offered by the TRICARE Standard option.

As much as I am dismayed by this impending reduction of health care services to active duty service members, reservists, Guardsmen, retirees, and their families—those who have given a large part of their working lives to service in our nation's armed forces—I am concerned as to when you plan to make this change in service known to these patriots.

If you are planning to make these changes, but are waiting to inform the TRICARE beneficiaries for whatever reason, I encourage you to make the announcement immediately. These changes could have a significant impact on the lives of TRICARE beneficiaries in my district, the state of Oregon, and in the TRICARE west region, and affected service members and veterans should be made aware right away.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

Best regards,

Greg Walden  
Member of Congress