THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR 15 2007

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman, Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-6050

Dear Mr Chairman

This letter is in response to a request by the Senate Report 109-292 for the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) to provide a report on the impact of the nursing shortage on the military health care delivery system by March 1, 2007 This report is to outline options to alleviate the shortage of nurses and cultivate nurses for the military workforce The report will address recruitment and retention issues, evaluate the medical enlisted commissioning programs, and explore the "Troops-to-Nurse Teachers" program based upon the Department of Defense's Troops-to-Teachers program, which will look at potential assignment of military nurse educators for duty at accredited baccalaureate schools of nursing to capitalize on the expertise and skills of military nurse veterans

Due to the detailed requirements of this request, additional time is required to adequately address and provide a comprehensive report on this issue The Department anticipates a final report will be sent to Congress in May 2007

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System

Sincerely,

William Winkenwerder, Jr., MD

cc
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member