THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

FEB 26 2007

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

Dear Mr Chairman

This letter is in response to language in the Conference Report on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (House Report 109-702) that requests the Secretary of Defense to provide a report to the Armed Services Committees by February 1, 2007, on the advantages and disadvantages of an enrollment requirement for the TRICARE Standard program

In response to this new Congressional direction, the Department initiated a comprehensive review to determine the advantages and disadvantages, in the current Military Health System environment, of extending the enrollment requirement to TRICARE Standard beneficiaries

Currently, enrollment premiums must be paid only by retirees and their family members for TRICARE Prime enrollment, and by Reservists and their family members for enrollment in TRICARE Reserve Select

Due to the complexity of the issue, more time is required to make a fair assessment of the impact of requiring enrollment for participation in the TRICARE Standard program We anticipate that the final report will be made available to Congress in August of 2007

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System

Sincerely,

William Winkenwerder, Jr , MD

cc
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member