HEALTHCARE FOR INJURED VETERANS AND SERVICE MEMBERS

WWP believes that those who have suffered wounds, illness, or injury because of military service deserve the highest quality comprehensive health care – and that, in all cases, this care should be affordable for working families. This is the sacred commitment that this nation makes to its veterans, service members, and their families in return for their extraordinary service and sacrifice.

- ★ In situations where veterans cannot access comprehensive, top quality care through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or other governmental offerings, they should have access to world-class private and nonprofit providers. VA should commit to partnering with such providers wherever doing so would improve veteran care.

- ★ We must improve long-term care solutions, particularly for veterans suffering from traumatic brain injuries (TBI). Too often, the government provided solution for veterans needing long-term care for TBI is a geriatric nursing home. This solution is wholly inappropriate for veterans of the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) conflicts who in many cases are in their 20s and 30s with long lives ahead of them. VA should partner with private and nonprofit organizations to find community based, individualized solutions that maximize independence. It should also extend and improve the Assisted Living for Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury (AL-TBI) pilot program.

- ★ Veterans suffering from service-connected infertility should continue to receive VA coverage for procedures that will allow them to start a family. Coverage must be accessible throughout the country.

- ★ Where private and nonprofit organizations fill gaps left by VA care, they should be allowed to use telemedicine to follow up with out of state patients, just as VA providers are.

- ★ Improvements are needed to ensure a smooth patient transition from Department of Defense (DoD) health systems to VA health systems.

- All military retirees, including medical retirees eligible for Medicare, should be able to access the low cost TRICARE options they earned with their service. Those eligible for both Medicare and TRICARE should not be forced to pay Medicare premiums to retain coverage.

- Congress and VA must address reports of inadequate management and resources within VA. Congress must provide VA with the authority and flexibility to hire top quality talent and remove underperforming employees and contractors.