

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES  
APPROPRIATIONS  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
INTELLIGENCE  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

April 10, 2018

The Honorable Phil Roe, Chairman  
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
335 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Tim Walz, Ranking Member  
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
333 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Chairman Roe and Ranking Member Walz:

I write to you today on behalf of all West Virginians in regards to renaming the Huntington VA Medical Center as the Hershel "Woody" Williams VA Medical Center. As you know, the Rules of Procedure for both the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs only allow for Department of Veterans Affairs facilities to be named after individuals who are deceased. I am asking for a suspension of the House Committee rules in this one special case to recognize and honor the contributions of an outstanding American Patriot, West Virginia's very own Hershel "Woody" Williams.

On May 17, 2017, I introduced a bill (S.1165) in the Senate to rename the Huntington VA Medical Center after Hershel "Woody" Williams. In order to satisfy Senate Committee Rules for VA facility naming, I worked closely with each of my colleagues in the West Virginia delegation and with the West Virginia chapters of our veterans service organizations to garner letters of support for the renaming.

Due to this effort and the overwhelming support from individuals and organizations in West Virginia, I am proud to report that the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee agreed to suspend the rule requiring facilities to be named only for deceased individuals due to the unique circumstances surrounding this special case. My bill (S.1165) passed the Senate by unanimous consent on September 7, 2017, but, unfortunately, it has stalled in your Committee since that time, alongside its House companion (H.R.3663) which was introduced on August 22, 2017.

Pursuant to Rule 10, Section (a)(2) and (a)(3) of your Committee rules, I would like to provide you with the necessary letters of support from each Member of the West Virginia Congressional delegation and from each Congressionally chartered veterans service organization within my state (see attached). It is my hope that after reviewing these letters and the broad bipartisan support for this American hero, you will take up this legislation and consider the suspension of Rule 10, Section (a)(1), as allowed for under Section (b) of that Rule.

Perhaps in no other time in our recent history has it been more vital to remember and emulate the heroism, perseverance, and patriotism of those who belong to the greatest generation. Woody is the embodiment of the best of his generation. He is West Virginia's resident hero, and our last living Medal of Honor recipient. By giving him this great honor while he is still alive, we are both honoring his great service and lifting up a role model to inspire all West Virginians and Americans alike.

On behalf of my friend Woody and all of West Virginia, I stand ready to assist in any way possible to expedite the consideration of this important legislation. I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you both on this endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Joe Manchin III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish at the end. A horizontal line is drawn beneath the signature.

Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator