



May 29, 2019

The Honorable Johnny Isakson, Chairman
United States Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs
131 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester, Ranking Member
United States Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Isakson and Ranking Member Tester:

The National Federation of the Blind, the nation's oldest and largest organization of blind Americans, strongly supports the Department of Veterans Affairs Website Accessibility Act of 2019 (S. 746). This bill will direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to report to Congress regarding the accessibility of VA websites to blind Americans. The report would also include the VA's plan to make these websites accessible.

Federal law already mandates that government websites be accessible to people with disabilities, nevertheless, some agencies fail to comply with these accessibility requirements. The Department of Veterans Affairs Website Accessibility Act of 2019 should not be necessary, but unfortunately it is, and there is no worthier group with which to start than our proud veterans.

The blind and disabled veterans of the United States served and sacrificed so much to protect our freedom and independence, and it is only right that we should provide them the means to keep their independence when they return home. Furthermore, as a blind son of a US Navy veteran from Vietnam, I know the importance of this issue to military family members who also need equal access to these important digital resources in order to support our veterans. The National Federation of the Blind urges you to vote favorably upon this bill and report it to the full Senate with all available urgency.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Riccobono, President
National Federation of the Blind

cc: The Honorable Robert Casey
The Honorable Jerry Moran