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**Heller Helps Get VA Choice Funding Over the Finish Line, Ensure Nevada Veterans’ Access to Care**

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV)applauded the U.S. Senate’s passage of his legislation, S.114, which provides funding for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to continue the Veterans Choice Program and improve the quality of care veterans receive in Nevada and around the country.

As a senior member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and author of legislation used to advance the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act (S.114) in the U.S. House of Representatives, Heller played a pivotal role in sustaining funding for the Choice Program. Last week, [the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed Heller’s bill to ultimately approve the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=AF1BFA5D-9DD2-4605-A2F8-111933CCC632). Following the U.S. Senate’s unanimous passage of the bill, the bill is expected to be signed into law by the President.

The Choice Program ensures that veterans have access to certain services, including surgeries and life-saving treatments, that the VA cannot provide. For example, Wendell, a Navy veteran from Lovelock, used the Choice Program to get a neck surgery to ensure he could still walk and John, an Air Force pilot from Battle Mountain, used the Choice Program to remove cancer above his neck.

The program also allows veterans living in rural areas to receive care near their homes. Without funding for the program, rural veterans, like those in Ely, Elko, Winnemucca, and Tonopah, would have to drive hundreds of miles to receive health care. The Choice program allowed an Army veteran from Ely to access mental health services nearby as opposed to traveling over 200 miles to Salt Lake City, UT or forgoing the care entirely.

“Guaranteeing Nevada’s veterans continue to have access to the VA Choice program has always been a top priority of mine, so I was proud to play an important role in getting funding for the program across the finish line and to the President’s desk to be signed into law,” **said Heller**. “From chemotherapy to critical life-saving surgeries, the Veterans Choice Program will ensure Nevada’s veterans have access to services that the VA cannot provide. For veterans living in Ely, Winnemucca, and other rural areas in Nevada, this program means that they can receive care in their own communities. I thank Chairman Iskason for his leadership on this important issue, and I look forward to continue working to see that Nevada’s veterans receive the world-class medical care they deserve.”

In addition to providing critical funding to continue the Veterans Choice Program, the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act also invests in the VA by strengthening its ability to recruit, train, and bolster their workforce.

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