

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0301

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October 19, 2018

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

Arizonans are counting on their representatives in Washington to work together to address their most pressing issues. As I travel and meet with constituents across Arizona's First Congressional District, one of the largest and most diverse in the nation, it is clear my constituents want us to help veterans access the health care and benefits they have earned, protect Social Security and Medicare from cuts, and fix our broken immigration system. My office has received thousands of letters, emails, and phone calls on each of these issues, and I want to share these concerns with you during your visit to our great state. I have enclosed nine emails from Arizonans who have contacted me about these critical issues.

Arizona is home to more than 600,000 veterans, including Navajo Code Talkers, and we are proud of their service. Many of these veterans live in rural or remote areas of the state. I often hear from Arizona veterans who have to travel 12 hours roundtrip to access care from medical specialists. The challenges they face are even greater on tribal lands where there is not a single long-term veterans nursing home. Aging veterans are forced to choose between leaving their families and communities to receive this care hundreds of miles away, or suffering without the care they need. This is not an issue we can just brush under the rug; every veteran deserves better than this.

In addition, VA clinics, nursing homes, and hospitals across the state remain plagued by issues that decrease the overall quality of care. In fact, of the nine lowest-rated VA hospital facilities across the country, two are here in Arizona – an unacceptable fact.

The Arizonans I talk to are very concerned by the recent statements made by congressional leaders about balancing the budget on the backs of these veterans, our seniors, and hardworking families. It is misguided to think we should get our deficit under control by cutting essential programs like Social Security.

In Arizona, more than 1.3 million people rely on their Social Security check every month. I will gladly be the first to come to the table and work on a bipartisan effort to rein in our growing deficit, but I will not stand for any effort to undermine the promises we made to our seniors and working families. They have earned their Social Security and we have an obligation to strengthen and preserve it.

Finally, my constituents are demanding a bipartisan fix to our broken immigration system. We need to secure our border by investing in 21st century security technology and hiring more customs and border patrol agents. These are proven ways to curb illegal immigration and reduce the flow of illegal weapons and drugs that come into our country, but this *must* be coupled with an overhaul of our immigration system to encourage legal migration, reduce backlogs, and give Dreamers stability.

As you said last year, Dreamers are "incredible kids," and I couldn't agree more. These young people are part of our future. They are our teachers, doctors, and students, and they want to continue living in and contributing to the only country they have ever known. I have met with Dreamers many times over the past two years here in Arizona and in Washington. They are hopeful about the prospect of a brighter future in America, despite the uncertainty they face. While it may not be politically palatable for some congressional leaders, there is broad support for a legislative solution to the DACA issue and immigration reform.

Mr. President, my constituents understand that no political party alone has all the answers to the challenges we face as a nation. That is why I am ready to sit down with Republicans and Democrats alike to find commonsense, bipartisan solutions. We serve the American people, and we owe it to them to cut through this gridlock and focus on the needs of our constituents.

Sincerely,



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress

Enclosure

VETERANS

[REDACTED]

Congressman O'Halleran,

I am a veteran of the Afghan war and I am assigned to the VA medical clinic here in flagstaff where I reside. Upon my visits for various reasons I have noticed a trend with this facility. I was recently told after asking to have my cauliflower ear drained, which consists of a nurse taking a syringe and pulling fluid from the ear, that they are unable perform such a task and I should drive 1 hour and 45 minutes to Prescott.

I was told verbatim, " This is a doctors office, not a hospital." I received a flu shot from them in the fall of 2017 which uses the same medical equipment that draining an ear would. The trend that this one example is illustrating is the fact that this facility does nothing but sub out the work, I have several pending appointments with other doctors outside of this facility to back that statement up. It is a waste of tax payers dollars as well as patients time. I feel as though they keep a full roster only to receive funding without providing adequate medical care. I would like to hear your thoughts and feedback on this matter.

Very Respectfully, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a registered voter here in the Casa Grande area. The reason I am writing is I am having difficulty with the VA regarding my PTSD claim submitted December 20, 2016. I feel that I have served my country in a wartime and deserve better than what I have been given. I am frustrated as are other Veterans I am sure. I usually am able to handle matters on my own, but this one Sir...I need your help. My family needs the claim to be processed so that we may not have to struggle financially. I have received the medical care, I just would like for my claim to be resolved. I know you are a busy man, but my family and I would greatly appreciate any assistance that you may be able to help me with.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Corporal/E4
US Marine Corps Veteran

[REDACTED]

Good day,


My name is [REDACTED] and I am having the worst issue receiving my 2017 tax return during my financial hard ship. I served honorably for 9 years in the US Army with 4 combat tours to Iraq and Afghanistan, during my last deployment to Afghanistan in 2012, my MATV patrol vehicle was hit by a 200 plus pound IED causing me to lose my right leg. I have severe PTSD and Vestibular Peripheral Traumatic Brain injury as well. I am currently 100% disabled through the VA and live off a fixed income, I have 3 children and a wife and times are really hard right now. Our only form of transportation has been repossessed due to hardship. I am asking why are US veterans treated like this? It has been degrading in nature to see how we are treated and not helped. Please Sir, look into my tax situation so I can get my family another vehicle. God bless America

US ARMY Med Retired
SSG [REDACTED]

SOCIAL SECURITY

[REDACTED]

We urge you to oppose any attempt to cut Medicare benefits or shift higher costs to older Americans. We expect you to fight against increasing costs of prescription drugs. We also encourage you to update and strengthen Medicare and Social Security so that working Americans that have paid into these programs all their lives, will be able to have a secure retirement. No older American should have to choose between food and medical care or prescriptions. Do the right thing for those that have entrusted you with their vote. Thank you.



Dear Mr. O'Halleran,

I have been reading in the NARFE magazine about the possibility of cutting Social Security and/or the pension benefits of the survivors of Federal employees. I am a widow and my husband spent more than 30 years working as a civilian for the Federal Government in a vital role in Newark, Ohio. As his survivor, I receive 55% of his pension. Some months I live from paycheck to paycheck. The amount of Social Security I receive does not include whatever he earned in the private sector because I had more quarters than he did. In fact, when the Social Security was calculated, they would give me credit for only two of the four years he served in the Air force even though he paid up his Social Security for his military service before he retired from the Newark Air Force Base.

I find it ludicrous that the Trump Administration's budget wants to cut the pensions of survivors of those who dedicated their lives to working for the Federal Government and the possibility of cutting Social Security. Apparently, those in power don't know what it's like to be elderly and to try to maintain a comfortable life. It's tough. I manage. But I can't sit by and not voice my concern.

You're up for re-election and seem to have the interests of the elderly at heart. I hope that you will speak up for us and let your fellow colleagues know that those who worked so hard to keep our country safe in previous years don't deserve to have their loved ones left behind with less than they're entitled to.

I worked also in the private sector and did my utmost to put money away for a rainy day. But some months, that rainy day fund dwindles to make ends meet.

Please do what you can to protect the pensions and Social Security for your constituents. Thank you for your time.



Sir,

I am extremely bothered about the proposed federal retirement cuts; loss of COLA and the loss of our law enforcement supplement. I have been a Border Patrol Agent approaching my (25) twenty-fifth year of service. If the supplement is rescinded, I will not be able to receive it being (1) one year short, unable to retire based on my age. The COLA loss will forever be constant

threat to our retirement as everyday living continues to cost more and more. We've already suffered a loss of FLOSA in our salaries also replaced with no real overtime, straight pay beyond (8) eight hours.

I hope that this brings the issues to light. Many of us have dedicated our lives to this agency and would like to see our retirement secure, without constant threats to cut it. Please support us!

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

DACA

[REDACTED]

Dear Congressman O'Halleran,


I am an immigrant. My parents bought me to the United States in 1958 when I was 11 years old. Since then I have received an American education, become an American citizen, married an American, raised an American daughter and enjoyed the many freedoms and opportunities America offers. I have had a productive and rewarding career and gladly paid my fair share of taxes. I have participated in the political process by speaking out and always voting. In other words, I have lived the "American Dream".

President Trump's cancellation of DACA is cruel, immoral and heartbreaking. The human impact of 800,000 young people losing their legal status in this country is unconscionable. Every one of them would lose their work authorization and be at risk for deportation.

These people came to the U.S. as children and America is their only home. They have no tools for survival if deported to a strange country. It is likely they don't even speak the language. I can't even begin to imagine having to move back to my birth country where I would be a total stranger.

It is now up to Congress to pass legislation that will keep the Dreamers in this country, allow them to live in freedom and become productive American citizens. America needs this special group of people. Immigration has made this country a better place. I want all immigrants to enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities that I have enjoyed. Please stand up for undocumented youth and join as a co-sponsor of a new and better Dream Act.


Sincerely, [REDACTED]



Dear Congressman O'Halleran,

I work with DACA students at NAU who are facing the loss of their legal status in the next few months. They are on their way to becoming teachers, nurses, doctors, and entrepreneurs, but without DACA, these goals will become impossible to reach. Please stand strong and do not vote for any budget that does not include relief for these students and their families. You have the support of your constituents, so please represent us and protect us!

Sincerely,



I have worked as a college/career counselor for the past 6 years in the Marana School District. I have worked with a number of Dreamers. Most were excellent students. One of my saddest experiences during over 40 years in public education was crying with one our top students, who earned a full merit scholarship to the University of Arizona. Because she is a dreamer, she did not receive her well-deserved scholarship. She went to Pima College instead and had to pay full price. Now, today, I can see her in tears again. This time worried, fearful, whether she will be able to stay in the USA to finish her education. Do the right thing. Speak out and do the right thing.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of the Director (MS 2000)
Washington, DC 20529-2000



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

December 6, 2018

The Honorable Tom O'Halleran
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative O'Halleran:

Thank you for your October 19, 2018, letter to President Trump. The White House forwarded your letter to the Department of Homeland Security and Secretary Nielsen asked that I respond on her behalf.

Due to pending litigation regarding the rescission of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, the Department is unable to comment further at this time. However, we would be pleased to provide technical assistance if Congress takes up legislative action in this area.

We defer to the Social Security Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding the issues you identified with social security and veterans, respectively.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 272-1940.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. Francis Cissna".

L. Francis Cissna
Director