

Legislation introduced to reverse damage from Trump Administration's egregious cuts at VA

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U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley said recently that they have joined Senate colleagues in introducing comprehensive legislation that would protect veterans, military spouses and VA employees in Oregon and nationwide indiscriminately targeted in the Department of Government Efficiency's (DOGE) cuts at VA and across the federal government.

"Veterans and the benefits they earned with their service to our country are under indiscriminate and unjust attack by Trump, Musk and their flunkies at DOGE," Wyden said. "The Putting Veterans First Act would ensure these unduly fired employees are returned to work and ensure that service for veterans is not interrupted for one day longer."

"There is no making sense of the Trump Administration's cruel, reckless plans to fire over 80,000 VA employees, many of them veterans themselves. Our veterans and military families deserve the full measure of our appreciation, not this stunning betrayal by President Trump," Merkley said. "All my colleagues should support this bill to reinstate and protect these heroes from Trump and Republicans' illegal and reckless cuts."

Veterans make up 30 percent of the federal workforce, with about 640,000 veterans working in federal agencies. For decades, administrations of both parties have made hiring veterans and military spouses to work in the federal government a priority—including Donald Trump's previous administration. Just this

week, an internal memo leaked the Trump administration's plans to cut more than 80,000 VA employees, which would include at least 20,000 veterans, who make up 25 percent of VA's workforce.

The Putting Veterans First Act would do the following:

- Reinstatement and protection of members of the veteran and military community indiscriminately fired by DOGE working as federal employees
- Protect the quality of VA care, benefits and employment
- Increase transparency and oversight of VA staffing, claims backlog and wait times data
- Protect veterans' private data from DOGE and unelected billionaires
- Determine the financial impact of DOGE's reckless cancellation of contracts at VA
- Provide critical mental health care for former and current civil servants
- Provide employment assistance for members of the Veteran and military community fired from the federal government in Trump's mass terminations

The legislation was led by U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.