

Military & Veterans' Affairs Committee
October 02, 2023
Truth or Consequences

- According to the Veterans Administration Website:
 - “VA will provide, pay for, or reimburse emergency care and related follow-on care for certain Veterans – including ambulance transportation costs, prescriptions, inpatient or residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days”

- In February, the VA finalized a rule change for special mode transportation service rates that will bring rates below the actual costs of these services. The rule change is slated to go into effect on Feb. 16, 2024,
 - It is estimated that the final rule would result in a 90% reduction in payments for ambulance services provided to Veterans. This reduction in payments will significantly impact the availability of ambulance transport to Veterans and dramatically reduce veterans' access to emergency medical services throughout the United States.

- The VA Emergency Transportation Access Act (S.2757) is a bipartisan bill that aims to protect rural veterans' access to emergency medical transportation. The bill was introduced in the Senate by Tester, Moran, Murray, and Boozman. It has bipartisan support in Congress.
 - S. 2757 would require the VA to complete several requirements before pursuing the rate change, including conducting a review of the impact a change in rates would have on veterans' access to.
 - Senator Heinrich has signed on; we are hoping Senator Lujan does so as well