

[IAVA Georgia Leadership Fellow to Testify at Congressional Hearing](#)

Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Field Hearing includes participation of VA Secretary McDonald

GAINESVILLE, GA. (August 21, 2015) – Today, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) Georgia Leadership Fellow Dr. Wayman Duane Williams [will testify](#) at a special field hearing for the U.S. Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. The hearing entitled "The Veteran's Choice Program: Are Problems in Georgia Indicative of a National Problem?" will be chaired by U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.) and include testimony from Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Secretary Robert McDonald.

IAVA played a leadership role in the development and passage in August 2014 of the Veterans Access to Choice and Accountability Act (VACAA). Among the provisions, the act ensures the VA efficiently utilizes the Veterans Choice Program, which allows veterans to receive health-care from non-VA doctors if they have been waiting more than 30 days for VA medical care or if they live more than 40 miles away from a VA medical care facility or face one of several excessive travel burdens.

"The population of veterans enrolling in VA medical centers nationwide is quickly growing, and in Georgia this is no different," said Dr. Williams. "With this growth comes increased demand that is challenging capacity for the VA. Our concern in Georgia is that we must have both specialty and primary care providers to match this population growth. The Choice Program has the potential to provide boost care received and reduce wait times and inconvenience to veterans, however veterans must have a clear understanding of the program in order to ensure a streamlined and timely delivery of care."

The hearing, held at the University of North Georgia, Gainesville Campus, is the third in a series of oversight hearings to examine the implementation of the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability and Transparency Act.

"IAVA is committed to remaining actively engaged with the veterans making use of the Choice Program," stated [Matt Miller, IAVA Chief Policy Officer](#). "The satisfaction of the veterans utilizing choice, the cost of the care purchased outside of VA facilities and understanding issues that come up along the way, will allow us to better realize a veteran-focus strategy and plan for non-VA care in the community moving forward. We are pleased to have this opportunity to share the direct experiences of our Georgia-based veterans with the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee."

A full copy of William's testimony can be found [here](#).

About Dr. Wayman Dwayne Williams

As Georgia Leadership Fellow, Dr. Williams is a catalyst for veteran leadership development, policy advocacy and team building. Dr. Williams spent 26 years with the Active Army and a number of years in the reserve components. In his last combat assignment he was responsible to the MNFI Surgeon and MNFI Commanding General for independent coordination with various government and nongovernment agencies to support health sector partnership programs with the Iraqi government as he traveled across the country. He has advanced degrees in religion and public policy. He is currently the Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Advisory Board of DeKalb County, Georgia, responsible for the county's veteran recognition, advocacy, and research programs on behalf of the 42,000 veterans in one of Georgia's largest counties. He has been working in the veteran policy and advocacy space for nine years.