April 26, 2022

The Honorable Julia Brownley
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Veterans’ Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
364 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Bergman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Veterans’ Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
3460 O’Neill House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Brownley and Ranking Member Bergman:

AARP, on behalf of our 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, is pleased to endorse the Elizabeth Dole Home and Community Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act of 2022 (H.R. 6823). We commend your bipartisan leadership to help more veterans live in their homes and support their family caregivers.

After their service, hard work, and contributions to our society, America’s veterans deserve to live with independence, security, and dignity. AARP is fighting for individuals to have high-quality, affordable options when it comes to long-term care—especially care at home. In a recent AARP survey, three-fourths of adults age 50-plus told us they wish to remain in their current homes and communities for as long as possible. To make this possibility a reality, many rely on family caregivers, who are the backbone of the care system in this country. According to the Rand Corporation, there are 5.5 million military and veteran caregivers in the United States. These uncompensated hidden heroes provide $14 billion in service for wounded warriors each year. They need and deserve our support.

Your legislation would expand access to current VA programs providing care at home, provide for improved coordination among VA programs and with Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) programs, and improve transitions and access to services for veterans and family caregivers denied or discharged from the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. Among other things, the bill would also create a central online resource to help families and veterans find information on available programs, increase access to respite care to give caregivers a temporary break from caregiving responsibilities, and review access to services, caregiver support, and other issues to lay the groundwork for further improvements.

AARP appreciates your efforts to better support military and veteran caregivers and help veterans get the care they need to remain in their homes. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Rhonda Richards on our Government Affairs team at rrichards@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

Bill Sweeney
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs