



August 25, 2023

The Honorable Julia Brownley
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives
2262 Rayburn House Office Building

The Honorable Jack Bergman
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives
566 Cannon House Office Building

Dear Ranking Member Brownley and Representative Bergman:

AARP, which advocates for the more than 100 million Americans age 50 and over, is pleased to endorse H.R. 542, the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act. We commend your bipartisan leadership to help more veterans live in their homes and to 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 home- and community-based services (HCBS). In a recent AARP survey, three-fourths of adults aged 50-plus told us they wish to remain in their current homes 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 an estimated \$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 Medicare's Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), 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 improvement.

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 Emily Hetherington on our Government Affairs team at ehetherington@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, reading "Bill Sweeney", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Bill Sweeney,
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs