



The Honorable Joe Courtney
Co-Chair
Congressional Coast Guard Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable John Garamendi
Co-Chair
Congressional Coast Guard Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Co-Chair
Congressional Coast Guard Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Co-Chair
Congressional Coast Guard Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Frank LoBiondo
Co-Chair
Congressional Coast Guard Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Don Young
Co-Chair
Congressional Coast Guard Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Coast Guard Caucus,

The Association of the United States Navy (AUSN) is excited to hear that the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Dr. Shulkin, has decided to combine the medical health records systems of the VA and the Department of Defense. Doing this will allow for the streamlining of medical records from the time an individual enters the service to when they leave and seek care from the VA.

AUSN is concerned that the Coast Guard has been without an electronic record system since September of 2015. A failed attempt to make the records electronic has forced the Coast Guard to use a paper based system, which can result in slower processing times and potential error. Since 2016, AUSN has been following this disaster, as shown in an article published last year by Politico: (<http://www.politico.com/story/2016/04/ehr-debacle-leads-to-paper-based-care-for-coast-guard-servicemembers-222412>)

We feel that the Coast Guard needs to be involved in the new DOD medical records system that the VA plans to fully join within the next six months. There is no reason that the Coast Guard cannot achieve this six month time frame that the Secretary of the VA has made one of his goals. It is important for the Coast Guard to become the fifth and final branch of the military to join this system so that electronic health records are available throughout the DOD and VA.

Thank you for taking an active role in such an important issue to the Military and Veteran community by working to improve the lives and careers of those who served our great nation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 703-548-5800 or at michael.little@ausn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Joseph Little". To the right of the signature, there is a small, handwritten note in blue ink that says "ABH²/NLS" and "USNR" below it.

Michael J. Little
Director of Legislative Affairs
CC: all members of Coast Guard Caucus