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TIMOTHY J. WALZ
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AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
RANKING MEMBER

October 1, 2018

Dear Colleague,

After spending 24 years in the Army National Guard and throughout my tenure in Congress, I have made my top priority serving the men and women in uniform and their families. I know the critical importance of having an effective leader to serve our veterans. As many of you know, I am retiring from Congress at the end of this year, and I write today to share my support for Mark Takano to succeed me as the top Democrat on the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs.

Over these last few years, I have come to know Mark as a reliable leader and unwavering advocate for veterans. His deep understanding of the issues, his strong work ethic, and his ability to bring folks together make him the effective leader we need. He deeply values the work of the veterans' advocacy community, and I know he will be the effective partner they need to advance the cause of our brave men and women who have served.

In his role as Vice Ranking Member, Mark has shown great leadership on the committee, participating in negotiations on major legislation, helping shape our messaging, producing recess packets and helping me run the Committee. In short, I couldn't have done it without him.

Mark has been an effective legislator, championing the issue of Graduate Medical Education to strengthen our healthcare system, helping veterans access a career-ready education that leads to a good-paying job, and calling attention to the issue of deported veterans. Mark also introduced and championed legislation that led to the restoration of GI bill benefits for over 7,000 students who had been defrauded by Corinthian Colleges and ITT Technical Institute and were left with few options after these for-profit institutions shut their doors.

Mark has also worked across the aisle while staying true to his principles. He worked with Chairman Phil Roe to lead an official delegation to Tijuana, Mexico to visit the Deported Veterans Support House. This trip led the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to formally establish a location in Tijuana where deported veterans can receive a Compensation & Pension (C&P) Exam, which is needed to determine eligibility for disability payments and health care.

Our veterans deserve an effective Chairman that will guide the committee during these challenging times, and I am confident that Mark is that leader. I humbly ask that you join me in supporting Mark Takano.

Sincerely,

Tim Walz