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Contact: Destry Henderson

202-225-2006

**McMorris Rodgers Votes to Improve Veterans' Access to Emergency Rooms
Throughout Eastern Washington**

(Washington, D.C.) Today, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers voted to ensure veterans have access to the emergency care they deserve when they need it and where they need it.

McMorris Rodgers voted for the Veterans Emergency Care Fairness Act (H.R. 3819). The legislation requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to reimburse qualified veterans for emergency treatment received at a non-VA facility until those veterans are transferred to a VA facility. Qualifying veterans don't have a service-connected disability, but are enrolled as active participants of the VA health care plan.

"This is important for veterans and rural hospitals across Eastern Washington," McMorris Rodgers said. "Veterans will be able to get the emergency care they deserve, even if it's not at a VA hospital. And this also ensures the rural hospitals across Eastern Washington that give the veterans emergency care will be reimbursed."

"I've seen the needs of veterans who live in rural communities," said Danna Hughes of Republic, who's been a veterans service officer for 18 years. "This will allow the veterans who are enrolled with the VA in Spokane and that live in rural areas to be seen for an emergency in their local hospital—and have the VA pay for it. This helps those in pain by allowing them to be seen at or local hospital and the financial burden taken care of by the VA."

"The passage of this bill enables veterans 'real' access to healthcare," said Ron O'Halloran, administrator of the Ferry County Public Hospital District. "No longer does a veteran or a family member providing assistance to the veteran in a time of urgency need to choose between seeking immediate medical care or driving 2.5 hours to the VA hospital in Spokane."

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