



Dear Senators Gonzales,

The Veterans and Military Families Caucus supports your legislation **SB 113 – Taos Medical Facility**.

Expansion of rural health care resources in New Mexico is a critical issue for veterans and military families all over the state and especially in rural areas. Construction of a primary care outpatient facility in Taos would benefit many veterans and military family members.

The 2023 Veterans Profile states that **Taos County's population is 9.3 percent veterans** and their neighboring county to the west, **Rio Arriba, is 8.2 percent veterans** and their neighboring county to the east, **Colfax, is 10.2 percent veterans**.

The Veterans Profile reports that there were **139,347 veterans living in New Mexico as of 2021**. Veterans represented **8.6 percent of the civilian population 18 and older** in our state. Add to that the number of active duty military families in our state, National Guard families, and retired military and veteran family members that also may need access to medical care.

Rural residents face serious challenges with access to health care. Constructing a new primary care outpatient facility will help address the current inadequate access to health care in the northern part of our state. It will also attract medical professionals and provide many support and administrative jobs for local residents.

The VMFC Caucus has supported health care expansion in the past few years and will continue to do so. Please **share this letter of support with your colleagues** in committees as you advance the legislation.

If you have any questions about how this legislation benefits us or how we can support your efforts in this regard, please contact us.

Respectfully,



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