

March 31, 2026

Vice Admiral Darin K. Via
Director
Defense Health Agency
7700 Arlington Boulevard
Suite 5101
Falls Church, VA 22042-5101

Dear Vice Admiral Via,

I write to you today to express serious concerns that servicemembers injured in the Administration's war with Iran may not be receiving adequate medical care and evaluations after returning from the Middle East. I have heard directly from constituents serving in our military who were injured in the war and are now experiencing delays and gaps in medical care at Ft. Hood. I believe that you would agree that such a delay of care is unacceptable, and I urge you to ensure that all servicemembers injured in the war with Iran receive appropriate and timely medical care—including necessary care for traumatic brain injuries (TBIs).

I have heard stories from members of the 103rd Sustainment Command of the Army Reserve who were injured in the March 1 Iranian drone attack on their facility in Kuwait. Tragically, six members of the unit were killed in that strike and dozens more were injured. Many of these injured servicemembers, however, could not be evacuated from Kuwait for days due to the ongoing fighting. Since returning to the United States, the members of the 103rd have been at Ft. Hood where they endured days and weeks of delays to be properly evaluated for potential injuries and see medical specialists, like neurologists and behavioral health specialists.

This delay in receiving adequate evaluations and care is particularly concerning because these servicemembers may be suffering from TBIs as a result of the Iranian drone strike. Despite TBIs being one of the leading injuries from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Department of Defense (DoD) has historically underdiagnosed servicemembers' TBIs and provided them insufficient treatment for the trauma they suffered. While you and your predecessors at the Defense Health Agency (DHA) have made improving the evaluation and treatment of TBIs a top priority, the stories I am hearing out of Ft. Hood lead me to believe DoD is not doing enough.

While I appreciate DHA's commitment to providing the members of the 103rd Sustainment Command with prompt medical care, I am concerned these issues are more widespread. Reporting indicates that TBIs are quickly emerging as the leading injury sustained by U.S. servicemembers in the war with Iran. DHA must take immediate steps to close gaps in screening and care to ensure that no servicemember with a potential TBI falls through the cracks. DoD has a responsibility to ensure that systems are in place to prevent failures seen in prior conflicts from recurring.

Therefore, I request you immediately do the following:

1. Review DHA policies and procedures regarding the evaluation and diagnosis of TBIs for servicemembers returning from wars like that with Iran.

2. Ensure that servicemembers diagnosed with TBIs immediately receive access to specialists, like neurologists and behavioral health specialists.
3. Evaluate the procedures for determining returning servicemembers medical status to ensure that servicemembers with potential non-visible injuries like TBIs are not being placed in a lower priority status.
4. Review policies and practices at Ft. Hood and across DHA to ensure reservists temporarily on active duty receive the same standard of medical care as active-duty members.

Thank you for your prompt review of these issues and your commitment to providing every servicemember high-quality medical care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator