

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0301

October 19, 2018

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

Arizonans are counting on their representatives in Washington to work together to address their most pressing issues. As I travel and meet with constituents across Arizona's First Congressional District, one of the largest and most diverse in the nation, it is clear my constituents want us to help veterans access the health care and benefits they have earned, protect Social Security and Medicare from cuts, and fix our broken immigration system. My office has received thousands of letters, emails, and phone calls on each of these issues, and I want to share these concerns with you during your visit to our great state. I have enclosed nine emails from Arizonans who have contacted me about these critical issues.

Arizona is home to more than 600,000 veterans, including Navajo Code Talkers, and we are proud of their service. Many of these veterans live in rural or remote areas of the state. I often hear from Arizona veterans who have to travel 12 hours roundtrip to access care from medical specialists. The challenges they face are even greater on tribal lands where there is not a single long-term veterans nursing home. Aging veterans are forced to choose between leaving their families and communities to receive this care hundreds of miles away, or suffering without the care they need. This is not an issue we can just brush under the rug; every veteran deserves better than this.

In addition, VA clinics, nursing homes, and hospitals across the state remain plagued by issues that decrease the overall quality of care. In fact, of the nine lowest-rated VA hospital facilities across the country, two are here in Arizona – an unacceptable fact.

The Arizonans I talk to are very concerned by the recent statements made by congressional leaders about balancing the budget on the backs of these veterans, our seniors, and hardworking families. It is misguided to think we should get our deficit under control by cutting essential programs like Social Security.

In Arizona, more than 1.3 million people rely on their Social Security check every month. I will gladly be the first to come to the table and work on a bipartisan effort to rein in our growing deficit, but I will not stand for any effort to undermine the promises we made to our seniors and working families. They have earned their Social Security and we have an obligation to strengthen and preserve it.

Finally, my constituents are demanding a bipartisan fix to our broken immigration system. We need to secure our border by investing in 21st century security technology and hiring more customs and border patrol agents. These are proven ways to curb illegal immigration and reduce the flow of illegal weapons and drugs that come into our country, but this *must* be coupled with an overhaul of our immigration system to encourage legal migration, reduce backlogs, and give Dreamers stability.

As you said last year, Dreamers are “incredible kids,” and I couldn’t agree more. These young people are part of our future. They are our teachers, doctors, and students, and they want to continue living in and contributing to the only country they have ever known. I have met with Dreamers many times over the past two years here in Arizona and in Washington. They are hopeful about the prospect of a brighter future in America, despite the uncertainty they face. While it may not be politically palatable for some congressional leaders, there is broad support for a legislative solution to the DACA issue and immigration reform.

Mr. President, my constituents understand that no political party alone has all the answers to the challenges we face as a nation. That is why I am ready to sit down with Republicans and Democrats alike to find commonsense, bipartisan solutions. We serve the American people, and we owe it to them to cut through this gridlock and focus on the needs of our constituents.

Sincerely,



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress

Enclosure