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Washington, DC - Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) today joined with colleagues in sending a letter to the White House in opposition of a proposal that would allow the VA to bill veterans' private health insurance companies for treatment of service-connected injuries and disabilities. The proposal was made as part of the FY 2010 VA budget. The letter, which was authored by Congressman Glenn Nye (D-VA), was signed by 68 Members in the House.

"Thousands of North Mississippi veterans and military retirees have earned health care through their honorable service to our country, and it is unacceptable that they should have to pay for the treatment of injuries received while admirably protecting our freedoms," said Congressman Childers. "The proposed policy could negatively impact veterans' family member's health care, as well as veterans' employment opportunities. In these tough times, these effects would be especially detrimental. I hope that we can work together to ensure that veterans receive the care they have earned."

Approximately 7,500 veterans currently receiving benefits from the Veterans Administration live in Mississippi's First Congressional District, along with over 4,000 military retirees.

The complete letter is attached.

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