



The Honorable Vern Buchanan
Chair
Ways and Means, Health Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
2409 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gwen Moore
Representative
U.S. House of Representatives
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chair Buchanan and Representative Moore,

The National Alliance to impact the Social Determinants of Health (NASDOH) writes to express support for your bill H.R.1289, the Veterans Nutrition and Wellness Act of 2025.

Founded in 2018 by Governor Mike Leavitt and Dr. Karen DeSalvo, NASDOH is a multi-sector coalition of stakeholders seeking to make a material improvement in the health of individuals and communities by advancing the adoption of effective policies and programs to address health-related social needs (HRSNs) – such as food insecurity, housing instability, and transportation insecurity – as well as the underlying social and economic conditions in which people live (non-medical drivers). NASDOH brings together stakeholders from different geographic regions with expertise in health care, public health, social services, patient and consumer perspectives, information technology, and business to share learnings, develop policy recommendations, and build consensus on solutions to support health. Our [website](#) lists all of NASDOH members.

Food and nutrition play a key role in promoting health and healthy outcomes. Likewise, food and nutrition insecurity¹ are associated with increased risk for multiple chronic health conditions, including diabetes, obesity, heart disease, mental health disorders, and other chronic diseases.² The Veterans Nutrition and Wellness Act would directly support the health and wellbeing of eligible veterans by requiring the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot program for providing medically-tailored meals, medically-tailored groceries, and nutrition education and cooking classes through a registered dieticians, nutritionists, and community health workers. The legislation also requires the VA, in implementing the pilot program, to seek to collaborate with community-based organizations, including food banks and local agriculture programs, to procure fresh and locally-sourced produce and expand the availability of medically-tailored meals and medically-tailored groceries.

¹ Food security means having access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Nutrition security means consistent access, availability, and affordability of foods and beverages that promote well-being, prevent disease, and, if needed, treat disease.

² <https://www.nimhd.nih.gov/resources/understanding-health-disparities/food-accessibility-insecurity-and-health-outcomes.html>

NASDOH strongly supports the goals of the legislation to expand access to healthy foods to improve the health of veterans. We appreciate your leadership on this important legislation and hope to see this legislation signed into law in 2025.

For more information on NASDOH and our members, please visit our website at www.nasdoh.org or contact Laura Pence at Laura.Pence@leavittpartners.com.

Sincerely,

Laura Pence

Leavitt Partners

Director, Leavitt Partners and Advisor to NASDOH

cc:

Representative Mike Bost (R-IL), Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs

Representative Mark Takano (D-CA), Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans Affairs