

17 September 2016

US Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20420
Attn: VA Secretary Robert McDonald

I am in receipt of your recent letter regarding artwork expenditures by the VA. I thank you for your response and appreciate your kind words and display of my grandchildren's artwork submissions.

We hope many Veterans see their work that conveys their love and reverence for those who serve to keep us safe.

Secretary McDonald, I was hoping that my letter to you questioning the extravagant purchase of artwork for VA facilities would result in a change. I mentioned in my letter the truly therapeutic value of artwork done by our Veterans. #VETSART4VA is just one source of artwork by our Veterans that could and should be displayed in our VA facilities. The VA has many sources among our Veteran population to draw from to decorate our VA centers. This artwork will have more healing power, I propose to you, than a cubed rock purchased at a cost of \$480,000 and installed at a cost of \$800,000.

I shudder to think how many services 1.2 million dollars could deliver to Veterans who desperately need care and treatment. Surely, you see where I am coming from.

Our Veterans do not need a cubed rock to heal them, they desperately need efficiency in the delivery of services to them, such as timely appointments to see doctors and assistance with medication and treatment. You stated in your letter to me: "It is important to note that studies from organizations, including the National Institute of Health, consistently highlight the positive, therapeutic value of artwork." And then you state: "For these reasons, we will continue to keep pace with industry standards of care when creating space for Veterans that are both functional and therapeutic." That suggests to me you plan to continue purchasing extravagant artwork outside the Veteran community to decorate VA centers.

I implore you to put an end to this extravagant purchase of artwork and utilize the truly therapeutic source of artwork among our Veteran community. Rather than decorating VA facilities with ridiculously priced rock sculptures, please focus on the "industry standards" of providing the very best care to a group of men and women who gave the very best of themselves to all of us. And leave the decorating of the VA Centers to the Veterans themselves. They will deliver, they always do!

With A Mother's Heart,

Beverly Perlson

The Band of Mothers

Cc: Senator Charles Grassley

Congressman Jeff Miller

Adam Andrezjewski