

Dear Senate Committee,

I have just returned from a seven hour drive from Sheridan, Wyoming, where my son was admitted to the VA Mental Health Facility April 16th, 2018.

In 2013, my son was beaten and raped by a group of men in the barracks in Fort Benning, Georgia. This trauma caused PTSD which progressed to schizophrenia.

This is his fourth stay in Sheridan. We are two hours from any VA facility in Colorado, and when I take him to our regional hospital he is evaluated and flown to Sheridan to be placed on hold until he is stabilized. The first flight out cost us \$10,000 out of pocket, because I was not aware I had to report his flight to the VA within 72 hours.

Once my son is stabilized the VA will no longer hold him. Last week I asked he be put in a transitional program before coming home. I was told he is stable, but too ill to benefit from the VA programs that are offered. Back home we go! **My family is not prepared or qualified to deal with the issues we are facing. We are learning as we go, but having a place where our son could find direction, and a place in the community would be ideal.**

Please support Senate Bill 270!

Brigitte Shafer
Washington County, Colorado