



The Honourable Jill McKnight, MP
Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

May 13, 2025

Dear Minister McKnight,

Subject: Congratulations on Your Appointment as Minister of Veterans Affairs

On behalf of *Veterans With Cancer Inc.*, I extend our warmest congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada. Your distinguished background as an entrepreneur and business leader brings a valuable perspective to this vital portfolio. We are confident that your experience will serve you well in addressing the long-standing systemic delays that have impacted the well-being of Canada's veterans—particularly those veterans with cancer who are awaiting compensation for service-related injuries.

As a fellow graduate of the University of Victoria, I am especially encouraged by the leadership and commitment you bring to this role. Your appointment comes at a critical time, as the need for reform within the disability claims process has never been more urgent.

In that regard, I would like to draw your attention to our recent research paper, *Improving Assessment Consistency for Veterans*, which we shared with Deputy Minister Paul Ledwell last month. The report outlines practical, evidence-based strategies to streamline the disability claims process—proposals that could reduce departmental costs by approximately \$11.5 million while significantly shortening wait times for veterans.

Veterans With Cancer Inc. is a not-for-profit organization founded by and for veterans who have been diagnosed with cancers linked to service-related exposures. Many of our members were exposed to hazardous substances—such as Carbon Tetrachloride, a chemical once widely used in military maintenance facilities and now recognized as a carcinogen. Despite clear connections between their service and their diagnoses, too many veterans face unacceptable delays and denials in accessing the support they have earned.

Your leadership represents an important opportunity to enact the changes that veterans and their families have long awaited. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your team to explore how our work can support your efforts in delivering more effective and compassionate care to Canada's veterans.

Once again, congratulations on your appointment. We wish you every success as you take on this important responsibility and stand ready to support your efforts in honouring the service and sacrifice of our veterans.

Sincerely,

Commander (ret'd) James P. Hutton rmc, CD, BSc, MSc, MBA
Director, Veterans with Cancer Inc.