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**DONOVAN VOTES TO PREVENT VA HOSPITAL CLOSURES, FUND
HEPATITIS C TREATMENT; CALLS ON SENATE TO ACT**
**Local Veterans Groups, Nurses' Union Support Donovan's Vote and Echo
Call for Senate Action**

Washington, DC--July 30, 2015....Congressman Dan Donovan (NY-11) yesterday joined a bipartisan coalition in the House of Representatives to pass the *Veterans Healthcare Choice Improvement Act*. The bill fills a \$2.5 billion gap in the VA's budget, averting the potential for medical services cuts and hospital closures. Further, the legislation makes available up to \$500 million for potentially life-saving Hepatitis C treatments for the 174,000 veterans at the VA who have been diagnosed with the disease. The bill now stands before the U.S. Senate for further action.

"Our veterans risked their lives to defend our freedom, and I will always fight tooth and nail to ensure they receive the best possible care," **Congressman Donovan** said. "I'm proud to have a role in providing continued funding for veterans medical services, and to combat the escalating Hepatitis C crisis. The Senate should immediately take up this important legislation – our heroes deserve it."

John Hojnacki, Combat Veteran Vietnam Commander of the SSG Michael Ollis VFW 9587, said, "I support this legislation's efforts to fill the VA's funding gap and to provide money for Hepatitis C treatment. I hope the Senate also passes this bill so it can become law."

Herb Morales, Commander of the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 154, said, "Veterans deserve quality health care. I'm encouraged by the improvements to the Choice program included in this bill, and I'm thrilled to see funding dedicated to treating Hepatitis C. The Senate should vote to support this legislation as soon as possible."

Mike Garguilo, President of the local chapter of Rolling Thunder, a veterans advocacy organization, said, "I'm very glad this bill will provide funding for Hepatitis C treatment so suffering veterans can get the help they need. Thank you to Congressman Donovan for his focus on the needs of our active and retired service members."

Robyn Pegues, RN, a nurse at the Brooklyn VA Hospital, said, "RNs applaud Congressman Donovan on voting to authorize up to \$3 billion of Choice money to be used to maintain critical veteran services and keep all medical centers open. We also call on Congress to pressure VA senior leaders to maintain all services at the Brooklyn VA and keep 12W fully open."

Approximately 25,000 veterans reside in the 11th Congressional District. Recently, Congressman Donovan met with Brooklyn VA Hospital administrators, local veterans groups, and National Nurses United to express his opposition to the closure of the 12W wing, a medical/surgical unit within the hospital.

Donovan concluded, “Servicemen and women come before politics. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with my colleagues in both parties to provide our veterans with the resources and attention they deserve.”

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