



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

January 24, 2013

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Waxman:

Thank you for your letters requesting information about the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in West Los Angeles, California.

On December 4, 2012, VA officials met with your staff to address the questions you raised in your letters. My understanding is that Mr. Stan Johnson, Director of the VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network, Veterans Integrated Service Network 22; Mr. Ronald Walters, Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs; Ms. Donna Beiter, Director of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System; and Mr. Cameron Gore, Deputy Assistant General Counsel, provided a comprehensive briefing to Ms. Pat Delgado, your Chief of Staff, and other members of your staff. Staff members from the offices of Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer also attended this briefing regarding the newly-announced Building 209 contract award, the columbarium project, and VA's efforts to end homelessness in Los Angeles and nationwide by 2015. With respect to Building 209, I am pleased to hear that you will be joining VA officials at the groundbreaking ceremony for the renovation to be held on January 25, 2013.

On December 10, 2012, VA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development published a report entitled the 2012 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). The report showed a 22 percent decrease in the number of estimated homeless Veterans in Los Angeles between January 2011 and January 2012. This 22 percent decrease represents one of the largest drops in any major city surveyed. Those 2012 AHAR findings clearly reflect a trend that VA is on the right track in the fight to end Veteran homelessness. While this is encouraging news, we have more work to do and will not be satisfied until no Veteran has to sleep on the street. The success we have achieved is directly attributable to the hard work by all of our staff and the Federal, state, and community partners who are committed to ending Veteran homelessness.

Should you have further questions or concerns, please have a member of your staff contact Mr. Aakash Bhatt, Congressional Relations Officer, at (202) 461-6444 or by e-mail at Aakash.Bhatt@va.gov.

I appreciate your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Eric K. Shinseki", is written over a light blue horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Eric K. Shinseki