

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 29, 2013

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

We are writing to request a meeting to discuss the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs campus and your pledge to develop supportive housing for homeless veterans in Los Angeles.

In 2010, you committed to developing three buildings on the West Los Angeles VA campus for long term supportive housing for homeless veterans. While we appreciate your dedication to this project, to date, none of the buildings have been completed. The groundbreaking for one of the three buildings designated for homeless services, Building 209, has only just taken place, and renovations for Buildings 208 and 205 have yet to be funded. A timely completion of these projects is vital to ensuring our veterans receive the services they deserve.

As you are aware, Los Angeles County has the largest homeless veteran population in the country and we are troubled by statistics illustrating the magnitude of this persistent problem in the region.

According to the recently released 2012 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Annual Homeless Assessment Report:

- There are an estimated 42,353 homeless individuals in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LACoC) and veterans make up 16.3 percent of the adult population of this total.
- Homeless veterans in Los Angeles account for 21 percent of homeless veterans in major cities, and more than 10 percent of homeless veterans nationwide.

It is important to note, however, that the 2012 Point in Time report for the LACoC only reflects an updated count of veterans in shelters; it does not include

an updated count of homeless veterans living on the streets. Considering that the 2012 report indicates that Los Angeles has the greatest number of chronically homeless individuals in the nation, and that chronically homeless veterans are more likely to be unsheltered than the general homeless population, *the inclusion of this data is critical to understanding the comprehensive veteran homelessness situation in the region.*

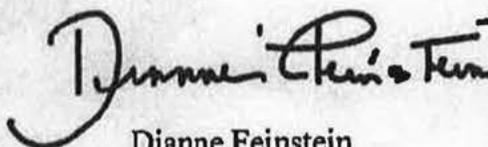
The most recent comprehensive study is the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Homeless Count in 2011, which indicates the following:

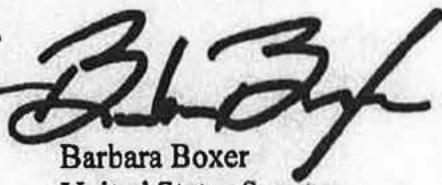
- Since 2009, there has been a three percent increase in homelessness and a 12 percent increase in chronic homelessness among veterans in Los Angeles County.
- Since 2009, veteran homelessness amongst women has increased 51 percent. Male veteran homelessness has increased by 22 percent.

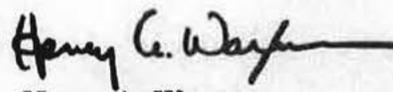
It is clear that leadership from your office is urgently needed to determine a new path forward.

In our meeting we will strongly urge you to assess the West Los Angeles VA projects as well as the HUD/VASH program to determine a more expedient path to provide essential resources for our veterans. Thank you for your consideration of our request and we look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,


Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator


Barbara Boxer
United States Senator


Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress