Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 13, 2011

The Honorable Eric Shinseki
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

The Honorable Jack Lew
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Secretary Shinseki and Director Lew:

We have been working with your organizations to provide housing for homeless veterans on the West Los Angeles campus for four years. While we appreciate the inclusion of this project in the President's FY 2012 budget, little progress has been made since then.

We write today to ask that you finalize the Department's request to Congress for construction projects, which includes a $20 million authorization for homeless projects on the West LA campus. Without this request, Congress cannot work to quickly authorize this critical project.

The failure to quickly address the high number of homeless veterans in Los Angeles has made it difficult for many of them to adjust to civilian life and cope with high rates of mental illness. These men and women sacrificed their well being for our safety, and it is incumbent upon us to rectify the poor conditions they face.

Further delay is unacceptable; without improvements on the West LA Campus our veterans will remain on the streets and our taxpayers may be forced to foot the bill to defend our inaction.

We look forward to your prompt response and working with you to defend our nation's most vulnerable veterans.

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Henry Waxman
Member of Congress