

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Washington, DC

July 19, 2011

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki  
Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

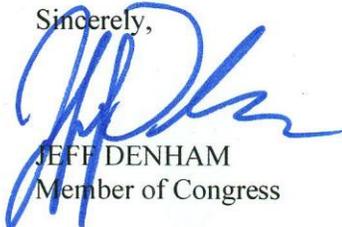
I write you today in regards to my concerns over the State of California's decision to delay the opening of both the Fresno and Redding Veteran Homes. As you know, California has been designated as a state of "great need" for Veteran housing and assistance by the Department of Veterans Affairs. During my tenure as Chairman of the California Senate Veterans Committee, I worked relentlessly to ensure that these two homes would be constructed and opened. Through my tireless efforts, I was able to have legislation and state bonds passed which established the cornerstone for which these vitally important homes could be built. Today, both homes have made great progress in their construction so that they can be completed and opened by April 2012.

Despite the hard work and persistence that has been put into opening these two Veteran Homes, the California State Legislature, under Governor Brown, recently passed a State budget that would delay the opening of both the Fresno and the Redding Veteran Homes for up to a year. This delay would prevent 450 Veterans from having access to housing that the State and Federal Government have promised to them. Additionally, this decision has placed the financial crisis of California on the backs of our Veterans. Even during the direst of economic times our Armed Forces have always been ready to defend and fight for our country. We must make sure that we never turn our back on these brave men and women, even during our current financial crisis.

I strongly encourage you to uphold the Memorandum of Agreement sent to you by the Acting Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) on March 9, 2011. In provision 8, the Memorandum states that the CDVA agrees, upon the completion of the project, that it will open at least eight beds per month until the project area is filled. I ask that you strictly enforce this provision to ensure that the State of California begins to immediately fill the homes once construction has been completed. Additionally, I encourage you to swiftly provide the CDVA with the funding promised to the State under the Federal Home Grant Program.

As an Air Force Veteran and an elected official, I understand the importance California's Veteran Homes and the services they provide. We must never forget the commitment we have promised to our Veterans. I urge for the swift opening of the Fresno and Redding Veteran Homes. I look forward to working with you and for your response on how the Department of Veterans Affairs will be addressing the State of California's decision to delay the opening of these crucially important Veteran Homes.

Sincerely,



JEFF DENHAM  
Member of Congress