

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 15, 2011

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

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

We write to express our deep concern about the findings of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) regarding its inspection of the VA Regional Office (VARO) of New York.

According to the OIG's July 28th, 2011 report, the VARO is averaging 257.1 days to complete compensation claims, a considerable 82 days more than the national target of 175 days. The accuracy of the processing of these claims is also disappointing, at 75.1 percent, it is well below the 90 percent target set by the Veterans Benefits Administration. The OIG report also specifically cited the need for the New York VARO to improve the control and accuracy of processing temporary 100 percent disability evaluations, TBI residual-disability claims, and PTSD claims.

With so many troops returning everyday from Afghanistan and Iraq, we are greatly concerned that the New York VARO may not be performing at the level our veteran constituents need. While the New York VARO Director concurred with the OIG's findings, we would like to know how the VA and the VARO will correct the shortcomings as well as implement the recommendations in the OIG report.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you review both the available resources and processes now in place at the New York VARO and develop a written plan to address NY VARO's need for improvement. We thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to your prompt reply.

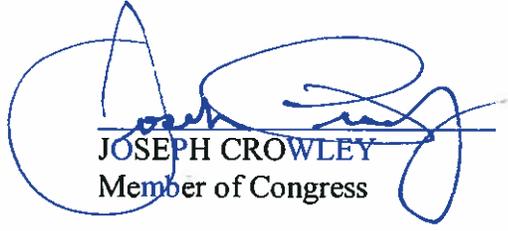
Sincerely,


GARY L. ACKERMAN
Member of Congress


TIMOTHY H. BISHOP
Member of Congress



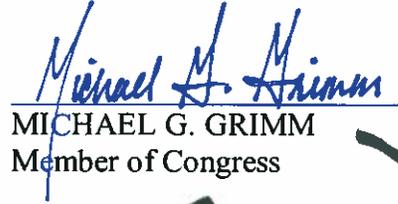
YVETTE D. CLARKE
Member of Congress



JOSEPH CROWLEY
Member of Congress



ELIOT L. ENGEL
Member of Congress



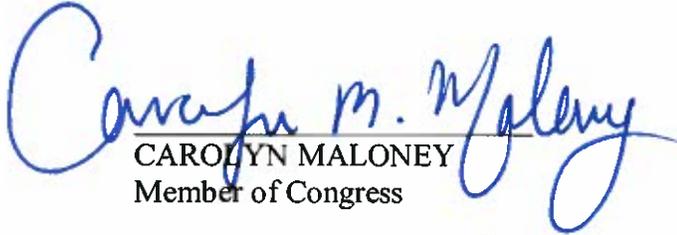
MICHAEL G. GRIMM
Member of Congress



STEVE ISRAEL
Member of Congress



PETER T. KING
Member of Congress



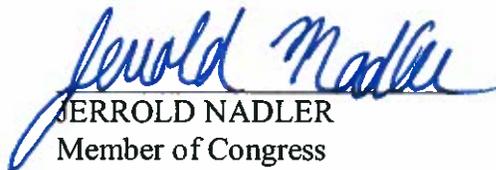
CAROLYN MALONEY
Member of Congress



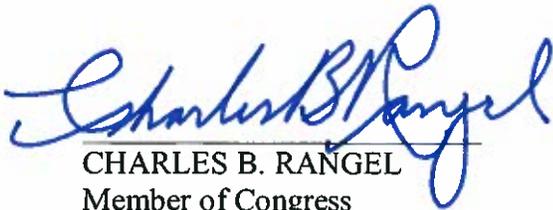
CAROLYN McCARTHY
Member of Congress



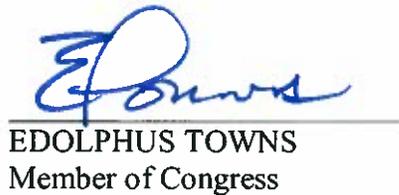
GREGORY W. MEEKS
Member of Congress



JERROLD NADLER
Member of Congress



CHARLES B. RANGEL
Member of Congress



EDOLPHUS TOWNS
Member of Congress