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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0905

December 22, 2011

Secretary Eric K. Shinseki
Department Of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave Nw
Washington, DC 20420-0001

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

While working a case on behalf of one of my constituents, a member of my staff learned it is taking over a year for veterans to be scheduled for a Compensation and Pension (C&P) examination to help support their VA claim or appeal.

Making veterans wait to be scheduled for these exams only delays their pending claim or appeal. Some of these C&P exams are for mental health (PTSD) claims that are critical cases.

Also, while the constituent who my office has been working with in this case is a veteran who served during the 1950's, I am sincerely concerned about our warriors returning home from the present conflicts overseas. As the father of three sons currently serving in the military, two of whom recently returned home from Iraq, it is unconscionable to think that these veterans are going to be forced to wait over a year for a scheduled appointment with a psychiatrist and for their C&P exam.

My office did learn that these appointments are scheduled automatically in the computer system and if my office comes across a veteran with this problem, to send the information and they will work them as top priority, getting them scheduled sooner. My worry is that those veterans who do not come to their congressional representative still have a long wait time for their C&P appointment.

I will be working with my colleagues who are serving on the Veterans' Affairs Committee to improve these wait times, but in the meantime I would like to know the steps your office is taking to work with the Orlando VAMC on this problem. I thank you for your work on behalf of our nation's proud veterans, and I look forward to your response by January 5, 2011.

Sincerely,

