



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

December 18, 2011

The Honorable Kathy Castor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Castor:

This is in response to your letter regarding the Florida National Guard Fort Homer Hesterly Armory in Tampa, Florida.

In my previous letter dated September 30, 2011, I indicated that the potential of the Armory as a site for delivering health care services to Veterans was being assessed as part of VA's fiscal year (FY) 2013 Strategic Capital Investment Process (SCIP). As part of that process, Ms. Kathleen Fogarty, Director, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital (JAH), recently conducted an internal review of the proposed acquisition of the Fort Homer Hesterly Armory. On October 19, 2011, Ms. Fogarty determined that the JAH Veterans' Hospital will not pursue this acquisition due to the extreme cost to renovate, and current interest in the site by another entity.

While VA will not assess the site in our FY 2013 SCIP, we will continue to review Veteran accessibility to services in West Tampa as well as future opportunities for an outreach clinic in that area.

The JAH Veterans' Hospital does have several clinic expansions progressing in the Tampa area. The Hillsborough County Outpatient Clinic is planned for the City of Brandon and is expected to be activated in FY 2014. Also, a Primary Care Annex in Tampa is expected to be completed near the end of FY 2014. These facilities are in your Congressional district and will provide your constituents increased access to VA services.

Should you have any questions, please have a member of your staff contact Mr. Tim Embree, Congressional Relations Officer, at timothy.embree@va.gov or (202) 461-5552.

Thank you for your continued support of our Nation's Veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Eric K. Shinseki", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Eric K. Shinseki