

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2022

The Honorable David S. Ferriero
Archivist of the United States
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Dear Mr. Ferriero,

We write on behalf of our constituents and veterans across the nation who are being severely impacted by the unacceptable delay in responding to requests for assistance by the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), an agency of the National Archives and Records Administration. In your October 2021 letter to Congressional leadership, you restated your commitment to eliminating the backlog, restoring the NPRC's pre-pandemic response times, and re-instating on-site staffing reduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, on January 10, 2022, NARA officials communicated that the NPRC has reverted to a 25% in-person staff, leaving even more veterans in the same position they were almost two years ago. We ask that you immediately bring NPRC back to full capacity and inform Members of Congress on your plans to operate in a timely manner.

The NPRC is responsible for an array of veteran services. For some veterans, there may not be an alternative service for accessing military records required by various federal and civilian agencies. Additionally, veterans and their families often request replacements for military service medals when they bury a loved one, find that the medal has become tarnished or when the medal is destroyed or lost. Normally, this simple request is filled within a reasonable timeframe. Now, veterans may wait up to 18 months. Also, veterans have reported difficulty in receiving documents needed to obtain Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical care or disability compensation. Despite a declaration on the NPRC's website that emergency requests associated with medical treatments will be processed, hundreds of thousands of veterans report waiting for the records needed to access medical care for health issues. As the NPRC continues to cite health precautions for not being fully staffed, our veterans suffer from health issues that need immediate attention.

The most glaring discrepancy is the neglect of the NPRC in processing critical request for copies of DD-214 forms. The NPRC's website declares that 45% staffing would enable it to resume service on routine requests for DD-214s, yet many veterans remain unable to access this form.

DD-214s are essential for a myriad of critical services. For example, some veterans have been unable to obtain the VA home loans due to long delays in receiving DD-214s. More significantly, veterans have been denied their appropriate retirement pay levels due to not being able to demonstrate their military service for federal retirement consideration. We all know that our veterans put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms. While the NPRC employees have yet to miss a paycheck, the veterans they serve have been denied access to documents that have a significant impact on their financial livelihood.

In your October 2021 letter, you stated that your goal for November was to reach approximately 75 % of on-site personnel through skeleton schedules. The NPRC is back tracking once again on this promise by decreasing in-person staff. At the very least, the NPRC should be at 100% of its former capacity if it is to effectively do its job and adequately serve those who have served us. We request that you report on your plan to re-open the NPRC to full capacity and remediate its backlog in a briefing open to all Members of the House of Representatives. Please make arrangements to schedule this briefing no later than February 7, 2022. To schedule the briefing, please contact Rep. Fred Keller's staff at Kevin.OKeefe@mail.house.gov (202-225-3731), Rep. Cliff Bentz's staff at Abigail.Michos@mail.house.gov (202- 225-5774), or Ranking Member Mike Bost's staff at Katherine.Smith@mail.house.gov (202-225-3527).

Sincerely,



Cliff Bentz
Member of Congress



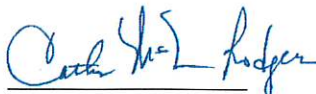
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Ranking Member
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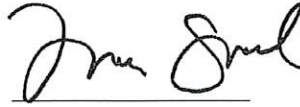
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Jackie Walorski
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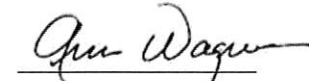
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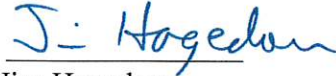
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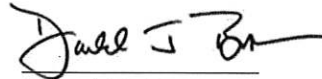
Brian Babin, D.D.S.
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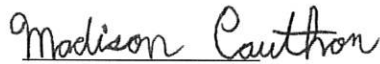
Brett Guthrie
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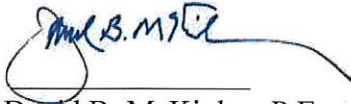
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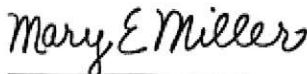
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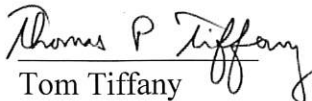
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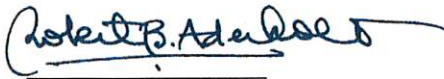


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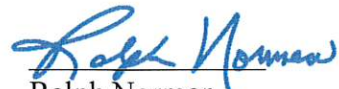

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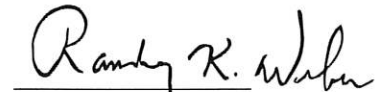

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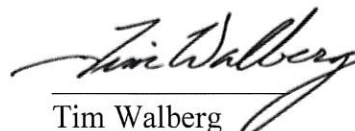

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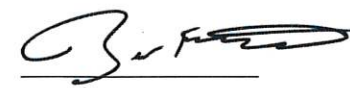

Randy Weber
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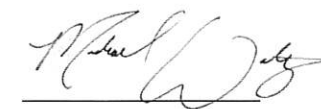

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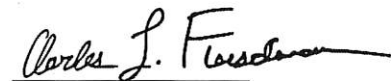
Frank Lucas
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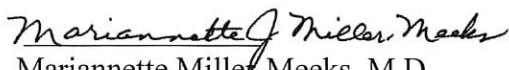
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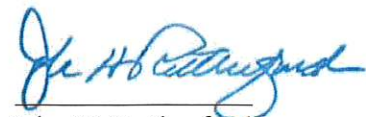
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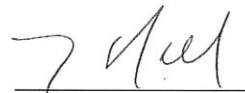
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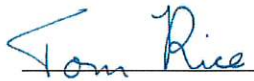
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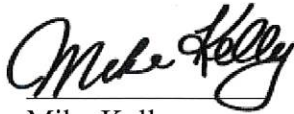
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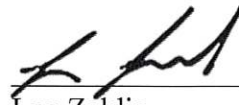
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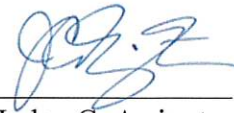
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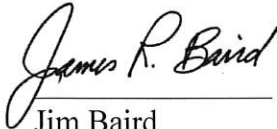
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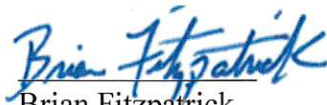
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