

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 23, 2016

The Honorable Robert McDonald  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420

The Honorable Sloan Gibson  
Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary McDonald and Deputy Secretary Gibson:

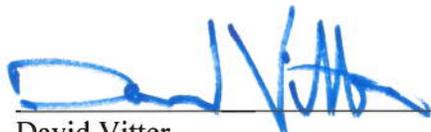
We write to you today with extraordinary frustration concerning the VA's recent announcement that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) permanent community-based outpatient clinic (CBOC) in Lake Charles, Louisiana, is being delayed yet again. This is completely unacceptable. Southwest Louisiana veterans have waited years for this clinic to become a reality and we are deeply disappointed to hear they will now have to wait even longer for this facility.

After years of ridiculous delays and bureaucracy, the VA finally announced a lease award for the Lake Charles CBOC in late September 2015. We would like to remind you that this lease was originally supposed to be awarded in February 2015. In a phone call late yesterday evening, officials from the Alexandria VA Health Care System, as well as from Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 16, communicated to our offices that the delay of the Lake Charles CBOC is due to an easement issue between the lessor and an adjacent property owner. We believe the VA owes Louisiana veterans a far more detailed explanation regarding the contracting processes that have led to this point, and we request an immediate call with you to discuss this urgent matter.

When the VA announces lease awards and construction timelines, our veterans have earned and deserve the ability to rely on that information. Significant issues with repeated clinic delays, deficient specialty care services, wait times and claims delays have existed within the VA in Louisiana for years.

We request your immediate attention.

Sincerely,



David Vitter  
United States Senator



Charles W. Boustany, Jr., M.D.  
Member of Congress