

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1314

May 16, 2014

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

Recent allegations regarding secret lists concealing long patient wait times for appointments at a VA hospital in Phoenix -- delays that may have been responsible for the deaths of up to 40 veterans -- are unconscionable. I fully expect the Inspector General to undertake a thorough and complete investigation into this matter.

Unfortunately, similar accusations of secret lists have arisen involving the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital in suburban Chicago, a facility utilized by many veterans throughout northern Illinois, including in the 14th Congressional District which I represent. Such allegations are gravely troubling in and of themselves, but they cause me particular concern given the fact that the director of the Phoenix facility that is the subject of the current investigation previously served as director of the Hines VA Hospital.

Although I am aware of no specific evidence outside these allegations to indicate secret lists were used at Hines, the allegations themselves, coupled with the fact that the same director has led both the Phoenix and Hines hospitals, to my mind is disconcerting enough to justify an expansion of the federal investigation. Therefore, I am requesting that you broaden the Inspector General's inquiry to include the Hines VA Hospital.

As you can appreciate, our nation's veterans have served selflessly and sacrificed much in the service of this country. They deserve the best health care our nation can provide them. When we as a nation fall short on that commitment, they deserve answers and an assurance that things will be made right. I appreciate your attention to my request as well as your dedication and service to our nation's veterans.

Sincerely,



Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress (IL-14)