

Dec. 14, 2011

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-11) and a bipartisan group of Valley Congressmen wrote to President Barack Obama, asking him to fast track funding for the construction of the planned VA clinic in San Joaquin County. Approximately 900 jobs will be created by this new clinic. Currently, veterans in San Joaquin County must often travel to Livermore or Palo Alto to receive basic medical services.

“Our veterans have risked their lives for our freedom. Now that the location has been decided, making sure that the new outpatient clinic and community living center in San Joaquin County is built as quickly as possible is the least we can do for these men and women. To force veterans and their families to drive several hours for basic medical services is unacceptable,” said Rep. McNerney.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) plan lists the project as a top 20 priority for construction. Ensuring that the funding and paperwork have been streamlined will help guarantee the prompt opening of the clinic.

“By cutting bureaucratic red tape, federal officials can expedite the construction of the medical facility. It is our duty to make sure that our veterans have the services they need and deserve,” said Rep. McNerney.

Representatives Cardoza (CA-18) and Denham (CA-19) joined McNerney in signing the letter.

“In San Joaquin County, the 900 jobs this project will create will be a great boost for our local economy. The Administration needs to make sure that we put people to work as quickly as we can, and this project will do just that,” said Rep. McNerney.

To see the signed letter click [here](#) .

Full text of the letter is below:

December 14, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

We are writing to bring your attention to a critically important issue for veterans in California. Earlier this year the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reached a final decision on the location of a new community based outpatient clinic and community living center in San Joaquin County, CA. We are pleased the VA reached a final decision, and we request your personal commitment to making sure that the new facilities are constructed as quickly as possible.

Bringing new medical facilities to San Joaquin County will benefit veterans throughout the greater Central Valley region and create hundreds of jobs in an area hit hard by these difficult economic times. According to information we have received from the VA, construction is likely to begin in 2013 or 2014, and operations are expected to start in 2018. We understand that designing such facilities is time consuming, and we believe that the VA should take every step to ensure that San Joaquin veterans receive medical care of the highest quality. However, we write to insist that everything possible be done to expedite this schedule.

Veterans from the Central Valley often travel hours to see a doctor, having to go as far away as Palo Alto to receive basic services. The new San Joaquin facilities are badly needed, and any delays in commencing construction would be unacceptable. Furthermore, in an area with tens of thousands of veterans and high unemployment, this new facility will provide 900 jobs and a tremendous economic benefit to the community. Timely construction of the new VA outpatient clinic and living center is critical.

Placing a new facility in the Central Valley is a top priority for the VA. In fact, the VA Strategic

Capital Investment Plan lists the project as a top 20 priority for construction. When producing future budget requests and any other relevant planning documents, we encourage your administration to prioritize the development and construction of the new VA medical facilities in San Joaquin County. Good planning that allows construction funds to be available upon completion of the schematic and design stages will facilitate a smooth and efficient process and serve the best interests of California's veterans.

We thank you for your work on behalf of our nation's veterans. We ask that your administration provide us with regular updates on progress the VA is making on this matter, and we look forward to working with you moving forward.

Sincerely,

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Dennis Cardoza
Member of Congress

Jeff Denham
Member of Congress