

*VA Clinic Will Have the Personal Attention of the Secretary*

*Feb. 3, 2012*

*Washington, D.C.* – At a meeting with Secretary Eric Shinseki and other top officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Rep. Jerry McNerney laid out several of his top priorities and asked for the Secretary's support. Rep. McNerney has made improving the services our veterans rely on one of his prominent initiatives. He was successful in bringing a new medical facility to San Joaquin County, which was a large part of his conversation with the Secretary.

"Today, I met with Secretary Shinseki to discuss what we need to be doing for our veterans. One of my highest priorities for the veterans in our region is to expedite the construction of the facility in San Joaquin County. Secretary Shinseki assured me that the matter will have his personal attention.

"Right now, some of our veterans have to travel hours to receive the care that they need. The new facility will make medical services more accessible to our veterans. And the construction of the center will bring 900 jobs to San Joaquin County-- jobs that we desperately need in our community.

"I also discussed the lackluster action of the VA in regards to a key part of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act. While some areas are being properly attended to, we must make sure that all of our veterans have access to the services they depend on. To let a single veteran fall through the cracks is unacceptable.

In October, Rep. McNerney wrote to Secretary Shinseki to call his attention to the provisions of the bill that are not being properly implemented by the VA. Specifically, the law calls on the VA to develop a program on readjustment and mental health care for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families. It also allows the VA to contract with community medical providers to implement the program.

“The brave men and women of our Armed Forces have sacrificed and fought to protect our way of life. We have a responsibility to provide them with the services they have earned. As the Ranking Member of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee of the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, I take that responsibility very seriously, and providing for our veterans will continue to be one of my top priorities.”