

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 14, 2009

The Honorable James Peake
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

General Eric Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs designee
Obama-Biden Presidential Transition
Headquarters
451 6th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Secretary Peake and General Shinseki:

We are writing to express our strong support for expanding veterans' medical services in San Joaquin County, CA, specifically at the site of the existing French Camp clinic. The Department of Veterans Affairs is working to establish a new nursing home and expanded medical facility in California's Central Valley, and we are aware that the VA has chosen consultants to help select a county and final location for the new facilities.

French Camp, which is already home to a heavily-used VA outpatient clinic, is an ideal site for an expanded treatment center and nursing home. The site clearly meets or exceeds the selection criteria established by the VA, which include local veteran demographics, site accessibility, and proximity to a hospital.

San Joaquin County alone is home to more than 42,000 veterans. These veterans and the staff working at the facility will have easy access to the site, which rests at the hub of major roadway access in the Central Valley. The facility is located at the nexus of two major freeways, Interstate 5, California's principal north-south corridor, and Interstate 205, which offers ready access to the Bay Area and other medical facilities in the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, should such a transfer be required. Additionally, the French Camp location is near major east-west thoroughfares, including Routes 120, 4, 88 and 26. Nearby Calaveras and Amador counties have therefore formally endorsed the French Camp site as the ideal location to serve their veteran communities.

French Camp also offers access to advanced medical services. The facility enjoys a working relationship with, and is adjacent to, the San Joaquin General Hospital. San Joaquin General recently expanded into a 246,000 square-foot, state of the art hospital, and will be able to satisfy the medical needs of thousands of patients. Furthermore, San Joaquin County has made a generous offer to provide land to the VA, and the county has been flexible in its offer to satisfy VA selection criteria. The county's generosity and flexibility is a testament to the type of relationship that would continue if the site is selected.

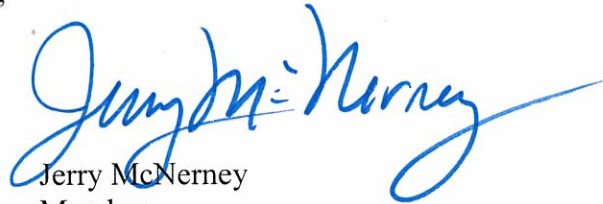
America's veterans made a solemn promise by wearing the uniform of the United States and serving in harm's way overseas. We owe it to them to do everything we can to

provide adequate health care when they return home. Veterans in California's Central Valley deserve French Camp to be selected as the location for a new medical center and nursing home.

Sincerely,



Bob Filner
Chairman
Committee on Veterans' Affairs



Jerry McNerney
Member
Committee on Veterans' Affairs