



In Iowa's Interest:

Logging our 100,000th Constituent Case

by Senator Tom Harkin

Recently, my office reached a remarkable milestone: we logged our 100,000th constituent case in Iowa. This means that my staff has had the privilege of helping Iowans 100,000 times with concerns before federal and state agencies over the 28 years that I have served in the Senate.

We've worked hard to ensure that all qualified Iowans have access to decent housing, veterans benefits, Social Security and Medicare, and military medals that veterans earned but never received.

This milestone is a testament to the trust and faith you have placed in my office. And it says a lot about the dedication of my staffers, who pride themselves on being a sympathetic ear to individual Iowans, and who work tirelessly to resolve the concerns of ordinary folks who need a helping hand.

Over the years, we've helped farmers with issues related to conservation programs and crop insurance. We've helped to speed up responses to questions about Medicare billing or payment disputes. We've made special requests to federal agencies to review calculations about housing assistance and to expedite passport requests.

We spent years looking into the case of a retired employee of the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant in Middletown, who wrote to me regarding a cancer diagnosis that appeared after his years at the plant. We dug deeper, talking to the Army and Department of Energy, and eventually secured compensation for thousands of eligible former workers or their surviving family members.

Following the Haitian earthquake two years ago, my office helped families in Pella who were adopting children. After expediting their visas and helping to get the families to Haiti, the children were united with their new, adopted families.

I mentioned our work helping countless Iowans to receive military medals owed to them. One family in Cedar Rapids received their father's World War I medals, another in Grundy Center got their father's World War II medals.

We do everything humanly possible to resolve a case for a constituent. If we've exhausted all possibilities at the federal level, we make referrals to city or county agencies, as well as to local non-profits so that Iowans know all of their options and have access to every possible resource.

I'd like to thank those of you who have reached out to my staff for assistance over the years. And I encourage any Iowan who has a concern with the federal government to contact one of my offices across the state – in Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Davenport, Dubuque, or Sioux City – either by phone or by visiting my website www.harkin.senate.gov.

We are here to serve you. And we consider it an honor and privilege to do so.