United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 16, 2015

The Honorable Robert McDonald
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary McDonald:

We write to you today to express our deep concern over the reprogramming proposals contained in the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) plan for completion of the Denver Replacement Medical Center which was publically released on June 5, 2015. In particular we are very disappointed that the VA proposed to reprogram $35 million from the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation (FVEC) fund which Congress created to recognize the dedicated service of the over 200,000 Filipinos who fought under the U.S. flag during World War II.

While the Senate was ultimately able to come up with a bill that provides additional flexibility to VA to transfer other monies, we remain concerned as to why the FVEC was proposed in the first place and also that VA may consider reprogramming funds from the FVEC in the future. The VA's June 5 plan did not contain an adequate explanation for the $150 million in reprogramming requests and we urge the VA to provide a more detailed justification for all reprogramming proposals in the future.

The fact the FVEC would be considered as a means to cover VA's mismanagement of a major construction project is an affront to those Filipino veterans who gave their lives in service to our nation and those Filipino veterans whose FVEC claims appeals are still pending. We understand VA has the authority to reprogram the FVEC funds without the approval of Congress but ask that in the future, should such proposals be sent to Congress for consideration, that detailed justification is provided. In addition, we view it as essential that any reprogramming request of FVEC funds include a plan for VA to replenish those funds.

As strong supporters of all of our nation's veterans, we look forward to working with you to ensure our commitments to them are kept. We would appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator

HARRY REID
United States Senator

DEAN HELLER
United States Senator