



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

July 29, 2014

The Honorable John Mica
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Mica:

This is in response to your letter regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Lake Baldwin VA Outpatient Clinic in Orlando, Florida.

VA has completed an analysis of our capacity to support the current and projected Veteran population estimates. The original space requirement for the new medical center at Lake Nona was based on a projected increase in outpatient clinic stops, from 387,215 to 623,082 by the year 2023. However, the current workload already exceeds projected workload, with 655,204 outpatient clinic stops recorded in fiscal year (FY) 2013, and the volume is expected to grow when the new Orlando VA Medical Center opens. Additionally, the maximum number of enrollees was previously estimated at 113,000; however, new projections indicate that number will approach 126,520 by 2018.

Based on results from a full review of all Orlando Veterans' health programs, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 8 officials predict that the new Lake Nona VA medical complex will not be able to support all the necessary requirements for the increase in demand. This and other factors, such as the significant increased amount of Compensation and Pension examinations and expanded Mental Health programs, has resulted in additional space needs above what will be available at the new Orlando Medical Center. While the new Medical Center does have expansion capability, there will be an immediate need for additional space that will be re-evaluated on a regular basis after the new Medical Center opens. Therefore, I am approving VISN 8's request to sustain outpatient health care services at the Lake Baldwin VA Outpatient Clinic.

VA is committed to providing outstanding health care to our Veterans in the Orlando area. Should you have additional questions, please have a member of your staff contact Mr. Omar Boulware, Congressional Relations Officer, at (202) 461-6468 or by email at Omara.Boulware@va.gov.

Thank you for your continued support of mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sloan D. Gibson", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Sloan D. Gibson
Acting Secretary