Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2014

Richard J. Griffin
Acting Inspector General
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Mr. Griffin,

We are writing to express our concern over recent allegations that employees at the North Central Federal Clinic in San Antonio, Texas, as well as the Austin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic and the Waco Veterans Affairs Medical Center, manipulated medical appointment data in order to conceal long wait times for veterans seeking care.

An employee of the VA who has recently worked at all three of these facilities claims that he and others were directed by supervisors to ensure that wait times for veterans were as "close to zero days as possible." To achieve this, employees falsely logged patients' desired appointment dates to closely coincide with appointment openings. But in reality, veterans were left waiting for months. This policy of falsifying medical records is dishonest, deceptive, and injurious to veterans.

The VA facilities in question serve tens of thousands of veterans in San Antonio, Austin, Waco and the surrounding communities. These brave men and women served their country admirably and they deserve the highest standard of medical care and family support services available. Anything less is unacceptable.

The allegations of mismanagement and deception by the VA are especially troubling because of reports that at least 40 veterans died while waiting to receive care in Phoenix. Swift action must be taken to protect the health and well-being of our nation's veterans.

We understand that your office has staff in San Antonio reviewing these allegations. However, we want to make sure that your office is investigating the potential misconduct that may also have affected veterans seeking care in Waco and Austin.

We ask that you expeditiously and thoroughly investigate the claims regarding misconduct at these VA facilities and report your findings back to Congress. Any individuals found to have engaged in misconduct or mismanagement must face serious consequences.

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Sincerely,

Lamar Smith
Member of Congress

Jeb Hensarling
Member of Congress

Bill Flores
Member of Congress

Michael McCaul
Member of Congress

Blake Farenthold
Member of Congress

John Culberson
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress

John Carter
Member of Congress

Michael Burgess
Member of Congress

Randy Weber
Member of Congress

Kay Granger
Member of Congress

Roger Williams
Member of Congress

Joe Barton
Member of Congress

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress

Pete Olson
Member of Congress

Mike Conaway
Member of Congress

Ralph Hall
Member of Congress

Sam Johnson
Member of Congress

Ted Poe
Member of Congress

Randy Neugebauer
Member of Congress

Kenny Marchant
Member of Congress

Kevin Brady
Member of Congress

Pete Gallego
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Mac Thornberry
Member of Congress