

SANDY ADAMS  
24TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

June 6, 2012

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Hon. Eric Shinseki  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

I write to you today in regards to the ongoing troubles with the construction of the new VA Orlando Medical Center in my congressional district in Lake Nona. As you are undoubtedly aware, this facility has been plagued by delays and experienced major deficiencies in both management and planning, a fact which took your department until late last year to report to Congress. This lack of communication and the inability of VA to perform the most basic functions of a construction project of this magnitude is incredibly distressing to me.

On May 18, 2012 VA released a "fact sheet" to interested parties about the progress of the project (attached). While I have concerns with many of the statements in this particular memo, I am writing to you today to get a clear and definitive answer on the completion date of this vital project. In the aforementioned memo your department stated, "The new Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Orlando Medical Center, originally projected to complete construction by October 2012, is delayed until summer of 2013 at the earliest." This statement is troubling to me because according to Brasfield and Gorrie - the prime contractor on the project - 15 days prior to the release of this memo the VA had signed off on extensions of 574 days.

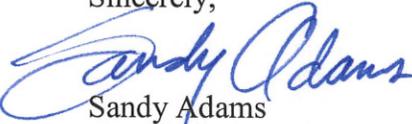
According to notes from a meeting on May 3, 2012 - 15 days prior to your "fact sheet" - following the submission of 200 open schedule changes by the VA, your Department agreed to project extensions of at least 574 days. These extensions result in a project completion date of no earlier than April 2014. How is it possible that VA believes it is proper to release a memo to members of the United States Congress that underestimates the completion date of the project by nearly a full year, when not 15 days prior you had signed off on extensions putting the date well into 2014? I am left to believe that the Department of Veterans Affairs does not believe it is a priority to keep members of Congress properly informed about a project that represents what should be a fulfillment of the promise we have made as a nation to our men and women in uniform.

It is incumbent upon you as the leader of the Department of Veterans Affairs to release accurate information to members of Congress about this project. Given the clear discrepancy between

your memo of May 18 and the statement by the prime contractor that the VA had 15 days previously signed extensions until 2014, I expect an updated official completion date estimate from the Department of Veterans Affairs by close of business on Friday, June 8, 2012.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sandy Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sandy" being more prominent and larger than the last name "Adams".

Sandy Adams  
Member of Congress

**FACT SHEET**  
**Orlando VA Medical Center Construction Update**  
**May 18, 2012**

**Summary:**

The new Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Orlando Medical Center, originally projected to complete construction by October 2012, is delayed until summer of 2013 at the earliest. This is due to several factors including errors and omissions in the original design, equipment coordination and design issues, and contractor related issues. No official date for completion has been agreed upon; however, VA is working collaboratively with the prime contractor to get construction completed as soon as practicable.

**Facts:**

- VA is committed to completing the Orlando VA Medical Center as soon as possible.
- The hospital and clinic buildings are approximately 60 percent complete.
- Veterans can be encouraged that during this time the medical center design has been changed to accommodate the most recent medical technology and equipment currently available and will be part of the medical center once it is complete.
- The VA's Office of Construction and Facilities Management assumed custody of the Central Energy Plant effective March 12, 2012. The warehouse and parking structures are complete and accepted by VA. The 120-bed community living center and chapel will be completed in the near future. The 60-bed domiciliary is complete and the Medical Center has started its initial activation activities.
- When complete, the \$665 million facility will be 1.2 million square feet on 65 acres as part of the Lake Nona Medical City complex.

**Ongoing Actions:** Further steps are underway to minimize delays.

- VA and the A/E firm have committed additional resources to the project to insure that any requests for information or design clarifications from the contractor are responded to in a timely manner.
- The A/E met its accelerated delivery of project design modifications for medical equipment agreed to in a January meeting on March 19, 2012.

- The 8-week partial suspension to the Diagnostic & Treatment (D&T) area was lifted effective March 16, 2012. Brasfield & Gorrie (B&G) was directed to remobilize its workforce and resume work in the D&T portion of the hospital.
- With acceptance of the warehouse, new VA equipment for installation and activation can be delivered and accepted on site for the entire facility.
- The contractor was to provide an updated construction schedule with the medical equipment information by April 30, 2012. As of May 18, 2012, VA has not received the updated schedule.
- Work is essentially complete on the hospital super roof and continues on the lower building roofs; however, work on the lower roofs has stalled and VA has issued Notices of Deficiency to B&G to rectify this critical activity.
- B&G advised it was restarting work in the clinic area as of March 26, 2012; however, capacity has not increased appreciably and still appears insufficient.
- VA continues to work collaboratively with B&G to answer questions they may have.

Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction  
May 18, 2012