



AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

July 26, 2012

The Honorable Michael Michaud
United States Representative
1724 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Michaud,

On behalf of the American Counseling Association (ACA), I am writing to thank you for your efforts on behalf of counselors seeking employment in the VA. ACA is the nation's largest non-profit membership organization representing the counseling profession, including licensed professional mental health counselors.

Your letter to Secretary Shinseki shines a light on a growing problem that has resulted in our nation's veterans getting short-changed on their care and treatment. Since Congress passed P.L. 109-461 in 2006, the American Counseling Association has been working and waiting for the Department of Veterans Affairs to open their doors to counselors so that we can help give our nation's veterans the help and care that they need and deserve.

Sadly, since 2006 we have still been shut-out of the process and while the number of veterans seeking treatment has grown, the VA has failed to keep up with the demand for treatment.

Your efforts will help all of us to better understand what the VA is and is not doing in regards to placing counselors in VA facilities, and making them available to returning service members who need help in treating their invisible wounds of war.

We thank you for standing up for counselors and fighting for our veterans. Your work is to be commended and we look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

Richard Yep, CAE, FASAE
Executive Director and CEO
American Counseling Association