

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2009

The Honorable Eric Shinseki
Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

Thank you for playing an instrumental role in bringing a new, state-of-the-art VA medical center to Aurora, Colorado. This long overdue facility will provide critical medical services to veterans in Colorado and throughout the western United States.

It is our understanding the new Aurora VA Medical Center will not include a PTSD Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (PRRTP) due to certain downsizing requirements. The current Denver VA Medical Center has an established, nationally recognized PRRTP program providing residential PTSD treatment for up to 19 patients. Since 1992, over 2,000 veterans have received care through this program, and the residential treatment program continues to see significant increases in OEF/OIF veterans and active duty patients seeking treatment.

The VISN-19 and the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System recently submitted a request for emergency minor construction funding for a new PTSD residential treatment facility to be built on the new Aurora VA Medical Center campus. This funding would help maintain the breadth of essential services available to veterans receiving care in the region. The proposed plans for the new PRRTP facility will also better serve female patients by dedicating five residential beds. Currently, female patients must travel out-of-state for residential treatment, resulting in separation from their local support group.

We urge you to support this request for funds to build a new PRRTP facility on the new Aurora Medical Center campus. The strain of multiple deployments on our armed services more than justifies the need for this facility to help these men and women better cope and reduce the symptoms affecting their mental health.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Please do not hesitate to call upon us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



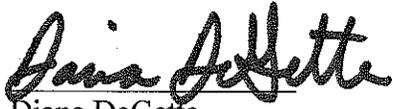
Ed Perlmutter

Member of Congress

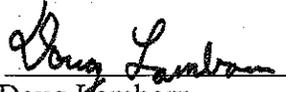


Mike Coffman

Member of Congress



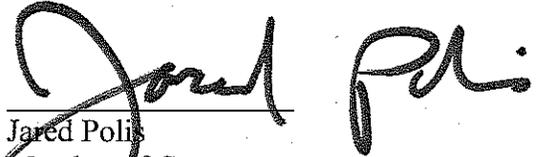
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



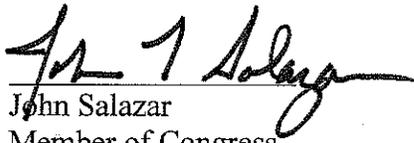
Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Betsy Markey
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
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John Salazar
Member of Congress



Mark Udall
United States Senator



Michael Bennet
United States Senator