



W. A. DREW EDMONDSON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF OKLAHOMA

July 23, 2009

The Honorable Eric Shinseki  
U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

It was with great distress that I recently learned of a policy change being implemented by your agency that will, in effect, imprison the residents of our nation's veterans' centers.

It is disturbing indeed to think that our government is seeking, in any way, to revoke the individual freedom of the brave men and women who have fought for freedom for all.

As I understand your policy, residents of veterans' centers will now only be permitted to spend 12 days annually outside of the facility in which they reside – the equivalent of one weekend a month for only six months. Their other option is to risk losing their permanent place of residence.

Spending the equivalent of six weekends per year with family certainly should not call into question the necessity of a permanent residence for our veterans. We have discussed this matter with Oklahoma Secretary of Veterans Affairs Norman Lamb, a veteran of the U.S. Army, who agrees this new policy should not be implemented.

As a Vietnam veteran and as a proud American, I humbly request that you correct this most egregious error.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. A. Edmondson".

W. A. DREW EDMONDSON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL