January 24, 2022

The Honorable David S. Ferriero  
Archivist of the United States  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Dear Mr. Ferriero,

We write on behalf of our constituents and veterans across the nation who are being severely impacted by the unacceptable delay in responding to requests for assistance by the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), an agency of the National Archives and Records Administration. In your October 2021 letter to Congressional leadership, you restated your commitment to eliminating the backlog, restoring the NPRC’s pre-pandemic response times, and re-instating on-site staffing reduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, on January 10, 2022, NARA officials communicated that the NPRC has reverted to a 25% in-person staff, leaving even more veterans in the same position they were almost two years ago. We ask that you immediately bring NPRC back to full capacity and inform Members of Congress on your plans to operate in a timely manner.

The NPRC is responsible for an array of veteran services. For some veterans, there may not be an alternative service for accessing military records required by various federal and civilian agencies. Additionally, veterans and their families often request replacements for military service medals when they bury a loved one, find that the medal has become tarnished or when the medal is destroyed or lost. Normally, this simple request is filled within a reasonable timeframe. Now, veterans may wait up to 18 months. Also, veterans have reported difficulty in receiving documents needed to obtain Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical care or disability compensation. Despite a declaration on the NPRC’s website that emergency requests associated with medical treatments will be processed, hundreds of thousands of veterans report waiting for the records needed to access medical care for health issues. As the NPRC continues to cite health precautions for not being fully staffed, our veterans suffer from health issues that need immediate attention.

The most glaring discrepancy is the neglect of the NPRC in processing critical request for copies of DD-214 forms. The NPRC’s website declares that 45% staffing would enable it to resume service on routine requests for DD-214s, yet many veterans remain unable to access this form.
DD-214s are essential for a myriad of critical services. For example, some veterans have been unable to obtain the VA home loans due to long delays in receiving DD-214s. More significantly, veterans have been denied their appropriate retirement pay levels due to not being able to demonstrate their military service for federal retirement consideration. We all know that our veterans put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms. While the NPRC employees have yet to miss a paycheck, the veterans they serve have been denied access to documents that have a significant impact on their financial livelihood.

In your October 2021 letter, you stated that your goal for November was to reach approximately 75% of on-site personnel through skeleton schedules. The NPRC is backtracking once again on this promise by decreasing in-person staff. At the very least, the NPRC should be at 100% of its former capacity if it is to effectively do its job and adequately serve those who have served us. We request that you report on your plan to re-open the NPRC to full capacity and remediate its backlog in a briefing open to all Members of the House of Representatives. Please make arrangements to schedule this briefing no later than February 7, 2022. To schedule the briefing, please contact Rep. Fred Keller’s staff at Kevin.Keefe@mail.house.gov (202-225-3731), Rep. Cliff Bentz’s staff at Abigail.Michos@mail.house.gov (202-225-5774), or Ranking Member Mike Bost’s staff at Katherine.Smith@mail.house.gov (202-225-3527).

Sincerely,

Cliff Bentz
Member of Congress

Mike Bost
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

Rodney Davis
Member of Congress

Fred Keller
Member of Congress

Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress

Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress

Brian Mast
Member of Congress
Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress

Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress

Kat Cammack
Member of Congress

Guy Reschenthaler
Member of Congress

Steve Scalise
Member of Congress

Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress

Bill Johnson
Member of Congress

Dan Crenshaw
Member of Congress

Michelle Steel
Member of Congress

Maria Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress

Ted Budd
Member of Congress

Mike Gallagher
Member of Congress

Ann Wagner
Member of Congress

Barry Moore
Member of Congress

Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

Tom McClintock
Member of Congress
Brian Babin, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress

Brett Guthrie  
Member of Congress

Ashley Hinson  
Member of Congress

David B. McKinley, P.E.  
Member of Congress

Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress

William Timmons, IV  
Member of Congress

Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress

Mary E. Miller  
Member of Congress

Andy Biggs  
Member of Congress

Jim Hagedorn  
Member of Congress

Donald J. Bacon  
Member of Congress

Madison Cawthorn  
Member of Congress

Darrell Issa  
Member of Congress

Julia Letlow  
Member of Congress

Ben Cline  
Member of Congress

Lauren Boebert  
Member of Congress

Buddy Carter  
Member of Congress

Andrew Clyde  
Member of Congress
Tom Tiffany
Member of Congress

Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress

Andy Barr
Member of Congress

Robert Aderholt
Member of Congress

Yvette Herrell
Member of Congress

Gus Bilirakis
Member of Congress

W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress

Dan Meuser
Member of Congress

Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress

Ralph Norman
Member of Congress

Pete Stauber
Member of Congress

Randy K. Weber
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Beth Van Duyne
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Barry Loudermilk
Member of Congress

Tim Walberg
Member of Congress

Tim Burchett
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Randy Feenstra
Member of Congress

Michael Waltz
Member of Congress
Frank Lucas  
Member of Congress

Glenn Grothman 
Member of Congress

Eric A. "Rick" Crawford  
Member of Congress

Chuck Fleischmann  
Member of Congress

Mariannette M. Mica M.  
Member of Congress

Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress

John H. Rutherford 
Member of Congress

Bill Huizenga 
Member of Congress

Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Troy E. Nehls  
Member of Congress

Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress

Dusty Johnson  
Member of Congress

Victoria Spartz  
Member of Congress

Mike Johnson  
Member of Congress

Peter Meijer  
Member of Congress

Bill Posey  
Member of Congress

Debbie Lesko  
Member of Congress
John Moolenaar  
Member of Congress

Claudia Tenney  
Member of Congress

Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Tom Rice  
Member of Congress

Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress

Pete Sessions  
Member of Congress

Alex X. Mooney  
Member of Congress

Larry Bucshon, M.D.  
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

Lee Zeldin  
Member of Congress

Jodey C. Arrington  
Member of Congress

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Sam Graves  
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Jim Baird  
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Vicky Hartzler  
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Austin Scott  
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Troy Balderson  
Member of Congress

Jason Smith  
Member of Congress

John Katko  
Member of Congress

Young Kim  
Member of Congress

James Comer  
Member of Congress