The Honorable David J. Shulkin  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shulkin:

I write to thank the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and particularly Director of Appeals Management Office David McLenachan, for launching the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP), and provide a few suggestions to help make sure veterans understand the new procedure.

As you know, RAMP is aimed at providing veterans with the earliest possible resolution of their benefit appeals, and was launched on November 1 as a pilot for 500 veterans with pending appeals. These veterans received a RAMP notice letter informing them about the new system. The following recommendations come from my Veterans Advisory Council:

- Place language encouraging veterans to speak with their Veteran Service Officer before deciding whether to participate in RAMP near the beginning of the letter;
- Adjust tone to ensure veterans understand the potential drawbacks of opting in so that veterans who may be better served by remaining in the current system are not misled;
- Add in the “Higher-Level Review Lane” section that “You or your representative will not be able to add new evidence during this process;”
- Clarify that a judge will not be reviewing appeals under RAMP;
- Specify in the “What It Means to Opt-In” section that multiple review tracks exist;
- Clarify in the ‘RAMP Opt-In Election” form that veterans do not need to return the form to remain in the current appeals process; and
- Change withdrawal language to state: “If you wish to withdraw any or all of your current claims on appeal, please contact your representative for assistance.”

Thank you for taking these suggestions into consideration as you work to improve the appeals process for all veterans. Please contact Daniel Bleiberg in my office at 202-225-9890 if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

CC:  
Chairman Phil Roe, House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
Ranking Member Timothy Walz, House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
Chairman Johnny Isakson, Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
Ranking Member Jon Tester, Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs