

Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Testimony

24 April 2015

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

William "Robby" Robinson, Chairman

The Board of Veterans Affairs is a seven member board appointed by the Governor to advise and assist the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the Governor and the General Assembly and on issues affecting veterans. I would note that several past members of the Board are also here today.

We have been monitoring progress on a new veterans' medical center since 1999. It was obvious that a new facility was required and we were pleased that the Department of Veterans Affairs recognized the requirement and began searching for places to build a new medical center. It is ironic that we sit here in Aurora today discussing construction of the facility when originally it was supposed to be opened about now. The Board of Veterans Affairs has monitored the construction process and the interaction of veterans' representatives with the VA and Kiewit Turner in nearly all aspects of the design and construction. The delays have disappointed the veterans who worked hard to bring it to reality. More importantly, the delays have led to continued reliance on the old facility which by its very size and age limits access to timely appointments and procedures as well as patient

care. That impacts veterans all over Colorado and many in adjacent states that are and will be served by the Denver VA.

We are very concerned about the challenges facing the VA as they try to complete the new medical center. We hope that all parties involved can work together productively and cooperatively to complete the project expeditiously.

The Board of Veterans Affairs stands ready to assist in any way that we can.