

**STATEMENT OF RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER  
BOB FILNER  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**March 1, 2011**

- Thank you Chairman Lungren and Ranking Member Brady for this opportunity to appear before your committee to discuss the Committee on Veterans' Affairs budget for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. I am pleased to join Chairman Miller here today in support of the Committee's request.
- As you know, the Committee has oversight of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA is the second largest federal agency, employing almost 300,000 people with a budget authority of over \$120 billion dollars.
- The Committee's budget request provides us with the capability to retain the finest professional staff while pursuing an aggressive agenda in support of our nation's veterans.
- Mr. Chairman as you know, today the men and women of our Nation's military remain deployed overseas as they have during

the last 9 years of this war. And like the VA, this committee's requirements to our veterans have grown over that time as we work to address longstanding issues from past wars while striving to provide the increasing resources necessary for those fighting the current conflicts.

- And while we can always use more resources, at the Committee and at the VA, this budget request does allow us to continue to provide the oversight and direction to ensure veterans, family members and survivors, who access the VA, receive the highest quality care and services. History has shown us that the needs of our newest veterans will continue long after Iraq and Afghanistan. It is our moral obligation to care for them when they come home, something that we have not always done in the past.
- Secretary Shinseki, when testifying before the Committee earlier this month said: "Not upholding these obligations in the past has left at least one generation of Veterans struggling in anonymity for decades. We, who sent them, owe them better."
- Mr. Chairman and members, we are a small committee...with a correspondingly small budget when compared to some. And yet, as a small committee, we continue to work diligently with our

resources to improve the lives of our veterans and their families. I personally think that there is no better value in our Congressional budget than funding the policies and initiatives that help our Nation uphold our sacred trust to our heroes.

- Again Mr. Chairman, I support this budget and I am happy to answer any questions you might have today.