

***Brentwood Community Council***  
149 S. Barrington Ave., Box 194 Los Angeles, CA 90049

September 27, 2007

The Honorable R. James Nicholson  
Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington D.C. 20420-0002  
Fax: 202-273-4877

**Re: BCC West Los Angeles VA Homeless Policy**

Dear Secretary Nicholson:

The Brentwood Community Council (“BCC”)<sup>1</sup> represents the Brentwood community in Los Angeles, which abuts the West Los Angeles VA Property. The Department of Veteran’s Affairs, August 21, 2007 Press Release, Titled, “**VA Moves Closer to Major Improvements in Los Angeles New Facilities for Health Care and Homeless, Plus Columbarium Studied,**” announced your decision to designate Buildings Nos. 205, 208 and 209 on the West Los Angeles VA Campus for the exclusive benefit of homeless veterans. We are sending this letter, separate from our comments on the Stage II CARES Report, because this use was not addressed in the Stage II CARES Report.

The BCC agrees with you that the VA must prioritize the goal of helping “veterans return to their communities as solid citizens, gainfully employed, living independently with restored dignity.” The BCC adopted its “West Los Angeles VA Homeless Policy” after consultation with several persons and organizations working with homeless veterans for long-term, therapeutic, supportive housing in a sober living facility for homeless veterans engaged in a continuum of care program. The BCC’s policy is as follows:

- Long-term, but not permanent, therapeutic, supportive housing for successful graduates of quality, transitional housing programs at which the veterans were provided treatment and rehabilitative services for any disabling condition including but not limited to alcohol or drug dependence or abuse, and/or psychiatric illness.
- Objective is to assist transition back to families or independent living in the community with no family members residing on West LA VA land.
- No use of alcohol or any controlled substance on the West LA VA land with periodic alcohol and drug testing.
- RFP that calls for submission of a business plan for operating a facility that is subject to competitive bidding.

# *Brentwood Community Council*

- Open and transparent public process giving opportunities for veterans, the community and elected officials to give input regarding the business plan.
- Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Adequate staffing on a consistent, long-term basis, including health care, counseling, and security personnel to protect the residents and the community.
- Buildings #205, #208, and #209 may be leased to different organizations, but the total resident population in those buildings shall not exceed 300.
- No enhanced use leases.
- Priority to Global War On Terror (GWOT) Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) veterans since it is more cost-effective to treat returning soldiers as early as possible.
- Any VA homeless veterans program should be designed on a local VA region-wide basis with involvement by other localities where homeless veterans are found and their families may be located, rather than looking to West LA VA to accommodate the needs of the entire region.

Sincerely,



Wendy-Sue Rosen, Chairwoman  
Brentwood Community Council

cc: U.S. Senator Feinstein  
U.S. Senator Boxer  
Congressman Waxman  
Governor Schwarzenegger  
State Senator Kuehl  
Assemblymember Bass

Assemblymember Brownley  
Assemblymember Feuer  
Supervisor Yaroslavsky  
Mayor Villaraigosa  
Councilmember Rosendahl  
Councilmember Weiss

---

<sup>1</sup> The Brentwood Community Council is the broadest based Brentwood community organization, representing approximately 35,000 stakeholders, including homeowner associations, business organizations, youth groups, schools, religious groups, volunteer service groups, multi-family residential dwellers, public safety and environmental organizations.