



*News From The ...*

## **COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

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### **VA IT Still Falling Short of 21st Century Technology**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Today, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled, “Reboot: Examining the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Strategy for the 21st Century.” Committee members hoped to receive a positive progress report from VA regarding IT improvements following recent increased funding and staffing.

“More than four years have passed by since the Dole-Shalala Commission recommended a shared DoD-VA database for transitioning veterans,” stated Rep. Bill Johnson (OH-06), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. “And yet today, despite advances in technology and increased funding, VA has yet to implement, or even begin to implement, a seamless, shared database with the Department of Defense. There is absolutely no reason that in 2011 this has not moved an inch.”

VA’s antiquated systems for processing numerous services for veterans, many still paper-based, include benefits to compensation claims to medical records.

“Historically, VA has struggled to manage IT developments that successfully deliver desired results within cost, schedule, and performance objectives,” said Belinda Finn, Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations, Office of the Inspector General at VA. “Our [ongoing] audit results should provide valuable information to VA and Congress as VA moves forward in managing its technology investments.”

Rep. Johnson commended VA’s successes. He also highlighted, however, that more progress was necessary to ensure an efficient utilization of resources in the future and eliminate redundancies within VA’s IT architecture.

“We expect VA to implement a timeline for the VA-DoD integration of an electronic health record. We also want to know why there remains a lack of system integration, a lack of program management, poor IT contracting practices, and overall oversight at VA,” questioned Johnson.

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