

**ROGER WILLIAMS**  
25TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
1122 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
TEL: (202) 225-8896  
FAX: (202) 225-9692

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
1005 CONGRESS AVENUE, SUITE 925  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701  
TEL: (512) 473-8910  
FAX: (512) 473-8946

1 WALNUT STREET, SUITE 145  
CLEBURNE, TEXAS 76033  
TEL: (817) 774-2575  
FAX: (817) 774-2576

[williams.house.gov](http://williams.house.gov)

March 19, 2014

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

As a member of Congress representing nearly 60,000 veterans, I'm writing to express my concern over a recent report that disabled veterans are being cited for parking in spaces reserved for the disabled at the new Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) outpatient clinic in southeast Austin. This came as a surprise to all the cited veterans who thought they were upholding the law and parking legally. One of my highest priorities will always be to address the issues that most affect veterans and their families.

In the state of Texas, qualifying disabled veterans with a disabled veteran (DV) plate are given the same parking rights and privileges as those who have obtained a disabled placard or license plate bearing the International Symbol of Access (ISA). In addition, veterans who have a DV plate, also have the right to an ISA license plate should they choose.

Veterans that have upheld their commitment to defend our country should not be burdened by the need to obtain additional validation of their disabilities beyond what is required by the state of Texas. In this case, requiring disabled veterans to obtain a different license plate to use at your facility is yet another example of the federal government putting too much regulation on its citizens. At a time when the disability claim backlog has reached historic levels, using unnecessary resources to cite these veterans is shameful.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to address this issue and I look forward to working with you to help your agency improve its service to our veterans.

Sincerely,

Roger Williams  
Member of Congress