

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 25, 2005

The Honorable R. James Nicholson
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Nicholson:

I am writing to you with concerns about the Great Lakes National Veteran's Cemetery in Holly, Michigan. When I attended the groundbreaking ceremony last October, it was my understanding that this site would have at least one phase completed by the summer 2005. However, the project has experienced several construction delays and remains incomplete. These slow downs have caused a great deal of anxiety and concern among this region's veterans and their families.

I have been contacted by numerous family members, veteran's organizations, and funeral homes asking for assistance in this matter. The sacred remains of their loved ones are being held in various temporary locations until this facility is able to accommodate them. It is simply unacceptable to delay the closure and finality that these families deserve.

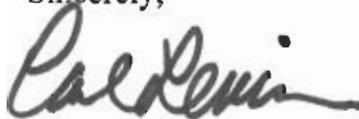
In response to these concerns, I would ask that your department provide me with information about the contract between your department and the private contractor awarded with the construction contract, the causes for these delays, and the proposed resolution of this matter, as follows:

1. What are the terms of the contract if work is not conducted or completed in the time allotted?
2. What type of timeline is provided for extensions and delays?
3. What type of further remedial actions or re-contracting is available to the agency?
4. What type of oversight is available to the Congress to resolve this matter in a timely fashion?
5. What is the absolute deadline proposed to open Phase I of this site?

I know that you join my constituents and me in our desire to complete this project and offer dignity and closure to these brave men and women and their families. A clear and timely response is appreciated.

If you have any questions, please contact Vicki Selva of my Michigan staff at 586-573-9145. Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl Levin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent dot above the letter "i".

Carl Levin