

TOM EMMER  
6TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

HOUSE MAJORITY WHIP

COMMITTEES

FINANCIAL SERVICES

VICE CHAIR

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIGITAL ASSETS,  
FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY, AND  
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2306**

326 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-2331

DISTRICT OFFICES  
9201 QUADAY AVENUE NE  
SUITE 206  
OTSEGO, MN 55330  
(763) 241-6848

1107 HAZELTINE BOULEVARD  
SUITE 476  
CHASKA, MN 55318  
(952) 262-2999

The Honorable John Carter  
Chairman  
Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and  
Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Ranking Member  
Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and  
Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 2, 2025

I am writing to express my support for report language to be considered by the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies (MilConVA) Subcommittee which directs the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to prepare a report on the VA's process for signing veterans' death certificates, among other related matters, to be included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 MilConVA Appropriations Bill.

Veterans and their families receiving care through the VA healthcare system often face unique challenges, making it essential to streamline administrative issues and ease the burden on families during times of loss. Currently, in several documented cases across the country, the signing of death certificates for veterans who have died of natural causes has been delayed for up to eight weeks. These delays cause significant distress for the families of deceased veterans and hinder the timely provision of funeral services and death benefits.

On July 9, 2024, the Anoka County Board, which is located in Minnesota's 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, found this issue to be so pervasive that it voted to enact policies authorizing local medical examiners and coroners to issue death certificates and seek reimbursement from the VA. When my office requested data from the VA on this issue, we were informed that no systematic tracking exists to measure the average time it takes to sign a veteran's death certificate. Additionally, the VA was unable to provide data on delays exceeding 72 hours, the number and reasoning behind refusals to sign death certificates, or any policies in place designed to ensure timely certification.

This report language aims to gain an understanding of the scope of this critical issue, and press for answers for our veteran communities. No family in mourning should have to go through an experience like this – and especially not the loved ones of a veteran who served this country. To solve the issue, we must first understand it, which is exactly what this report language aims to do.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and know that my office is willing to assist with your efforts in whatever way possible.

Sincerely,

Tom Emmer

---

Tom Emmer  
Member of Congress