

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0909
GUS M. BILIRAKIS

February 12, 2021

Mr. Scott Levins, Director
National Personnel Records Center
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, Missouri 63138

Dear Mr. Levins:

It is my understanding that the National Personnel Records Center remains indefinitely closed and is still, almost one year into the pandemic, only processing emergency requests for those who have died and need burial and also for those who have a terminal illness with less than six months to live.

I currently have 37 Congressional inquiry requests that have been pending since March of 2020. Each of these represents a pressing need from a Veteran who has honorably served our nation and deserves for his/her public servants to provide timely documentation of that service. I have a blind, elderly Veteran who can no longer care for himself. He is waiting for confirmation of his service so that he can enter a Veterans' senior living facility. In another case, I have a Veteran who was exposed to toxic levels of radiation at a military base in Uzbekistan. He needs to document his service at that base to be eligible for VA medical care. These are just two examples, with each case representing a pressing need.

While I can understand the need to implement safeguards to protect federal employees from contracting COVID-19, the indefinite delays of your department are inexcusable. Other federal, state, and local agencies have found a way to fulfill their public obligation and provide essential services. Your agency should be able to do so as well. Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Gus M. Bilirakis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "G" and "B".

Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress