

**Rep Brian Babin (TX-36) Remarks on His Amendment
to FY2016 MilCon and VA Appropriations Bill**

Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to terminate the VA's abused Appraised Value Offer program so that these funds can be used to better serve the needs of our nation's veterans rather than VA bureaucrats.

The VA spent nearly \$300,000 of taxpayer money to move a VA employee 140 miles - from Washington DC to Philadelphia.

That's \$300,000 that could have been used to care for numerous deserving veterans who have served this nation in uniform, but instead was spent to move someone 140 miles.

At the request of the House Veterans Affairs Committee – the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Inspector General is investigating this abuse and here is what we've learned so far:

Under the VA's Appraised Value Offer program, the VA paid more than \$80,000 to one of its government employees and \$211,000 to a federal contractor that was tasked with selling the employee's home.

At a time when the VA is struggling to meet the medical needs of our veterans, it's unconscionable that the VA would waste \$300,000 in taxpayer money to move someone 140 miles.

Unfortunately, this is just another disturbing example of the lack of transparency and accountability at the VA.

The folks at the VA are already under scrutiny for their shocking failure to properly care for veterans....and now....to spend \$300,000 on this is absolutely abusive.

Clearly, the VA cannot be trusted to exercise common sense with this program and it is time to end it.

As a military veteran and the father of a decorated NAVY Seal, I am deeply frustrated with the abuse and mismanagement at the VA.

Our veterans must be the VA's first priority.

I'd like to thank House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller for shedding light on this important issue and holding the VA accountable for failing to put veterans first.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and end this outrageous abuse within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Thank you, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

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