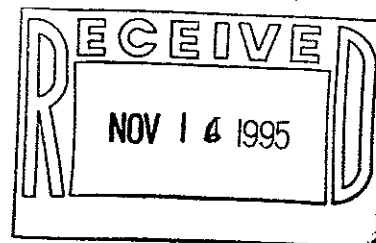




## THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON

NOV 16 1995



The Honorable Alice Rivlin  
Director, Office of Management  
and Budget  
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Ms. Rivlin:

Given the prospect of an unprecedented lengthy shutdown of the Government, we agree with the President that it is necessary to review the effect that it will have on our Nation's veterans and reexamine what remedies might be available.

As a result of the shutdown, our Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) offices are closed and are not accepting, processing, or paying claims or assisting veterans in filing them. If the shutdown continues into next week, as it appears that it may, it will result in serious and irreversible damage to our veterans. Some will not satisfy filing deadlines for benefits and others may even die during this period prior to filing a claim. Most important, the effective date of a claim attempted to be filed by a veteran during the shutdown will be delayed; this will mean a reduced amount of benefits for many.

The U.S. Department of Justice has determined that the facts stated above fall within the exceptions to the Anti-Deficiency Act that permit some continuing Government functions. Based on this opinion, we agree that our VBA offices should reopen for the purpose of accepting veterans benefits applications, and assisting individuals in submitting them. Therefore, I am amending our shutdown plans to bring back a sufficient number of VBA employees to minimally staff our benefits offices for this purpose.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jesse Brown", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jesse Brown