



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kawika Riley (Veterans' Affairs)

October 16, 2008

(202) 224-9126

## **AKAKA RESPONDS TO VA FREEZE ON DOCUMENT SHREDDING**

*Chairman supports temporary solution, urges quick policy shift to preserve claims records without endangering veterans' personal information*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI), Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, issued a statement today in response to reports of inappropriate disposal of documents at several Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Offices. VA's Office of Inspector General (IG) has found some evidence that more than one VA Regional Office has shredded documents which veterans submitted for pending disability claims. In response, VA has announced a temporary freeze on shredding documents at all Regional Offices.

*"I support VA's temporary freeze, but this is not a long-term solution. VA needs an enforced and understood policy which preserves documents relevant to pending claims, without leaving veterans' personal information open to identity theft. I trust that VA will act quickly, as they should,"* said Akaka.

*"Some documents must be properly disposed of due to space constraints and privacy issues. Veterans must be able to trust VA to safely keep their records. If they cannot, VA will not be able to do its job, and veterans will not get the benefits they have earned through their service,"* said Akaka.

VA's statement on the temporary freeze is available [here](#).