



*The National Association of State  
Directors of Veterans Affairs, Inc.*

May 7, 2014

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As President of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA), it is indeed my honor and privilege to write this letter on behalf of the State Directors of Veterans Affairs for all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the five territories that represent America's more than 23 million Veterans, their family members and survivors.

I write this letter in response to American Legion Commander Daniel M. Dellinger's press conference on May 5, 2014, when he announced the Legion's call for Secretary Eric K. Shinseki's resignation along with his top VA officials, Under Secretary of Health Robert Petzel and Under Secretary of Benefits Allison Hickey.

First, NASDVA does not endorse, nor does it agree with Commander Dellinger's recommendation. NASDVA does agree that Secretary Shinseki and his top VA officials should remain in place and stand steadfast in taking appropriate and swift action to rectify current health care issues that have surfaced at VA facilities in recent weeks.

A leadership change in the VA is not warranted, nor will it instantly address concerns or solve current problems. The American Legion has the right to voice its concerns; however, in America there is due process that should be followed and respected. A premature rush to judgment is not prudent, or in the best interest of our Veterans.

Under Secretary Shinseki's leadership, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is transforming the VA from a paperless claims process system that has reduced the compensation and pension claims backlog by 44 percent; has reduced the Veterans homeless population by 24 percent; and has enrolled more than 2 million Veterans in the Health Care system since 2009.

Additionally, Secretary Shinseki and his VA team have diligently addressed concerns by state VA directors by advancing innovative Veterans health care services throughout the country. Although more work is required, the USDVA has built Community Outpatient Clinics as well as established the Office of Rural Health to address transportation needs and Tele-health care services to those disadvantaged Veterans in rural America.

Under Secretary Shinseki and Under Secretary Petzel's leadership, some 146 State Veterans' Homes in 50 states and Puerto Rico are today providing top quality health care to our Veterans. These homes represent 52 percent of all VA authorized long-term care for America's elderly and disabled Veterans.

NASDVA has worked in tandem with Secretary Shinseki, Under Secretary Petzel and Under Secretary Hickey in reducing the claims backlog, Veterans homelessness and providing better access to care to our nation's Veterans. NASDVA strongly agrees that Secretary Shinseki and his Under Secretaries should remain in place to continue leading the VA into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Mr. President, thank you for your unwavering support to Veterans, and for your visionary and steadfast leadership to our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. Marsh', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

W. Clyde Marsh  
President, NASDVA

Cc: Secretary Eric K. Shinseki