

VA Secretary Announces Resignation

May 30, 2014

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States said today's resignation of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki is in the best interests of the nation's veterans.

"The VFW was the first major veterans organization to call for an independent investigation and, if warranted, for the dismissal and criminal prosecution of those employees involved with gaming the system," said William A. Thien, the national commander of the 1.9 million-member VFW and its Auxiliaries. "Throughout the political firestorm of the past several weeks, the VFW remained steadfast in supporting an independent investigation and calling for full accountability in this matter — especially for those in Congress, who for years have turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to the concerns of America's Veteran Service Organizations.

"Change will not come easy to the VA, but change it must, and the VFW will absolutely be part of its evolution, just as we were in the years leading up to and after we helped to create it," said Thien. "The new secretary will inherit a host of ongoing challenges, but he or she must immediately identify and fix what's broken, to hold people accountable to the maximum extent of the law, and to do whatever is necessary to help restore the full faith and confidence of veterans in their VA," he said. "Members of Congress have an equal responsibility to put their individual political agendas aside and do what they were elected to do. The VFW will never tolerate politics as usual when it comes to the proper care and treatment of our nation's heroes.

"Secretary Shinseki is an American patriot, an honorable man whose personal integrity and commitment to duty and to others is above reproach," said the VFW national commander. "We support his decision to resign, because the outside calls for his resignation were overshadowing the crisis in healthcare issues veterans face, and that is what's most important."

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