

The American Legion



OFFICE OF THE
NATIONAL COMMANDER

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March 8, 2017

Honorable Phil Roe
United States House of Representatives
336 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515


Dear Representative Roe:

On behalf of more than 2.2 million members of The American Legion, we express support for the draft legislation entitled the *VA Accountability First Act of 2017*. This bill, as currently written, would bring additional accountability measures to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) while strengthening protections for whistleblowers.

Veterans deserve a first rate agency to provide for their needs, and the VA is excellent. Unfortunately it is marred from time to time by badly behaved personnel who, because of the complicated system the of discipline, make it difficult to remove. Legislation to improve that process and make it easier to deal with these few, problem employees would help restore trust in what is otherwise an excellent system.

The Legion's Resolution Number 3, entitled *Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability*, passed at The American Legion's National Convention in 2016, urges Congress to enact legislation to address this dilemma. Resolution 3 will provide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs the authority to remove any individual from the VA if the secretary determines the performance of the individual warrants removal or transfer or demotion of the individual to a General Schedule (GS) position without any increased monetary benefit.

Congressman Roe, The American Legion thanks you for the leadership you have shown to bring improvement and more accountability to VA. We are committed to working with you and your House and Senate colleagues to pass legislation aimed at holding VA accountable.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. SCHMIDT
National Commander