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Attachments:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Legion is "very pleased" with President's VA initiatives

WASHINGTON, DC - APRIL 09, 2009 -Leaders of the nation's largest veterans organization say they are "very pleased" with the Obama administration's announced efforts to build what is being termed a "21st Century VA."

Representatives from a number of veterans and military service organizations gathered at noontime today to learn from President Barack Obama the steps his administration is taking through the budget process to modernize and more efficiently fund the Department of Veterans Affairs. The group included The American Legion's Senior Executive Director John Sommer.

The National Commander of The American Legion, visiting Legion officials in Missouri, reacted with a broad smile upon learning of the President's initiatives. "Especially pleasing was the announcement of solid plans to implement what's called a Joint Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record," said Commander David K. Rehbein. "This type of paperless administrative and medical care record, which would follow a service member from enlistment through his or her lifetime, will facilitate much more expeditious and accurate delivery of the highest quality health care. It's what those who wear, and have worn, the uniform need and deserve."

Commander Rehbein continued, "We are also very happy to learn of the President's strong support, along with VA Secretary Eric Shinseki, of advance appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs. As has been noted by administrations officials themselves, a timely, predictable, and sufficient flow of funding from year to year means better care for our veterans." The Commander concluded, "The American Legion has long championed the implantation of electronic medical records and advance appropriations for VA medical care, so this is a proud and promising day for us."

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