Bcc: All Legion Leadership

Media

The American Legion to Congress: Investigate Allegations of VA Wrongdoing

(INDIANAPOLIS, February 9, 2020) -- American Legion National Commander James W. “Bill” Oxford released the following statement regarding allegations that senior leadership at the Department of Veterans Affairs attempted to retaliate against a staff member for reporting a sexual assault.

“Generally, The American Legion does not comment on VA’s internal personnel matters. We invest full faith and credit in the administration, the Inspector General, and department leadership to faithfully execute their duties, serve in a manner that honors their sacred positions, and work to protect the communities they serve. We are not privileged participants in any formal investigations and learn of publicly available reports from the same sources the general public does, and we rely on these reports to inform our membership, our voice, and positions.

In cases where evidence is uncovered of malfeasance or wrongdoing, The American Legion expects that the perpetrator or perpetrators will be held accountable and either disciplined, dismissed or prosecuted accordingly. The allegations that have been reported over the past week at the Department of Veterans Affairs are extremely concerning and bring into question the ethical suitability of the leadership at VA’s highest levels.

The American Legion calls on the administration and Congress to thoroughly investigate the recent allegations of improper employee behavior and report their findings to the American people with complete transparency. We expect that any persons found to have acted outside of their authority and the scope of their duties will be held accountable and dealt with in an appropriate manner. This was one of the core tenets of Veterans Affairs accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 that The American Legion supported, and still supports today.”

With a current membership of almost 2 million veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through more than 12,000 posts across the nation.