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American Legion offers praise, concerns about White House Executive Orders

WASHINGTON (January 25, 2017) – The leader of the nation’s largest veterans organization expressed support for some recent executive actions of the Trump administration, while at the same time voicing concern that VA “not take a step backward.”

“The American Legion believes that the president is correct in exempting national security, public safety and our armed forces from the federal hiring freeze,” National Commander Charles E. Schmidt said. “We fully support his promise to rebuild our military and eliminate the scourge of radical Islamic terrorism from the face of the earth. Acting VA Secretary Rob Snyder has assured us that frontline caregivers will be exempted. We have strong concerns, however, about how this will impact the veterans who have been waiting too long to have their claims processed. The sacrifices that these veterans have made must not be forgotten. VA has made progress in this area and it must continue to do so.”

Schmidt also asked the private sector to step up efforts to hire veterans seeking employment. “Veterans, particularly disabled veterans, have often looked to the federal government as an institution where they could find meaningful employment. This hiring freeze will certainly impact their job prospects. I urge all employers to look to this extremely talented, professional and disciplined population of men and women and allow them to serve your companies and businesses as well as they have served our nation,” Schmidt said. “The American Legion will continue to sponsor veterans job fairs across the nation as a way to show our gratitude. Employers would be wise to tap into this talent pool.”

The American Legion has long called for securing America’s borders and the construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline, two issues that the Trump administration also addressed with recent executive orders.

With a current membership of 2.2 million wartime veterans, The American Legion, www.legion.org, 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 13,000 posts across the nation.

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