

Farewell Message to VA Employees

This morning, I resigned as Secretary of Veterans Affairs. My personal and professional commitment and my loyalty to Veterans, their families, and our survivors was the driving force behind that decision. That loyalty has never wavered, and it will never wane.

Over the course of the last five-and-a-half years, you have made significant and lasting progress in expanding access for Veterans, in significantly decreasing the backlog in Veterans' claims while building the system that will end the backlog in 2015, and in bringing an end to Veterans' homelessness. We have come a long way together in bringing this Department into the 21st Century in ways that will serve Veterans well into the future. Yet, there is more work to be done, and I have no doubt that you will achieve all that you set about doing in the interest of Veterans.

I have been privileged to have served as your Secretary and am deeply grateful to the employees and leaders who have placed the interests of Veterans above and beyond their own self-interests; who are serving with dignity, compassion, and dedication; and who live by VA's core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence. I know that you will provide your support and loyalty to Acting Secretary Sloan Gibson, who is now your leader. In fact, I expect it.

Thank you. May God richly bless all of you, Veterans, and this great country of ours.

Eric K. Shinseki