

## Wounded Warrior Project Statement on VA Secretary Shinseki's Resignation

**Washington, D.C., May 30, 2014** – In the wake of reports of widespread falsification of records and inappropriate practices, today, Secretary Eric Shinseki tendered his resignation. Wounded Warrior Project® agrees that new leadership is needed in order to swiftly change the culture at VA that seems to tolerate, if not foster, lapses in ethics in providing care to all warriors.

Secretary Shinseki was an exemplary military leader and has been a dedicated public servant. We thank him for his service to our country.

With his departure, the conversation must refocus on what has been missing in the escalating storm of words regarding VA's inappropriate scheduling practices: the search for root causes of these practices – and for fundamental solutions. Swift, stern discipline is critical. But that in no way assures that veterans across the country will immediately begin receiving timely, effective care. What our warriors tell us is that many VA facilities are simply overwhelmed and the most dedicated VA clinical staff cannot keep pace with veterans' health care needs. While a bonus system that rewards timeliness of care-scheduling likely played a role in the unacceptable cooking of the books, so too has a need for more staff and a culture that discourages candor.

Veterans to whom we owe the highest standard of care have been ill-served by egregious administrative practices. We must now move beyond finger-pointing, and to fundamental reforms to fulfill the promises made to our veterans to provide the care and support they have earned in service to their country. The need is too great, and the stakes are too high, to allow our nation's heroes to slip through the cracks of a broken system. Wounded Warrior Project remains committed to honoring and empowering wounded warriors, and will continue to fight for real solutions that serve the best interests of our nation's veterans.

### **Wounded Warrior Project®**

Wounded Warrior Project is recognizing its ten-year anniversary, reflecting on a decade of service and reaffirming its commitment to serving injured veterans for their lifetime. The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. WWP currently serves 50,000 warriors and nearly 7,000 family members through its unique 20 programs and services. WWP's purpose is to raise awareness and to enlist the public's aid for the needs of injured service members, to help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs. WWP is a national organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit [woundedwarriorproject.org](http://woundedwarriorproject.org).

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