



November 18, 2024

The Honorable Doug Collins
Nominee for Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Weidner Law Firm
P.O. Box 2017
854 Washington St., Suite 300
Clarksville, GA 30523

Dear Mr. Collins,

My wife, Carol, and I, along with the entire Lipphardt family extend heartfelt congratulations on your nomination by President Trump to serve as the next Secretary of Veterans Affairs. As a fellow Georgian, combat veteran, and Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. (VFW), I am optimistic about your selection to serve in this honorable cabinet post and the vision of the incoming Trump-Vance Administration to project a strong American military and honor the brave veterans who have sacrificed in defense of liberty.

With my term as Vice Chair of the VFW National Legislative Committee completed in 2018, I announced I would be seeking the office of VFW Commander-in-Chief. You graciously wrote a letter of support for my candidacy for which I remain most grateful. Our dedication and love of this country, our deep personal faith, unshakeable and uncompromising integrity, and lives lived in service to others have once again caused our paths to cross to build upon that relationship.

Having been elected and duly installed as Commander-in-Chief of the more than 1.4 million members of the VFW around the world, I respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you as soon as possible. Now is the time to share the VFW's policy agenda and insight into the best ways to care for our veterans, caregivers, and survivors as you prepare for your confirmation hearings this winter.

We have also started to prepare our annual testimony before the joint session of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees next spring. I will be testifying on behalf of our members, supporters, and the veterans' community. This joint session is where we will be seeking to ensure that VA receives the authorizations and resources it needs to provide the highest quality health care and benefits to our veterans who have earned them.

An organization that says "but we have always done it this way" is not on a path to the future, but rather headed toward failure not yet realized. Doing the same thing over and over is truly the definition of insanity. Routine leads to complacency, complacency to mediocrity, and mediocrity to failure. The VFW has changed. Everything we do; we do for veterans. We know that VA is overdue for change. Our goal is to help you craft your vision for this critical change. Future generations are counting on us. I wish you the best in your upcoming confirmation and are ready to assist in any way that we can. Let us meet soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert J. Lipphardt".

Commander-in-Chief
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111

Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org