

**For Immediate Release:** Contact: Neal A. Patel February 24, 2015 202-224-6244

**Heller: It’s more important now than ever that**

**America’s Veterans can trust VA Secretary**

**McDonald to work for them**

**(Washington, DC) –** Today, United States Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) issued the following statement after Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Robert McDonald recanted his statement to a homeless veteran that he served in the Special Forces when in fact he did not.

“Having said that, I am disappointed Secretary McDonald has not been truthful regarding his prior military service. Legislation I introduced, the Stolen Valor Act of 2013, was signed into law by President Obama to stop this type of behavior by members of our military claiming false service for personal gain.

“As a member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, I am working to reduce the claims backlog and keep the VA accountable to the promises it makes to our nation’s veterans.  I expect to receive truth and transparency from the VA Secretary. Lapses like these reduce the credibility of and faith in the VA. It’s more important now than ever that America’s veterans can trust Secretary McDonald to work for them, and I expect this standard to be fully upheld moving forward,” said Senator Dean Heller.

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*The Stolen Valor Act of 2013 specifically details that whoever, with intent to obtain money, property, or other tangible benefit, fraudulently holds oneself out to be a recipient of a decoration or medal shall be fined, imprisoned for no more than one year, or both.*