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**President Signs Heller-Backed Legislation to Hold VA Accountable**

**Washington, D.C** – Today, President Donald Trump signed into law the Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act, legislation designed to bring accountability to the Department of Veterans Affairs by expediting the removal process for poorly performing employees and ensuring appropriate protections for whistleblowers.

This legislation shortens the removal process for bad actors and ensures an individual removed from the VA is not kept on the VA’s payroll while appealing that decision. It will also make it easier for the VA to remove poor performing senior executives and replace them with qualified candidates. Additionally, any appeals by senior VA executives would no longer be brought before the Merit Systems Protection Board, but instead would be handled directly by the VA secretary under an expedited timeline.

“I applaud the president for signing important legislation into law that will hold the VA accountable,” **said Heller.** “This legislation was a product of strong bipartisanship in both Houses of Congress and the result is a win for veterans in Nevada and across the country. As a senior member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, I will continue to find common ground and reasonable solutions to help our state’s 300,000 veterans receive the timely and quality care they have earned.”

The legislation also contains a number of other provisions to hold employees accountable, including:

* Requires the VA to evaluate supervisors based on the protection of whistleblowers;
* Incentivizes managers to address poor performance and misconduct among employees by requiring the VA secretary to include this as part of the annual performance plan;
* Prohibits bonuses for employees who have been found guilty of wrongdoing; and
* Prohibits relocation expenses to employees who abuse the system.

The legislation was initially introduced in the U.S. Senate by U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) along with U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, and Jon Tester (D-MT), ranking member of the Committee.    
  
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