



PRESS RELEASE

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VVA Applauds Confirmation of Denis McDonough as VA Secretary

(Washington, D.C.) --“Vietnam Veterans of America applauds the overwhelming 87-7 vote to confirm Denis McDonough as Secretary of Veterans Affairs,” said VVA National President John Rowan. “We have full confidence that Denis McDonough will work with the Veterans Service Organizations and Military Service Organizations to improve veterans’ healthcare and other services. We are compiling a list for his attention, including the long-overdue implementation of [Pub.L. 114-315](#), the *Toxic Exposure Research Act*; the immediate implementation of the three additions to the list of diseases presumed service-connected to Agent Orange (Pub.L. 116-283), and more.

“Denis McDonough has the knowledge and experience needed to be an effective leader of the Department of Veterans Affairs,” noted Rowan. “We expect the Secretary to hit the ground running, and we look forward to working with him,” noted Rowan.

“Though not a veteran, he’s deeply familiar with the complex Veterans Health Administration,” said Rowan. “As White House chief of staff under President Barack Obama, McDonough worked closely with former VA secretaries Eric Shinseki and Bob McDonald, as well as Congress to address the wait-time scandal, formulating Veterans Choice, thus opening the door to the private sector to augment veterans’ healthcare services from the VA. We believe he will lead the VA to fill all the vacancies currently impeding VA's capacity to serve veterans.”

Prior to serving as White House chief of staff, McDonough served as deputy national security adviser (2010-2013) and as Chief of Staff of the National Security Council (2009-2010). Following his time with the Obama administration, McDonough has worked for the Markle Foundation, focusing on employment and job training for Americans. His experience on Capitol Hill includes senior foreign policy advisor to Sen. Tom Daschle and legislative director for Sen. Ken Salazar. A native of Stillwater, Minnesota, he graduated from Saint John's University in 1992 and Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service with an MSFS degree in 1996.