

VFW Calls on Administration, Congress to Stop Indiscriminate Firing of Veterans

The following is a message from VFW National Commander Al Lipphardt

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WASHINGTON —Ten days ago, I shared the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW) concerns for the news of mass lay-offs coming out of our nation's capital. Since then, it has become clearer that the veteran community has been hit hard as probationary federal jobs are being axed across the country, to include the latest announcement of [1,400 more just let go from the VA](#).

With veterans making up approximately 30% of the more than 2.2 million employed by the federal government, the potential of losing thousands of veterans from the government work force is troubling. A lot of these aren't brand-new, off-the-street employees. These are employees who have been serving the American people for years, in uniform and in civil service, and at least some of whom have been or are being caught by a formality in administrative statuses. There are bigger ramifications in firing veterans than just faceless workers being let go. The American people are losing technical expertise, training and security clearances already bought and paid for by taxpayers. These veterans are now being told their skills are no longer useful to the government. We're losing people who are genuinely committed to the mission and find a continued sense of purpose in what they do. On top of all this, studies show having gainful employment is a social determinate of health and gets ahead of arguably one of the root causes of veteran suicide. Since the federal government is the single largest employer of veterans in the nation, it's veterans who are being indiscriminately harmed in this bull-"DOGE"-ing of the federal work force.

I was wounded in combat during the Vietnam War. I am thankful that the medics who treated me chose not to take my whole arm for the sake of efficiency. It took a trained eye, a skillful hand and human intuition to fix me up and get me back in the fight. In my experience, those operating with a scalpel have a better chance at saving limbs than those

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who operate with a chainsaw.

Unfortunately, it appears humans have been taken out of what is a human capital issue. It has been reported to us from veterans who have lost their jobs that the emails they received letting them go were disjointed, and inconsistent across the board. This leads us to believe they were automated with little to no oversight or thought. When it comes to complex problems, we rely on humans to make the right choices at the right times. We should never leave the hard decisions that impact people's lives and livelihoods to an algorithm or an email distribution list.

On Tuesday, March 4th, I will testify before a joint session of the congressional veterans' affairs committees to deliver the VFW's priorities and call on Congress and this administration to put an end to the indiscriminate firing of veterans in the government workforce. I am also calling on VFW members to "march forth" and join me on that day. I want to see hats in the hallways of our Capitol as our legislative committee members engage with lawmakers in demanding that they "Honor the Contract" the government made with those who have already served and sacrificed so much for America and their fellow Americans. It's time to apply pressure and stop the bleeding.

[Guidance for Veterans Facing Federal Government Layoffs](#)