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## **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Announces Formation of New Veterans' Family, Caregiver, and Survivor Advisory Committee; Names Senator Elizabeth Dole Chair**

*Committee to focus awareness and action on the needs of military families and caregivers, as well as the veterans they support*

**WASHINGTON** — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the formation of the Veterans' Family, Caregiver, and Survivor Federal Advisory Committee as part of VA Secretary David Shulkin's commitment to supporting our nation's Veterans and those who care for them.

The new Committee will be chaired by former U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole, a noted advocate for military caregivers, and the founder of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation and the Hidden Heroes Campaign, both of which regularly collaborate with the VA on issues related to military caregiving.

"The VA is committed to the delivery of highest quality care and support to our Veterans, and recognizes the essential role their families, caregivers, and survivors have every day," said Secretary Shulkin. "Senator Dole is an accomplished and experienced advocate for Veterans' caregivers I am honored that she will Chair this landmark Committee."

The Committee will advise the Secretary, through the Chief Veterans Experience Officer, on matters related to Veterans' families, caregivers, and survivors across all generations, relationships, and Veteran status, with a focus on gaining a better understanding of the use of VA care and benefits services, and factors that influence access, quality, and accountability for those services. A key element of the committee's work will be to engage Veteran family members, research experts, and family service providers as a way to better understand their needs and identify ways VA can continue to support them in the best possible way.

"Military families, caregivers, and survivors are truly our nation's hidden heroes, and make great sacrifices each and every day on behalf of their loved ones, so we must do more to support them on their journey. VA, under Secretary Shulkin's leadership, is stepping up at a time of tremendous need and opportunity," said Senator Elizabeth Dole, herself a caregiver to her husband, former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole, a World War II veteran injured in combat. "I am proud to serve as chair of such a critical committee, alongside some of the nation's top voices on the issues that affect Veterans and their families."

Serving alongside Senator Dole on the committee will be Mr. Sherman Gillums (Vice Chair), Ms. Mary Buckler, Ms. Bonnie Carroll, Ms. Melissa Comeau, Ms. Harriet Dominique, Ms. Jennifer Dorn, Ms. Ellyn Dunford, Dr. Robert Koffman, Lt. Gen. (U.S. Army, Ret.) Mike Linnington, Mr. Joe Robinson, Ms. Elaine Rogers, Brig. Gen. (U.S. Army, Ret) Dr. Loree Sutton, Mr. Francisco Urena, Ms. Shirley White, Ms. Lee Woodruff, and Ms. Lolita Zinke.

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