



**Department of
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News Release

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Gunn Sworn In As Veterans Affairs General Counsel

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney Will A. Gunn, a retired Air Force colonel, took the oath of office yesterday as General Counsel of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) following his recent Senate confirmation.

“I’m thrilled by the opportunity to serve as VA’s General Counsel,” Gunn said. “I’m also humbled and deeply honored by the confidence that President Obama and Secretary Shinseki have shown in me with this appointment.

“Veterans hold a special place in my heart,” he added. “I look forward to helping lead a transformation at VA to make the department more people-centric, results oriented, and forward looking than ever before. I look forward to serving as VA’s General Counsel and consider it both a blessing and a sacred trust.”

Gunn assumes the helm of an office with a nationwide staff of more than 700 employees, including 460 attorneys. The General Counsel ensures the faithful execution of the laws, regulations and policies that VA administers.

The General Counsel's interpretations on legal matters further VA's mission of service to the nation's Veterans with written opinions on adjudications and appeals involving Veterans' benefits under laws administered by VA.

Operating through seven professional staff groups in Washington plus 22 regional counsel offices across the United States, the office provides VA representation before administrative and judicial forums, offers formal and informal legal and ethics advice, and drafts and advocates legislation affecting Veterans.

Gunn, an attorney who at the time of his nomination represented military members and Veterans in private practice in northern Virginia, retired from the Air Force in 2005, where he served as a colonel in the Judge Advocate General's Corps.

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Gunn Sworn In 2/2/2/2

A former White House fellow, he received the American Bar Association's Outstanding Career Military Lawyer Award. In 2003, he was named the first chief defense counsel in the Department of Defense's Office of Military Commissions, building a defense team and supervising defense activities for detainees selected for trial before military commissions to ensure they received effective representation.

A native of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Gunn is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and is a cum laude graduate of Harvard Law School. While at Harvard, he was elected president of the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, the nation's oldest student-run legal services organization.

He also has a master's degree in environmental law from George Washington University School of Law and a master of science degree in national resource strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Gunn has been chair of the American Bar Association's Commission on Youth at Risk and served on the board of Christian Service Charities. In 2005, he was named president and chief executive officer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington.

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