

**VA**



**U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs**

# **News Release**

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## **Secretary Wilkie statement on the President's State of the Union address**

WASHINGTON – Tonight VA Secretary Robert Wilkie issued the following statement on the President's State of the Union address:

"President Trump gave a visionary and optimistic message in his State of the Union address to the nation. He challenged Americans to choose greatness.

"Under President Trump's leadership, VA is tackling issues that have lingered for decades, with key advances in the areas of transparency, accountability and customer service.

"VA is giving Veterans more choice in their health care decisions with the historic MISSION Act and improving transparency by becoming the first hospital system in the nation to post publicly wait times, opioid prescription rates, accountability, settlements, and chief executive travel.

"The department is also increasing accountability and protecting whistleblowers with the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act, and overhauling the disability claims and appeals processes to create a simplified system for filing to provide Veterans with clear choices and timely decisions.

"Additionally, VA is adopting the same electronic health record as the Department of Defense, helping ensure a seamless transfer of medical information for Veterans leaving the service, and improving customer service through integrated VA digital portals, contact centers, and databases so that Veterans can easily find the information they need.

"President Trump saluted D-Day soldiers, Private First Class Joseph Reilly, Staff Sergeant Irving Locker, and Sergeant Herman Zeitchik along with Navy Seaman Craig Wibberley, who was one of 17 sailors lost when terrorists attacked the USS Cole 18 years ago. We join him in recognizing and honoring those great Veterans and their fellow Veterans across the nation."

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