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February 18, 2015

The Honorable Dean Heller  
United States Senator  
324 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Heller:

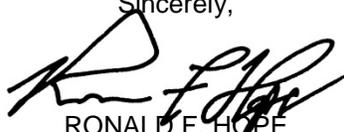
As National Commander of DAV and on behalf of our 1.4 million members and Auxiliary, I am pleased to inform you that we have chosen you to be the first recipient of our new "Outstanding Senate Legislator of the Year" award in recognition of outstanding achievement in support of wounded, injured and ill veterans, their families and survivors by a United States Senator in 2014.

In particular, we want to recognize your commitment and leadership in the effort to address VA's claims processing backlog, one of DAV's highest legislative priorities. As you know, the benefits claims backlog had reached a critical point several years ago, requiring all of us to work together to seek new solutions and approaches that could help improve the system while protecting veterans rights. As a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and as Co-Founder and Co-Chairman of the Senate VA Backlog Working Group, you have demonstrated outstanding leadership and commitment to working in a bipartisan manner to address this problem for the benefit of the men and women who served, particularly those wounded, injured and made ill by their service.

This year, DAV has reorganized and redesigned how we recognize outstanding public officials and their achievements on behalf of the men and women who were wounded, injured and made ill in service to our nation. Beginning this year, we will present an award for Outstanding Senate Legislator of the Year, and we are proud to present the first such award to you. We will be formally announcing this and several other awards during our Midwinter Conference which runs from February 22 to 25 here in the nation's capital. We would welcome the opportunity to present this award to you in front of our membership attending the Conference if your schedule allows; if not, we will make other arrangements to present this award while our national leadership is in Washington. Please have your staff contact Lisa Bogle at 202-314-5241 or [lbogle@davmail.org](mailto:lbogle@davmail.org) to make arrangements.

Again, I want to congratulate you on receiving our first Outstanding Senate Legislator of the Year Award and thank you for standing up for America's veterans, their families and survivors.

Sincerely,



RONALD F. HOPE  
National Commander

c: DAV Department of Nevada