

## **VFW Disgusted with Elected Leadership**

WASHINGTON (October 9, 2013) — The nation's oldest and largest war veterans' organization is disgusted with the partisan bickering and government paralysis caused by a White House and Congress who will not budge from their ideological extremes in order to properly take care of America's true heroes.

"Yesterday's news that the government will not transport or make a death assistance payment to grieving military families was the last straw. It is absolutely appalling and nothing short of a travesty that elected officials continue to receive paychecks and benefits while not providing for those who deserve it most," said William A. Thien, the national commander of almost 2 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Auxiliaries.

"Because of failed leadership, we have 56 closed Department of Veterans Affairs regional offices, 7,000 furloughed employees, and more than 4 million disabled veterans and survivors who were told next month's disability or survivor benefits check will be delayed," he said. "We also have a hypocritical National Park Service that closes our nation's war memorials to veterans and a federal government that continues to make foreign aid payments while our own national security is threatened because Congress has failed to pass a defense budget or put an end to the sequester.

"This is totally unacceptable and disgraceful that our elected leaders in Washington would allow this to happen," said Thien. "We need leadership, not more rhetoric, and if the government is unable to take care of veterans, then the government should quit creating us," he said. "And should another military family crisis arise like yesterday's failure, I can guarantee the VFW will provide whatever financial assistance necessary to those families."