



(October 8, 2015)

In order to further improve the lines of communication and to respond to the concerns between the National VA Council and you our members, I have established a National VA Council Briefing. This NVAC Briefing will bring you the latest news and developments within DVA and provide you with the current status of issues this Council is currently addressing. I believe that this NVAC Briefing will greatly enhance the way in which we communicate and the way in which we share new information, keeping you better informed.

Alma L. Lee
National VA Council, President

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**In This Briefing: Senator calls on DOJ to investigate findings of VA IG report**  
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By FederalSoup

A Senate lawmaker is calling on the Justice Department to investigate alleged unethical behavior by Department of Veterans Affairs employees revealed last month in a VA Office of Inspector General report.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), who serves as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, in a letter to Attorney General Loretta Lynch called on DOJ to look into an IG finding that about two dozen VA executives were relocated as a way to sidestep a pay freeze and gain salary increases.

“According to the [VAOIG] report, the Veterans Benefit Administration spent about \$1.8 million for 23 relocations during the past three years—and according to the report, these relocations were used ‘as a means to justify annual salary increases’ for the senior executives, who sought to create positions as a way to exempt themselves from the salary freeze in effect at VA,” Blumenthal [wrote](#). “Veterans deserve the accountability that can only come from DOJ acting upon the evidence and information it has now received.”

“This scheme to defraud taxpayers and manipulate the system is, unfortunately, only the latest example of unacceptable misconduct by VA employees,” he told Lynch.

Blumenthal urged Lynch to ensure that DOJ works with VA’s IG to make sure the office’s evidence-gathering “aligns with [DOJ’s] requirements, ”and asked that her department “put special emphasis on investigating the possibility of prosecution of cases stemming from these reports.”

In regard to standards of evidence, the senator noted that while VA’s IG has found evidence that has pointed to criminal activity in a number of recent investigations, federal prosecutors—while they believed criminal intent in fact existed in many cases—declined to pursue most of them because the evidence that was gathered was insufficient.