

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ED FLYNN, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA,
DURKAN, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, MEJIA, MURPHY,
PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, WORRELL AND LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION DENOUNCING CUTS TO PERSONNEL AND SERVICE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

WHEREAS: Over the last two weeks, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) laid off thousands of government workers as part of the efforts by the White House to dramatically cut the size of the federal workforce; *and*

WHEREAS: This included over 1000 government employees at the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), many of whom were still in their probationary periods; *and*

WHEREAS: According to the the National Federation of Federal Employees, the federal government is the single largest employer of veterans in the United States, and veterans make up about 30% of the 2.2 million federal employees, many of whom are disabled veterans; *and*

WHEREAS: The scale of these layoffs, and the potential of more firings in the U.S. military, have created a lot of uncertainty, confusion, fear and anger in the veteran community. Employees shared that the reasons for the terminations are unclear, and the reasons cited such as performance-driven terminations do not align with their reviews; *and*

WHEREAS: Many are concerned that the firings would negatively impact veteran unemployment, and put millions of veterans' benefits at risk. It was also reported that service lines at VA hospitals and clinics have been halted, and beds and operating rooms at VA facilities have been suspended; *and*

WHEREAS: Disabled Veterans have also shared concerns regarding delays in disability compensation cases, increases in wait times at VA medical facilities, and delays to important medical appointments; *and*

WHEREAS: Since President Biden signed the PACT Act in 2022 to support veterans and military families exposed to toxins and environmental hazards, over 1 million veterans and their survivors have received disability benefits. In addition, over 5.6 million veterans have been screened for toxic exposures, and over 740,000 veterans have enrolled in the VA between 2022 to 2024; *and*

WHEREAS: In recent months, the VA requested an additional \$6.6 billion to address their healthcare shortfall, and could run into problems with the medical hiring system and operations if the money is not approved; *and*

WHEREAS: These layoffs are reckless and have real impacts on the benefits, and healthcare of veterans and military families. The VA serves more than 9 million people, and there

are veterans who struggle with a host of medical issues, including unique service-related challenges as well as mental health challenges who require treatment; *and*

WHEREAS: Last Friday, Congressman Stephen Lynch held a rally with the veterans and government workers, as well as city and state officials outside the VA Medical Center in West Roxbury to denounce the terminations; *and*

WHEREAS: We must fight against cuts to the federal workforce and services at the VA. We must ensure our veterans and military families do not experience any interruptions to their benefits, healthcare and other services they receive; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Boston City Council denounces the latest terminations to personnel and services at the Department of Veteran Affairs and calls for the White House to reinstate all VA employees who were fired without cause; *and*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

That the Boston City Council commits to advocating and fighting for our veterans and military families to ensure their benefits, services and programs are not interrupted.

Filed on: February 26th, 2025