



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

November 21, 2019

Mr. Everett Kelley
AFGE National Secretary-Treasurer,
performing the duties of National President
80 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Kelley:

I was disturbed to read recent press accounts that stated leadership in the American Federation of Government Employees' (AFGE) national headquarters allowed a culture of sexual harassment to develop and thrive at the highest levels of your organization.

While AFGE National President J. David Cox has taken a leave of absence as these claims are investigated, reports in media outlets such as Bloomberg suggest that many other senior officials failed to properly address this problem for at least the last 2 1/2 years.

AFGE represents 260,000 employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and VA takes very seriously the problem of sexual harassment as well as other actions that create a hostile work environment. Our efforts should be bolstered by AFGE, which has long claimed to have an interest in protecting the rights of workers.

In light of recent events at your organization and the lack of information about how deep this problem goes, I am writing to get your personal and public assurance that you will protect VA employees who are members of your union from any form of harassment by union officials, while thoroughly investigating all allegations of improper behavior. VA spends considerable time and resources making sure its working environment is fair, inclusive, and psychologically safe for all, and it is important to us that the valued members of our team who complain about sexual harassment are not frustrated, neglected, or ignored by AFGE leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert L. Wilkie".

Robert L. Wilkie