

# IAVA Responds to President's Afghanistan Announcement

**New York, NY (May 27, 2014)** – Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) today issued the following statement after President Obama addressed the military involvement in Afghanistan. The President announced 9,800 servicemembers will remain in Afghanistan after this year in a “limited” capacity. The Afghanistan policy announcement comes as the VA controversy continues to grow.

The announcement comes after President Obama spent Sunday at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan and after his Memorial Day visit to Arlington National Cemetery.

IAVA CEO and Founder Paul Rieckhoff released the following statement:

“Today’s announcement underscores the urgent need to support our returning veterans. The President has laid out a strategy for withdrawing from Afghanistan, but our veterans still await a strategy to fix the unacceptable, long-standing problems throughout the VA system. After more than 13 years at war, we owe it to the last Americans serving in Afghanistan that they get the care and support they’ve earned when they return home.

Over the last few months, as VA whistleblowers step forward in new cities almost every week, it’s become clear that our nation is not doing right by all our veterans. In the midst of the VA scandal, the President must understand that IAVA members – who we engaged with at Memorial Day events across the country – are outraged and impatient for real action and real reform.”

IAVA’s 2014 Policy Agenda provides a road map for supporting veterans and getting them the care they earned. IAVA is urging passage of the VA Management Accountability Act, which the House overwhelming approved last week and which the Senate must still pass. This legislation is essential to empowering the leadership of the VA.