

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES

Pete Nichol森 – Commander
Daniel P. Duffy – Sr. Vice Commander



W. Benny Bachand – Adjutant/Quartermaster
Wayne Carrigan – Jr. Vice Commander

October 7, 2010

Mr. Salvatore Capprichio
Executive Director, Political Action Committee
Veterans of Foreign Wars
200 Maryland Ave N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Comrade Capprichio:

On behalf of the Department of Florida, I am writing to object to the manner in which the Veterans of Foreign Wars Political Action Committee made its endorsements for the United States Congress. This year's process is both arbitrary and capricious and devoid of Department input. Consequently, I am asking each member of the Department of Florida to disregard the list of endorsements as published in this month's VFW Magazine and vote their own conscience since we had no input into this year's endorsement process.

Apparently, the Committee has abandoned the previous years' process of "advise and consent" whereby it provided a list of proposed endorsees to the Departments for comment, concurrence, additions and deletions. The Department of Florida certainly understands that the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the VFW-PAC are necessarily separate entities, however, the PAC exists because of the support it derives from all Departments, Districts, Posts, Comrades and Sisters. Consequently, the Departments acting on behalf of its Districts, Posts and members should have an opportunity to voice its opinion on which Floridian candidates should or should not receive the endorsement of the VFW-PAC.

It is abundantly clear that the PAC has skewed this year's endorsements towards incumbents. By weighting selections toward the sitting members of Congress, you are encouraging complacency and taking discourse out of the electoral process. Our position is that a process that only evaluates the voting record of sitting members inherently disadvantages those candidates who challenge incumbents. The extant process negates any previous public or private sector experience of a non-incumbent candidate.

I am concerned that the selection process adopted by the PAC will have both lasting and negative consequences on our ability to recruit and retain members in the Department of Florida. It is evident from the tone of the received emails that the VFW-PAC and by association the Veterans of Foreign Wars is not serving the interests of some members and potential members. This regional firestorm could have been avoided if the PAC board and staff remembered the old adage that all politics are local.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pete Nichol森". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Pete Nichol森
State Commander

Cc: Richard L. Eubank, Commander-in-Chief
Richard L. DeNoyer, Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief
John Hamilton, Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief
Allen F. "Gunner" Kent, Adjutant General