



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

The Honorable C.L. "Butch" Otter March 26, 2015
Governor of Idaho
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720

Dear Governor Otter:

I want to thank you for your dedication to the Veterans of Idaho and highlight the work being done in your state.

States and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have long been partners in ensuring all Veterans receive the care and benefits they have earned. To further this partnership, VA established the **Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award** to publicly recognize and share the innovative programs being developed at the state level. Through our partnership with the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA), VA now annually identifies outstanding state programs that positively impact Veterans and exemplify VA's strategic goals and priorities.

This year I had the pleasure of honoring the Idaho Division of Veterans Services with the Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for the *Veteran Music & Memory Project*. Through this effort, the Boise State Veterans Home has reduced the use of psychotropic medications and improved the interaction between residents and staff. Your efforts will have a significant and lasting impact on the Veterans of Idaho and the Nation.

One of my primary goals is to create an efficient, innovative, and Veteran-centric organization. Programs like this are exactly the kind of public and private sector practices VA is looking to learn from. Thank you for your support and partnership in our mission to care for those who have born the battle. I look forward to working with you in the future and to seeing what new innovations Idaho can bring to the Nation.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the Director of the Idaho Division of Veterans Services.

Thank you and congratulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Robert A. McDonald", is positioned above the printed name.

Robert A. McDonald