

From: DRM
Sent: Thu, 8 Apr 2021 22:04:00 +0000
To: Murphy, Thomas, VBASTL
Subject: Re: Sen Grassley

Tom,

Thank you for the background. As our team works to gather information responsive to the Senator's request, I need you to sit this one out. I've asked Gina Farrisee to take the lead, and she will be contacting individuals in VBA who may have that information.

Don't discuss this matter with your subordinates, and if anyone on your team contacts you about this, simply ask them to fully comply with any information request from Gina. Also copy Gina on any emails you send or receive related to this matter from this point forward.

DM

From: Murphy, Thomas, VBASTL (b)(6)@va.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 15:53
To: DRM
Subject: Sen Grassley

Good Afternoon Sir. Here is some of that not good news we get sometimes.

Just recently I became aware that Charmain Bogue, EDU Director, and (b)(6) were accused of an inappropriate business relationship. I had my COS find out what the last administration did about it when they became aware last November. I needed to know if they did an investigation and if so, what was the outcome. They did not. So we contacted OAWP to ask about opening an investigation as is the process when SES's are involved.

Then we received this from Sen Grassley's office.

<https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-seeks-sweeping-review-into-allegations-of-whistleblower-reprisal-ethics-violations-at-veterans-benefits-administration>

The other part of the allegation involves myself; Rob Reynolds, RO Director in Roanoke, VA; and Jamie Manker, Former VBA SES. At the time, I was the Acting USB, Jamie was the PDUSB, and Rob was the

DUSB for Policy. The allegations Senator Grassley mentions here are part of a long list of allegations levied by a fired former employee that claimed to be a whistleblower. I terminated her for multiple violations of VA policies. All well documented in HR files.

This series of events took place over the last two administrations ending shortly after Paul Lawrence was appointed Under Secretary for Benefits. All allegations against all of us were dismissed with the exception of "Accepting Gifts" for attending NASCAR events. The details about my case are attached. Of note, the NASCAR event was part of a long standing VA outreach contract that has since been terminated.

It was determined by Secretary Wilkie that I did NOT accept a gift for (b)(6) because (b)(6) simply accompanied me, in my official VA capacity, to a Veteran's Day Event. But in the future I should contact OGC Ethics in advance of such events.

Rob Reynolds' case was withdrawn by USB Lawrence because the USAF provided evidence that (b)(6) (b)(6) was in attendance as a (b)(6)

Jamie Manker took extreme exception to the accusation and decided he wouldn't work for VA any longer. He opted to retire. The secretaries office called and asked him to stay and that they would clear his record. He declined.

Because of these accusations, VA lost one of the most effective outreach events in the sporting world. This family friendly event was even touted in one of President Obama's speeches for its success in reaching Veterans.