

VFW CHIDES WHITE HOUSE, TEXAS GOVERNOR FOR NO-SHOW

VFW IS INSULTED NEITHER WHITE HOUSE REP OR TX GOVERNOR ARE ATTENDING NATIONAL CONVENTION

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KANSAS CITY, Mo., August 22, 2011 - The White House will not be sending a representative to the Veterans of Foreign Wars 112th National Convention in San Antonio, Texas, drawing harsh criticism and a rebuke from the leadership of the nation's largest combat veteran's organization.

"The VFW has had a long-standing tradition of inviting the sitting president to address our convention. We want to know where he stands on veterans' affairs, and we want those remarks made in public and on the record," said Richard L. Eubank, the national commander of the nearly 2 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries.

"When the President is unable to attend, it has *always* been customary for the White House to choose a high-level administration official as an alternative speaker," Eubank continued. "It is an insult of the highest magnitude that for the first time in the history of the VFW, the White House has apparently decided that this great and iconic organization of combat veterans and all of its members are not worthy of its notice by not at least *offering* a first-tier speaker from the administration."

Eubank, a Marine Corps retiree and Vietnam combat veteran from Eugene, Ore., was also critical of Texas Governor, Rick Perry; "The VFW also has a tradition of inviting the governor of the host state where its annual convention is being held to come and welcome and greet our convention delegates. Although Governor Perry was similarly sent an invitation 3 months ago, apparently our invitation was deemed not important enough for the governor's office to at least accept or decline the invitation. Governor Perry's candidacy for president does not provide him an excuse for bad manners. The White House and Governor Perry can rest assured that the 2 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliaries will remember this discourteous treatment for a very long time to come."

Annually, the VFW's National Convention plays host to a number of other speakers as well, including prominent members of the Cabinet, military and civic leaders, business leaders and a host of everyday people honored for their exemplary service.