



For Immediate Release
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Joe Peters to Create Position of Veterans Advocate Within Office of Attorney General

(Harrisburg) – Republican candidate for Attorney General Joe Peters announced he will create a new Office of Veterans Advocate immediately after he is sworn into office. This week marked Vietnam Veterans Day also called “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” As such, there is no better time to acknowledge the debt owed to all veterans, no matter the conflict in which they served, as well as those who have in the past and today serve in our PA National Guard and Reserve components.

“I will work with the Legislature to create a Veterans Advocate in the Office of Attorney General (OAG),” said Peters, a former cop who has worked with active duty, Guard and Reserve forces throughout his long career as a prosecutor. “This Veterans Advocate would be patterned after the other ‘Advocate’ existing within the office -- the Consumer Advocate, an independent and specially empowered office housed within the OAG.”

Peters, a former federal Mafia prosecutor who also served two presidents as a top official at the White House Drug Czar’s office, said he would immediately expand the existing program of the OAG’s Office of Military and Veterans Affairs within which brochures and links are made available to veterans, while the larger Advocate’s office is created. “I will immediately appoint an experienced leader and create a staff trained and familiar with veterans issues to actively assist veterans and their families,” said Peters.

“Today I am assembling a Veterans Advisory Group consisting of past and present military personnel and family members to assess gaps in services for vets and their families, and establish priorities to begin aggressively assisting them using all of the law enforcement and civil powers of the OAG, to provide aggressive, active assistance.”

Peters noted that the state is losing veterans every day to suicide and that they face acute issues of PTSD, homelessness, reintegration challenges and lack of timely access to health care. “I will not stop with state issues, but be an advocate reaching into the federal systems to broker resolution to challenges such as the lack of prompt scheduling of health care appointments at VA hospitals,” said Peters. “An attorney general does not need a law or authority to aggressively reach out to the federal government to work cooperatively on corrective action. There will also be a focus on scams centered on vets and their families, predatory

Joe Peters: Republican for Attorney General

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lenders, educational needs, ID theft and outreach to our vets and families to whom we owe a debt we can never repay.”

Joe Peters began his long career at the Office of Attorney General (OAG) as an intern and later rose to be the state’s top drug prosecutor, as the first Executive Deputy Attorney General of the Office’s Drug and Organized Crime Division. He served state Attorneys General and U.S. Presidents from both parties, who sought him out because they wanted the best and brightest, not a political crony. By contrast, his GOP opponent Sen. John Rafferty spent just a few years in the OAG’s office working Medicaid fraud cases back in the late 1980’s.

Joe oversaw the country’s 26 High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) programs and their budget of \$250 million, and he represented the White House with police, prosecutors, governors, mayors and non-governmental organizations during his time there as Assistant Deputy Director for State & Local Affairs in the Drug Czar’s office.

Joe has presented to law enforcement officials from around the world, and has trained military and civilian personnel in Panama and consulted with law enforcement in Italy, the UK, Dubai, Kuwait and Qatar. Joe graduated from King’s College and later the Dickinson School of Law. He is a member of the E. B. Jermyn Lodge #2 Fraternal Order of Police and has been honored by the PA Chiefs of Police Association by being named a Life Member. He is an associate member of the Pennsylvania District Attorney’s Association and a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, where he sits on its Terrorism Committee.

Joe is the oldest of five children of Gene and Peg Peters and is the proud father of his son Max; his father served two-terms as a GOP Mayor of Scranton. In 2004 Joe was the Republican nominee for Pennsylvania Auditor General.