

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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GEORGE TURNBOO
SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT II

STATEMENT FROM THE OFFICE OF THE EL DORADO COUNTY DISTRICT 2 SUPERVISOR, AS A FOLLOW-UP FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CONCERNING THE VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

9 February 2021

On Dec. 5th, 2020, Mr. Cockrell attended the “Toys for Tots” toy drive event in Placerville:

- Mr. Cockrell dressed as Santa Claus to encourage Christmas Spirit for the children.
- The toy drive was a community event where families, law enforcement, veterans, and other organizations were equally welcomed to donate toys for underprivileged children.
- Mr. Cockrell made himself available to anyone who wanted a photo with Santa and was in dozens of photos with families and various groups. He did not discriminate against any person or group who wanted a photo.
- Video from the toy drive shows that when Mr. Cockrell was asked to stand in front of the Proud Boys group for a photo, he made a peace sign for the photo, but the group prodded him to make other hand gestures, which he did in the spur of the moment without any ill will or preconceived intention.
- The Mountain Democrat newspaper did not have an article in the newspaper stating that Mr. Cockrell was a member of the Proud Boys, nor did a photo of Mr. Cockrell dressed as Santa appear in the newspaper. Photos and misinformation were circulated in political groups on social media.
- Mr. Cockrell listed his organization affiliations on his application for the Veterans Affairs Commission and that list does not include the Proud Boys nor the Hangtown Proud Boys.
- Mr. Cockrell’s application is attached and shows he is qualified for the Veteran Affairs Commission. Several Commissioners support Mr. Cockrell’s appointment to the VA Commission because he is a younger veteran with a diverse military background. Mr. Cockrell understands what it is to serve our country and the challenges veterans face back home.
- It is unjust to determine ANYONE'S ability to serve based on misinformation.

To mitigate any potential inequalities in representation, on February 9th, 2021, District 5 Supervisor and District 2 Supervisor will put forward Agenda Item #13, File #21-0148, which is a recommendation that ALL commission nominees undergo a form of Implicit Bias training, to ensure they treat everyone equally.

- George Turnboo
El Dorado County District 2 Supervisor