



## Little action to address bureaucratic tangle

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By Alex Holt

During the campaign, Barack Obama promised to "invest additional resources into enforcement and investigation in order to crack down on employers who are not following the letter and spirit of the law. He will also require the Pentagon, Labor and Justice Departments to work together more closely to ensure the rights of our troops are being protected."

There has not been much activity. President Obama appointed a new assistant secretary to head the Veterans Employment and Training Services, which investigates complaints filed by reservists. David Small, Communications Director at the Reserve Officers Association, says they are hopeful that the new secretary, himself a veteran with a service-connected disability, will help institutionalize changes that will make the office more effective in its investigations and referrals.

The association has complained that the Justice and Labor departments are not working together effectively and that so far the administration has not addressed the problem.

We spoke with two lawyers who specialize in the field, the Reserve Officers Association, and doing extensive searches, it appears that no other action has been taken than appointing a new assistant secretary to VETS.

The only statement the president has made on the subject that we could find was when he proclaimed "National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week" in September, 2009. "Through their continued support and flexibility," said President Obama in his proclamation, "employers across the country bolster the efforts of members of the Guard and Reserve." Not once did he mention the word discrimination.

With the only actions being appointing a new assistant secretary and making a proclamation about reservists and employers without mentioning the word discrimination, we haven't seen enough action for anything other than a Stalled.

Sources:Barack Obama, "Fulfilling a Sacred Trust With Our Veterans" accessed on Jan 13, 2010

President Obama, "National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week" Sep 14, 2009

Interviews: David Small, Communications Director at the Reserve Officers Association, Jan 13, 2010; Edward Still, co-author of The USERRA Manual, Jan 13, 2010; **Steven Herrick, Managing Partner at Washington, DC Office of Tully Rinckey PLLC, Jan 13, 2010.**