



MEMORANDUM

TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE • GEORGE P. BUSH • COMMISSIONER

Date: November 10, 2021

To: Mark Havens, GLO Chief Clerk,

From: Eric Brown, Deputy Director, Texas State Veterans Cemeteries

Subject: Employment Resignation

Mark,

I am respectfully submitting this formal notice of resignation as the Deputy Director of the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries, with the last working date of Nov. 30, 2021.

It has been a tremendous privilege and honor serving those that served, while having a positive impact on many families, communities, and cemetery staff that embrace the hallowed grounds and dignified "tone of honor."

The mission, vision, and public service obligation for our well deserving Veterans and their families has become increasingly difficult to manage, specifically due to an unfortunate longstanding perspective and designation of the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries as a "Money Losing Program" and "Money Losers."

The very deliberate comments made during the Oct. 28, 2021 Veterans Cemetery Committee meeting by the GLO Chief Investment Officer, including similar comments from various agency key staff, spoke volumes of the agencies unfortunate perspective of this very special commitment and public service obligation. The lack of empathy and fundamental understanding of Veterans' service and sacrifice is abhorrent.

This perspective, when coupled with historically denigrating treatment and deliberate language conveying a displeasure at the existence of and funding for our Texas hallowed grounds must change.

I am saddened by this very misaligned perspective, but grateful at the opportunity to proudly represent our Veterans, active duty military, and their families as a member of the Texas General Land Office & Veterans Land Board.

Currently, none of the more than 155 National and 150 state Veteran cemeteries across the nation generate a profit. These "shrines" were never meant to thrive financially, but instead are intended to honor those that served and their families through dignified and honorable burial and interment services. The Texas hallowed grounds experienced extraordinary increases in customers and visitors the past several years to honor and participate in time honored Veteran and military events, evidence of the community's genuine appreciation.

As we approach Veteran's Day, please know that the service and sacrifice of the almost 24,000 souls buried at all four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries mattered and their sacrifices were not in vain. As stated during the Oct. 28 committee meeting, "we should view costs to maintain our cemeteries as an investment in Veterans, not a loss."

The cost has been paid and continues to be paid on battlefields around the globe, with brave men and women prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice, if necessary.

I would like to convey a heartfelt thank you to Commissioner George P. Bush for allowing and supporting the successful growth and evolution of our Texas gems.

I stand fully prepared to provide any and all transition support to mitigate any disruptions to public and Veteran services to our deserving communities.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eric Brown, Deputy Director
Texas State Veterans Cemeteries
U. S. Air Force (ret.)