

**Statement of Gary Shatswell**  
**Nominee for**  
**Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Officer**  
**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**  
**before the**  
**Committee on Veterans' Affairs**  
**United States Senate**

Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Blumenthal, and distinguished Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Officer for the Department of Veterans Affairs. I am deeply grateful to President Donald J. Trump for this honor and for his confidence in me and am thankful to Secretary Douglas A. Collins for his trust.

I sit before you, a man who loves God, my family, and my country. So, I begin with God. I am filled with gratitude to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, whose words have guided my life. In John 15, He says, "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends."

Those words describe the ethos of every man and woman who has worn this Nation's uniform, placing something larger than themselves above their own comfort, safety, and in some cases, their lives. If confirmed, honoring their service and sacrifice will be a guiding light.

To my family, I want to acknowledge my three amazing children who are watching online. Julia, Elizabeth, and Garrison, I love you more than words and am so proud of who you are and how it shows up in your faith, service, and work.

My family name, though uncommon, has deep roots. John Shatswell built a home in Ipswich in 1635. Thomas Shatswell was a drummer for the patriots in the Revolutionary War. Colonel Nathaniel Shatswell fought for the Union in the Civil War. Of the eight boys in my father's family, six served, including my father. My Uncle Kenny returned from Vietnam wearing a Purple Heart. I have cousins, nieces, and nephews who have served.

Before my father passed, I took him regularly to the VA in Tacoma, Washington, and saw firsthand what the VA means to those who served and those who love them.

Finally, to my country. I was raised in an extraordinary family that formed my love for America. We traveled extensively, singing Gospel music. When I was 10 years old, we toured Europe, including behind the “iron curtain.” I remember feeling the oppression as we crossed those borders, and I remember how the next time I recited the Pledge of Allegiance, tears ran down my face. American freedom became real to me.

Since joining VA as Senior Advisor to Secretary Collins on December 1, 2025, I’ve met with senior leadership in the Central Office, medical centers, clinics, and cemeteries around the country. I sat with many Veterans and heard their stories. That time of listening was invaluable. From my industry experience, I began asking, “What if?”

- WHAT IF we connected with Service members when they enlist and stayed present through active duty, transition, and the rest of their lives? No one left behind.
- WHAT IF we eliminated repeatedly asking Veterans for the same information?
- WHAT IF rather than digitizing old paper processes, we reimaged them as digitally native?

It has been a blessing to witness the breadth of support this country provides our Veterans, but frankly, we can and must do better when it comes to information technology.

My conversations with leadership and individual contributors have revealed a few common themes:

- We need a culture of transparency and accountability, achievable through agile program management, which will also accelerate mission delivery. We must go faster.
- Regarding artificial intelligence, we need clear, bright-lined guardrails of security and privacy, enabling a green light to drive productivity and human decision making.
- We need to leverage our enterprise data as a strategic asset, strengthening security and unlocking benefits we cannot yet fully envision.

My résumé highlights 30 years of executive leadership, hypergrowth, and turnaround management. Yet, there are countless untold stories; for example, I created and taught the first web development course at Microsoft. I ask hard questions and do hard work. I've had the privilege of meeting with several of you, and those conversations about improving service to our Veterans have deepened my commitment. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary and this Committee to prioritize, execute, and deliver.

In loving God, my family, and this country the thread of service is in my DNA.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today, and to be considered for this position. I look forward to answering your questions.