



## Department of Veterans Affairs

Washington, D.C.

### Will A. Gunn

Will A. Gunn was sworn in as the General Counsel for the Department of Veterans Affairs on May 26, 2009. As the Department's top lawyer, Mr. Gunn oversees approximately 450 attorneys within the Office of the General Counsel, which provides proactive legal advice and representation to the Department concerning all aspects of its program and management responsibilities. The General Counsel supervises over 700 employees in Washington, D.C., and in field locations across the United States.

Mr. Gunn is a retired Air Force colonel, having served as a military lawyer in the Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps. In 1990, he was selected as a White House Fellow and served in the Executive Office of the President in the Office of Cabinet Affairs. In 2003, Mr. Gunn was named the first-ever Chief Defense Counsel in the Department of Defense Office of Military Commissions. Mr. Gunn built a defense team and supervised all defense activities for detainees selected for trial before military commissions—the first proceedings of their kind to be conducted by the United States in over 60 years. Mr. Gunn won acclaim for his principled leadership and commitment to ensuring that detainees received effective representation. In doing so, he set the tone so that the military lawyers under his leadership were able to vigorously defend their clients. These efforts radically changed public perceptions about military lawyers and raised international attention on the Guantanamo prison camp.



**General Counsel**

In 2005, Mr. Gunn retired from the military and was named President and CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington where he led one of the largest affiliates of Boys & Girls Clubs of America. In 2008, he founded the Gunn Law Firm to provide representation to military members and veterans in a range of administrative matters.

A native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Mr. Gunn graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy with military honors in 1980. He is a 1986 cum laude graduate of Harvard Law School and while at Harvard, he was elected President of the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, the nation's oldest student run legal services organization. Mr. Gunn also has a Masters of Laws degree in Environmental Law from the George Washington University School of Law and a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Mr. Gunn has served as chairman of the American Bar Association's Commission on Youth at Risk and has served on the boards of Christian Service Charities and the Air Force Academy Way of Life Alumni Group. He has held leadership positions in a host of other bar association and community organizations and has also received numerous awards and honors including the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau's Outstanding Alumni Award, a Human Rights Award from the Southern Center for Human Rights, and the American Bar Association's Outstanding Career Military Lawyer Award. In 2002, he was elected to the National Bar Association's Military Law Section Hall of Fame.

Mr. Gunn is also a licensed minister. He and his wife, Dawn, live in Northern Virginia.

*June 2009*