

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Thursday, May 3rd, 2018

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**OFFICIALS DEMAND DARLENE SENGER APOLOGIZE  
TO U.S. SEN. TAMMY DUCKWORTH FOR TRYING TO  
FALSELY BLAME HER FOR VETERANS' DEATHS**

CHICAGO – Illinois Comptroller Susana A. Mendoza; Democratic nominee for governor J.B. Pritzker; State Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, U.S Army Corps veteran and Chair of the House Veterans Affairs Committee; and State Rep., U.S. Marine Corps veteran Stephanie Kifowit demanded Governor Rauner's former Deputy Chief of Staff Darlene Senger apologize to U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth Thursday.

As WBEZ reported this week, when news broke of 13 deaths of veterans at the State's Quincy Veterans Home last year, Senger's first reaction was not to propose help; to seek answers as to why it happened; or to express concern for remaining veterans, but rather to attempt to falsely blame the deaths of veterans on wounded veteran Senator Duckworth, who had served as Illinois' Director of Veterans Affairs. Duckworth's term as Director ended six years before the first cases of Legionnaires' Disease were reported at the Quincy Veterans' Home.

“What kind of a person does that?” Comptroller Mendoza asked of Senger, who is now the Republican nominee for State Comptroller. “As we recover from the manufactured budget crisis that Governor Rauner created, my office continues to have to make tough choices when prioritizing state payments. That means Illinois needs a comptroller with a strong moral compass--not one just seeking to deflect blame away from the governor. Sen. Tammy Duckworth sacrificed her body on the battlefield fighting for our country. She deserves respect from Darlene Senger, not false blame. Senger owes her an apology. A BIG ONE.”

“While Bruce Rauner staged press stunts and paid lip-service to veterans and their families, this administration was hiding emails that contained a secret plan to shift blame

away from their failed governor,” said JB Pritzker. “After years of Rauner's fatal mismanagement, his administration tried to pin the blame on U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth, a combat Veteran and advocate for Veterans’ rights who embodies the spirit and courage of this country. Governor Rauner, Senator Duckworth is owed an apology. She deserves to be honored for her service and sacrifice.”

"I am personally upset by the situation at the Quincy Veterans Home. All veterans -- especially those at the Quincy facility -- deserve our gratitude and a commitment to helping them when they need it the most," said Secretary of State Jesse White, a veteran of the U.S. Army, Army Reserves and Illinois National Guard. "It's insulting that as the Governor's deputy chief of staff, Darlene Senger, would attempt to point blame and try to politicize a life-and-death issue facing our veterans. There is no room in state government for individuals who callously point fingers and attempt to skirt their own responsibilities."

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