

- Thank you for inviting me here today. I know you have a lot of important work to accomplish, but I'd like to take a moment and talk about the accomplishments of Commissioner Bernie Melter – who was appointed during the Carlson Administration – and whom I re-appointed when I was elected.
- Bernie has a long, distinguished history of serving the veteran community. When people talk about being service-minded, they are talking about someone just like Bernie. Listen to this (partial) list of his accomplishments:
- He has been a member of the American Legion, the VFW, Disabled American Veterans of America, the Marine Corps and the Navy and Army Retiree Councils (remember – that's a partial list!).
- In 1979, Bernie was selected as one of 10 Outstanding Vietnam Veterans in Minnesota by Governor Al Quie. In 1987, he was named Minnesota County Veterans Service Officer of the Year. He was also awarded the Department of the Army Commanders Public Service Award in 1996 (did I mention that this is also a partial list)?
- Bernie is also active in community and church affairs. A former Eagle Scout and recipient of the Silver Beaver Award, he serves as coordinator for Cannon Falls Scout Troop 39. He served with the Red Cross, on the State Service Council, and as a board member of the North Central Blood Services Region.
- Bernie, when I was preparing to give these remarks and I read your biography, I thought: "No wonder this guy is retiring. He hasn't gotten a full night's sleep in the last three decades!"
- You deserve much respect for your many years of service. You're a difficult act to follow, and the State of Minnesota will miss your talent and hard work.