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DATE: August 12, 2020

To: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Purple Heart Trail of Westfield, Massachusetts strongly supports the Coalition to the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. Further, we support the Veteran residents of the Soldiers' Home and their families. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is strongly encouraged to provide improved funding, staffing, and construction of a new and upgraded home. This new Soldiers' Home must have private rooms with bathrooms for their residents in order to prevent the spread of viruses and other contagious diseases.

In addition, to enhance the mission of the Soldiers' Home, it is essential that an Adult Day Care Program be incorporated in the plan.

Finally, the Commonwealth must provide better governance and oversight of the Soldiers' Home. The Massachusetts Veterans community and resident family members must have input to the operation, staffing, and care of their loved ones.

The tragedy that occurred at the Soldiers' Home never should have happened and it is imperative that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enact the appropriate action to ensure that a major oversight like this never happens again.

*Sincerely Yours:*

*George W. Barnet, Jr.*