



Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 219 - Westfield MA

308 Elm Street

Westfield, Massachusetts 01085



August 4, 2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Legislature

c/o Senator John Velis

State House Boston

24 Beacon Street

Room 70

Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Velis,

The Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 219 of Westfield, MA strongly backs the Coalition to Support the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. We stand with the veteran residents of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home and their families during this difficult time and ask the Massachusetts Legislature make specific changes to care for our country's heroes in their elder years.

We urge the legislature of the Commonwealth to provide much needed funding to staff and construct upgrades and new private bedroom/bathroom units at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. We also concur with the Coalition's request to implement an Adult Day Care Program on the premises.

Furthermore, we agree with the other veteran organizations plea to provide better governance and supervision of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. The tragedy that occurred earlier due to the COVID virus should have never happened. We strongly recommended the Commonwealth finally enact the appropriate actions to ensure a major oversight like this never happens again.

Sincerely,

Ken Lafreniere, President
VVA Ch. 219