

**Town of Hadley  
Select Board**

**Resolution in Support of The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke**

Whereas in 1952, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke opened and has provided "Care With Honor and Dignity" to thousands of Massachusetts Veterans for over 68 years;

Whereas in 2010, Veteran rooms at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home were determined by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs to be non-compliant with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard;

Whereas in 2012, The Massachusetts Division of Capital Assets Management commissioned a Needs Assessment Study that determined that "of the 278 current beds, less than 5% meet VA Standards";

Whereas in 2013, a design to add 120 private rooms, as well as convert existing rooms thus creating 278 fully compliant beds, was approved by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) for 65% federal funding; however, the state has repeatedly failed to commit its 35% share of matching funds, required to allow for the start of construction;

Whereas in 2016, a project to create an Adult Day Health Care Program at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke was also approved by the VA for 65% funding; however, it also has never received Massachusetts' commitment for the 35% matching funds;

Whereas in November 2017, with the support of Governor Baker and the Legislature, the state approved \$199 million to build a new 154-bed long-term care facility at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea; while disregarding the long- documented deficiencies at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home;

Whereas the lack of sufficient space and staff were major contributing factors in the rapid spread of the Novel Coronavirus-19 at the Home which resulted in the deaths of 76 Veterans who tested positive for COVID-19. This atrocity is one of our country's worst Veteran tragedies and contradicts Massachusetts' claim of being the best in the nation for Veteran benefits;

Whereas all Veterans deserve equal treatment in Massachusetts state-funded Veteran Homes; to include the same living conditions as well as proportionate funding to provide for a safe and efficient level of staffing in all departments;

NOW, THEREFORE, **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Town of Hadley urges Governor Baker and the Legislature take immediate action to increase funding to ensure sufficient staff, equipment and supplies to provide safe care; and to expedite the design of the new Soldiers' Home in Holyoke to allow for the construction of fully compliant rooms for 250 Veterans, including a toilet and shower in each bedroom, and the establishment of an Adult Day Health Care Program to meet the VA project submission date of April 15, 2021; in order to provide the best in care for "those who have borne the battle" and sacrificed their safety and well-being to preserve our nation's freedom.

*Dear Sirs  
I give a thumbs  
Clara Staley  
Jane Nieminen  
John W. [unclear]*

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