

Thankyou Rep. LaFave and members of the Committee for giving me this time to talk about SB 971.

The American Legion does support more Veteran Cemeteries, and we do support a Veteran Cemetery in Crawford County. However, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan has NO Veteran Cemeteries, and its Veteran Population is approximately 25,843 veterans with the two largest areas of Veteran population being Marquette County with 5,803 and Delta County with 3,374 veterans each and that is no surprise since these are the two largest counties in the Upper Peninsula.

The MVAA received funding in the new budget to study as to what locations in the State would be the best locations for Veteran Cemeteries. We support the MVAA doing the study but understand that Crawford County already has a location designated. We there for request that the MVAA study move forward as expeditiously as possible, but that priority for the study be given to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. And that Crawford County location be approved as is, since it is centrally located to the upper part of the mitten of Great State of Michigan without the study.

Currently, under very limited conditions, members of the Michigan National Guard may be buried at the V.A. run Cemeteries. And now that all new Cemeteries will be State run after their development by the V.A., we are requesting that all new Veteran Cemeteries allow for the burial of Michigan National Guard members of the Army and Air Force that fulfill their guard obligations and released form the Michigan National Guard under honorable conditions or die while under "State" activation orders.

Thankyou Mr. Chair and members of the Committee do you have any questions.

Tim Poxson

Legislative Chair American Legion Department of Michigan Legislative Chair

(Copy of American Legion Resolution attached for information only)

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION: 22-39 (passed at September fall Conference)

SUBMITTED BY: LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: VETERAN CEMETERIES STUDY BY THE MICHIGAN VETERAN AFFAIRS AGENCY (MVAA)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The American Legion Department of Michigan has for years worked to get more veteran cemeteries in the State of Michigan, and

WHEREAS, The MVAA received funding to conduct a study as to what locations in the State of Michigan will be the best locations for Veteran Cemeteries, and

WHEREAS, The House of Representatives will soon be introducing a bill to move forward with that process, and

WHEREAS, The Upper Peninsula of Michigan has no Cemeteries, and

WHEREAS, All new Veteran Cemeteries will be State run, and

WHEREAS, Currently under very limited conditions may members of the National Guard be buried at a VA run Cemetery, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Michigan, in annual Fall Conference assembled in Muskegon, Michigan, September 23-25, 2022, that the American Legion Department of Michigan does support such a study for the location of Michigan Veteran Cemeteries, and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That priority of such a study be given to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED. That all wording that would exclude counties of certain populations be removed from wording of such new Legislation, and, be it

FINALLY RESOLVED. That any New Veteran Cemeteries run and owned by the State of Michigan allow for the Burial of Michigan National Guard members of the Army and Air Force that fulfill their Guard obligations and released from the Michigan National Guard under honorable conditions.