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April 3, 2023

Livingston County Board of Commissioners  
304 E Grand River Ave  
Howell, MI 48843

Dear Commissioners,

Under the leadership of our new Veteran Services Director our county has recently made two significant enhancements to our Veteran services programs. These enhancements improve our ability to connect veterans with their earned benefits and services.

It has long been desired to reach out to newly discharged veterans living in our county, making them aware of the array of available services. Past attempts to accomplish this were stymied by the inability to acquire the contact information of recently discharged veterans from state or federal government agencies.

This hurdle was recently overcome. Thanks to the perseverance of Mr. Ramon Baca, Veteran Services Director, the federal government now provides Livingston County with authorization to access the list of recently discharged veterans who reside in our county. Accordingly, our county will now mail each returning veteran information regarding how they can access their earned benefits and services through our Veteran Service Department. We can now be confident that each newly discharged veteran living in our county is aware of how best to access their earned benefits and services.

A second enhancement resulted when Mr. Baca focused attention on the property tax exemption for disabled veterans. Confusion regarding the statutory requirements of this exemption created a situation where some eligible veterans could miss out on the full value of this earned benefit. This issue was effectively addressed when Mr. Baca sought a written legal opinion from our county's legal counsel. This legal opinion clarifies the circumstances under which a qualified disabled veteran (under MCL 211.7b) does not have to pay property tax. It is worth noting that uncertainty regarding the requirements of MCL 211.7b was not isolated to Livingston County, rather this uncertainty was/is statewide.

I am asking for your support for the "Resolution Sharing Veteran Services Department Enhancements with Other Michigan Counties." It is my belief that veterans in other Michigan counties may benefit from Mr. Baca's findings. Normally the sharing of information doesn't require Board approval. However, in this case authorization is needed as we would be sharing an attorney/client privileged opinion titled Disabled Veterans Property Tax Exemption, dated March 9, 2023.

Best regards,

Wes Nakagiri  
Commissioner, District 4  
Livingston County Board of Commissioners