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CONTACT:

Michael Jolin

michael.jolin@vets.ri.gov

401-921-0955 (office)

401-787-1076 (cell)



RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Raimondo Officially Opens New Veterans Home with Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Veterans Day

BRISTOL, R.I. – Governor Gina M. Raimondo presided over a traditional ribbon cutting ceremony today, marking the official opening of the new Rhode Island Veterans Home. She was joined by her Director of Veterans Affairs, Kasim Yarn, members of the Congressional delegation, the project team, and other state and local officials.

"Over 16 major trades have contributed to building this beautiful new home for our honored Veterans, and the pride in their work is evident in every detail," said Governor Raimondo. "This state-of-the-art facility is a testament to the incredible debt we owe our veterans and reaffirms our commitment to ensuring a high quality of life after their service. I'm proud that Rhode Island is now leading the way in recognizing the sacrifice of those who've served our great nation. Our veterans deserve nothing less."

Located on the 110-acre site of the existing home in Bristol, Rhode Island, the state-of-the-art Veterans Home opened with 208 beds. Residents completed the move to the new home earlier this week.

"We owe our veterans a debt of gratitude and we have an obligation to ensure they are cared for after their service," said Congressman Langevin. "The new Veterans Home will provide rehabilitative and social services that so many of our veterans need and deserve. This Veterans Day, I'm proud to join in the ribbon cutting of this state-of-the-art facility to demonstrate our appreciation and commitment to those who have sacrificed so much for this country."

"I can think of no better way to mark Veterans Day than by celebrating the official opening of this extraordinary new Veteran's Home," said Cicilline. "All Americans owe our veterans an incredible debt of gratitude for their service and sacrifice to our nation. We also owe them the

opportunity to return home, provide for their families, and retire with dignity. And that is why the new Veterans Home in Bristol is so important. This state-of-the-art facility will allow Rhode Island's heroes to live in comfort with convenient access to high-quality health care. It is an outstanding example of how federal investments are improving the lives of Rhode Islanders, and I am committed to working to secure additional resources to benefit our state's veterans."

Over 400 construction workers and trades people have been onsite building the new home. Designed and built to retain a residential feel, the new Veterans Home contains six distinct "neighborhoods" within the 256,000-square-foot building. Each neighborhood has a private family dining room that will allow families to visit and eat with their loved ones, and a "living room" area with a fireplace so residents can sit and relax, read, or socialize with others. Importantly, residents will now have their own living space, a single room that includes a personal bathroom with a shower.

"Rhode Island is one of the first states to use this new 'community living' concept for veterans' long-term care. It dispenses with the traditional, institutional model," said Kasim Yarn, the state's Director of Veterans Affairs. "This is what our veterans have advocated for. And with our veterans' population being overwhelmingly earlier-era veterans – World War II, Korea, Vietnam – we're ahead of the curve."

Rhode Island voters approved two bonds totaling \$121 million for the new 208-bed home. Half of the project's construction costs will be reimbursed by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs through its state veterans home construction grant program.

"The opening of this state-of-the-art facility for our veterans has been a long time coming and I am grateful that our state's veterans have the best possible home now available to them. Their selflessness and sacrifices in the name of our country demand that they receive the best possible care and comfort for the remainder of their lives and the new Veterans Home will do just that for these brave men and women," said Sen. Walter S. Felag, Jr., Chairman of the Senate Committee on Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs.

"This is a great day for our brave veterans and everyone should be proud that our state's retired military heroes now have the top-notch facility that they so thoroughly deserve. We owe such an unmeasurable debt to our veterans and this new Veterans Home is just one way to show our gratitude and respect toward these champions of democracy," said Rep. Samuel A. Azzinaro, Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs (D-Dist. 37, Westerly).

Peregrine Group, a veteran-owned, Rumford-based contractor, led the design and construction of the project on behalf of the state. Brewster Thornton Group Architects, a Providence-based, women-owned enterprise, designed the new home, and Gilbane Construction served as the project's construction manager.

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