Dear Friend,

Taking care of our active military members and veterans is a top priority of mine. While we proudly make strides to ensure the best possible care for our military heroes, it is incumbent upon us to continue finding ways to keep the promise to our veterans and military personnel.

All active military members and veterans deserve peace of mind knowing we are working to improve their quality of life. Supporting our men and women in uniform is the least we can do to honor their selfless service.

That’s why I helped pass crucial legislation that will keep the promise to those who proudly serve our nation and those who honorably served in the past.

Within this newsletter, you will find information on the most recent House legislation as it relates to our military heroes. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

STEVE JOHNSON
State Representative

(517) 373-0840 • StevenJohnson@house.mi.gov
www.RepJohnson.com
Giving high school dropouts a second chance through the MYCA

The Michigan Youth Challenge Academy (MYCA) is a great opportunity for teenagers on the verge of dropping out of high school. Operated by the Michigan National Guard, the MYCA is a free and voluntary residential education program for both males and females ages 16 to 18, who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of high school and have no felony convictions. Over a 22-week period, academy participants attend classes as they would in traditional high school. However, they also engage in a variety of activities aimed at development of leadership skills, teamwork, physical fitness, employment skills and civic responsibility. The academy follows an interdisciplinary intervention model that includes formal education, elements of social and behavioral sciences, and a quasi-military structure of organization and procedures. This program offers hope to teenagers and teaches them life skills, increasing the likelihood of them being law-abiding citizens. Cadets who graduate through the program will not only earn a full semester of high school credits, but also can qualify to receive credits from Kellogg Community College. Dropping out of high school doesn’t have to be the end of the road. Michigan Youth Challenge Academy is a second chance.

Justice must be served for our veterans

It is extremely troubling that my fellow veterans are not receiving the treatment they well deserve.

I wholeheartedly support Attorney General Bill Schuette’s investigation into the mistreatment of patients at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans (GRHV).

Sadly, 11 former caregivers at the GRHV were charged in July for altering patient medical records or charts with misleading or inaccurate information. More recently, a former employee at the GRHV has been convicted of 4th degree vulnerable adult abuse.

It infuriates me to see anyone commit actions like these toward our military heroes. Knowingly treating any veteran like this is inhumane. That is in no way how Americans should repay our men and women fighting for our freedoms.

If you are intentionally providing less than exceptional care for our veterans, expect justice to be served.

Despite this awful news, it is encouraging to see the GRHV making strides in the right direction and improving care for patients at the home.

As a member of the House Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, I will continue to support the Attorney General’s ongoing investigation and promise to make taking care of our active military members and veterans a top priority of mine.

National Guard members are better protected under legislation

I am supporting legislation to ensure members of the state’s National Guard always have the ability to properly protect themselves while on National Guard property.

There are approximately 400 active service personnel operating in our state armories, recruitment centers and other various military facilities. As federal employees, the Department of Defense prohibits these individuals from carrying a firearm for defense purposes.

However, Michigan’s Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has recently permitted Michigan National Guard members – including full- and part-time service personnel – who hold concealed pistol licenses to carry personally owned firearms in all places now allowed under federal and state law.

House Bill 4474 accepts the current practice to ensure that members of the state’s National Guard have the option to properly arm and protect themselves if they choose.

For their own personal protection and the protection of others, a trained member of the National Guard should be able to carry a weapon on National Guard property.
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