

White Paper

Saving the Pacific Branch Home for Disabled Veterans

By Lynkeisha Dixon (CA), 19 April 2024

Whereas, in 1862, President Abraham Lincoln, in a moment of profound foresight and compassion, coined the promise "Care for Veterans that shall have borne the battle [service-connected ailments]" that led to the creation of the 1866 Soldiers Home system, a testament to our nation's commitment to its brave defenders, and,

Whereas, in 1887, Congress established the receivership of land for the future home location "West of the Rocky Mountains," and,

Whereas, in 1888, two initial deeds for the Pacific Branch of the National Home for Disabled Veterans were legally executed, and the Deed-restricted land-use mandates to "permanently maintain" properties as a national "home for disabled Veterans" and, for separately deeded beachfront property, provide a "beach-house" and a "pavilion" for "residents of the home," were legally established and executed, and,

Whereas, the deed-restricted land-use terms clearly intended that a Home, including beachfront property for its "residents," be maintained in perpetuity and,

Whereas, in 2013, the 9th Circuit federal court ruled to perpetuate the intended land use and,

Whereas, in 2018, the Office of the Inspector General Report on Land Use at the Home upheld the court ruling, and,

Whereas, today, 2024, the once whole- operation of the Home is rapidly being repurposed by a non-veteran, multi-government level, influenced and approved master plan operation, therefore be it.

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States should urge Congress to be a staunch advocate for the welfare and rights of our veterans and stands at the forefront of this issue. It is with a deep sense of duty and urgency that we appeal to the honorable members of Congress to heed a matter of grave concern that directly impacts the sanctity and well-being of our veterans.

At the heart of this issue is the master plan currently in motion, which egregiously violates the terms outlined in the 'permanent' deeds of 1888. These solemn agreements, agreed upon by the 'Party-of-the-second-part,' the U.S. Government, were meant to safeguard our veterans' home. However, the ongoing construction activities by the principal developers and third-party contractors not only disrespect these solemn agreements but also inflict tangible harm on our veterans. This situation of blatant disregard for our veterans' rights cannot be allowed to persist unchallenged.

Therefore, we propose two critical resolutions for immediate action by Congress. First, we urge an immediate moratorium on the master plan, halting all construction activities by the principal developers and third-party-related contract operations. This pause is crucial for meticulously presenting, reviewing, and resolving the existing, fact-based evidence highlighting the violations and harm inflicted. Second, this moratorium will ensure a fair and just process is adhered to, upholding the integrity of the original

deeds and, most importantly, the dignity and well-being of our veterans. We implore Congress to act swiftly and decisively to protect those who have served our nation with honor.