



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

Daniel J. McKee **Governor**
Kasim J. Yarn **Director**

April 9, 2026

The Honorable Samuel A. Azzinaro
Chair, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H7679 - AN ACT RELATING TO MILITARY AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE - BURIAL OF VETERANS

Dear Chair Azzinaro:

I submit this letter for the record to express the Office of Veterans Services' strong support for **H7679**, which would grant Filipino and Laotian Hmong forces who served honorably in military operations supporting the United States as special guerrilla units the right to burial at the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

Filipino forces served alongside U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. Laotian Hmong forces served during the conflict in the Kingdom of Laos and surrounding regions between 1961 and 1975. These service members fought bravely, sustained heavy casualties, and made extraordinary sacrifices in support of the United States. Their service has been formally recognized by the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Many of these special guerrilla unit service members have earned the right to a dignified burial at the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Extending this recognition is a matter of fairness, gratitude, and honoring their service.

I respectfully urge you to support H7679 and stand with the Hmong and Laotian community members who served our nation with courage and distinction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. J. Yarn", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Kasim J. Yarn
Director of Veterans Services

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel for the Speaker of the House of Representatives
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy