



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

August 2, 2024

Ronald E. Walters
Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs
National Cemetery Administration
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Under Secretary Walters:

As Members of the Orange County Congressional Delegation, we write to you in support of the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program Pre-application submitted to your office by the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) for the Southern California Veterans Cemetery at Gypsum Canyon in Anaheim Hills, CA.

After years of delay due to a lack of consensus on an appropriate location, the County of Orange, all 34 cities, a bipartisan majority of the County's state and federal delegation, public safety and labor organizations, and more than 100 local, state and national veterans' organizations are united in support of the Gypsum Canyon location.

On July 27, 2021, the Orange County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved allocating \$20 million exclusively for site development of a veterans' cemetery at Gypsum Canyon and adopted a resolution to move forward with planning and developing a site to honor and respect the men and women who served our great country. The Board also allocated over 200 acres of county-owned land located at Gypsum Canyon near the intersection of the 91 freeway and 241 toll road, which has been deeded to the Orange County Cemetery District (OCCD) for the purpose of building a public cemetery and a separate veterans cemetery.

On July 23, 2024, the Anaheim City Council unanimously approved OCCD's application to develop and operate a public cemetery at Gypsum Canyon. This action allows OCCD, CalVet and the County to continue collaborating on land development for shared cost options.

CalVet completed and released its feasibility study of the Gypsum Canyon location on January 26, 2024. The study was authorized in legislation, which was overwhelmingly approved by the California State Legislature and enacted into law in 2022. On June 28, 2024, State Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva and State Senator Thomas J. Umberg announced the inclusion of an additional \$5 million in additional state funding in the 2024 State Budget Act, which was passed by both houses of the legislature and chaptered into law. This funding

supplements the existing \$25 million in state funding already allocated in the previous state budget, bringing the total amount of combined state and local funding to \$50 million to begin construction for a veterans' cemetery.

Our veterans were willing to give their lives to defend our freedom and democracy. All gave some and some gave all. Orange County is united in its support for Gypsum Canyon as the final resting place for our veterans and their families, who courageously served our nation.

We request your full and fair consideration of this application, consistent with all applicable rules and regulations.

Sincerely,



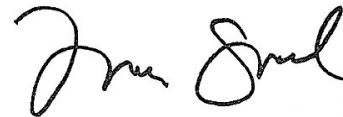
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



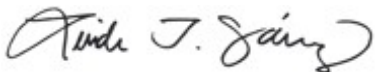
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Member of Congress



Katie Porter
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