

My name is Brian DaConto and I am a Veteran.

I am here to testify why the SSMF should stay a state agency.

I am actively involved with the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and various other civic organizations

I am also a state employee, union steward for local 714 and work for the SSMF as a fund representative.

We are a small agency with a big task of taking care of our returning veterans.

There are only 9 employees in the agency and we cover the entire state.

We have been a state agency for 94 years and our expenses are paid for by the trust fund.

WE have a great team that has developed a rapport, a network of contacts, with one goal.

Getting the services to the vet.

It's more than a job it's a passion. Everyone in our office is willing to go the extra mile and they do so

On a daily basis.

Being a state employee has a special Value. When that returning vet enters my office

he knows that his state, his country has not forgotten him. I let the vets know that the state of Connecticut taxpayers are the ones giving them a hand. It is important for them to know who is actually providing a hand. Often vets feel that the public at large doesn't care. It is not like the old days when our country went to war and our active duty veterans knew that everybody was there for them. The Soldiers, Sailors and Marine's Fund, as an actual agency of the state, is a strong statement by the people of Connecticut that we all as citizens care.