

Testimony by Kathryn Lechause

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Vietnam Veteran, Former Member of the RHHV Board of Trustees,  
Veterans Hall of Fame Honoree and Member of several Veteran Service  
Organizations

**Bill 6855 - An Act Implementing the recommendation of the Legislative Program Review & Investigations Committee regarding Residential Services at the Veterans' Home.**

I am in Support of the bill

I would like to emphasize two points in my testimony:

- 1) The Board of Trustees must have a meaningful role
- 2) The work this bill starts must be a legislative priority henceforth.

I am a witness to statements made by deputies of the Dept of Veterans Affairs that the Board of Trustees is purely a ceremonial body. The technical changes to the Board's makeup detailed in the legislation appear to be a good start. It gives potential for an active dialog where there is none today. It is important that all parties believe they have an equal say in workings and decisions of the Board. While this may be a dramatic change it is one that will directly affect the efficacy of the Board.

The value of the comprehensive PRI report cannot be overstated. Nor can the need for ongoing active participation and oversight by the Legislative Committee members. The greatest respect that can be given our Veterans is when their issues are given equal priority to that of any pressing issues facing our state.