

February 14, 2019

Dear Members of the Committee,

I write today in strong support of the confirmation of Thomas J. Saadi to continue as the Commissioner of CT Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA).

I am an Army veteran and I worked for 6 years as Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty's Veterans District Aide in her New Britain, CT office. I worked closely with Commissioner Saadi when he was the Chief of Staff for Commissioner Sean Connolly because constituents would contact the Congresswoman for assistance with state legislative requests. Then-COS Saadi would ensure that the constituents could meet with the Commissioner and himself to hear their idea and concerns and then work with the state representatives and senators who represented the committee of cognizance and the local official that would assist in crafting a resolution, which could be a bill. He provided real access to their agency leadership that gave the common person faith in the system.

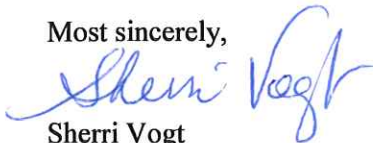
As the newly appointed commissioner, Mr. Saadi attended the Congresswoman's Veterans Affairs Panel to keep the stakeholders of the Fifth Congressional District well informed of initiatives and projects at Rocky Hill, the cemeteries, and with the vital Veterans Service Officer program. The panel consisted of 15 to 20 key veterans active in the Fifth Congressional District and Commissioner Saadi made himself available for their questions, suggestions, and networking to ensure the veterans of NW and Central CT had solid information about the benefits they earned at Rocky Hill.

Commissioner Saadi was always available to assist Congresswoman Esty when she needed insight on how a federal legislative suggestion might impact state veteran services.

While staffing Congresswoman Esty in Bantam, we both were moved to tears when Mr. Saadi told of his family's deep devotion to the U.S. Marines that served throughout the decades in Beirut, Lebanon- his native country. The Commissioner spoke of the long held respect his extended family in Beirut had for the U.S. Marines that served at the very airport he flew in and out of as a young boy when times were very volatile. In 1983 when 241 Marines were killed in the barracks bombing he understood the cost, the sacrifice, the commitment of America to protect democracy at home and abroad. He would later join the US Army Reserves himself in order to carry on that same tradition of dedication to democracy, freedom, and liberty here and around the globe.

Commissioner Saadi is a great American in the finest traditions of the US Army and as a dedicated public servant who cares for those who also raised their right hand and swore to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. It is an honor to support his nomination to the post of Commissioner of CT Department of Veterans Affairs.

Most sincerely,



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