



STATE SENATOR

Peter MacGregor

2016 MEMORIAL DAY

A Grateful Nation Remembers

State parks offer Fireworks-Free Fourth of July

For the second year in a row, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency and the DNR are working together to offer camping options for veterans and other visitors who prefer a quieter Independence Day holiday.

Over the July 2-4 weekend, 11 Michigan state parks will host a Fireworks-Free Fourth of July. Located farther away from traditional community firework displays, these parks are ideal camping locations for those wanting a quieter celebration. Find out more, including a list of participating state parks and how to make camping reservations at www.michigan.gov/stateparks.

New plate recognizes veterans

The **Support Michigan Veterans** specialty fundraising license plate is now available.

Revenue from sales of the plate will be distributed by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency to support outreach activities that benefit Michigan veterans and their families, including tuition support for Michigan National Guard members or children of the veterans' tuition grant program, and funding for county and local veterans' organizations. Find more information at www.michigan.gov/sos and click on *Owning a Vehicle* on the left sidebar.



Michigan Senate remembers

Each year, a special Senate Memorial Day service pays tribute to our fallen soldiers. This solemn tradition is an important way to honor their service and ensure their sacrifice is never taken for granted or forgotten. The May 26, 2016 ceremony marks the 22nd anniversary of this special event.



Senate adopts tribute to Blue Star Mothers

Earlier this year, I co-sponsored Senate Resolution 139 to commemorate Feb. 1, 2016 as Blue Star Mother's Day.

Blue Star Mothers of America was founded in Flint, Michigan in 1942 to support the mothers of children in active service. Among their many patriotic contributions, Blue Star mothers welcome home returning veterans, visit wounded veterans in hospitals and rehabilitation centers, assist in veterans' ceremonies and perpetuate the memory of the men and women who have served our country.



Senate hearings on GR Home for Veterans

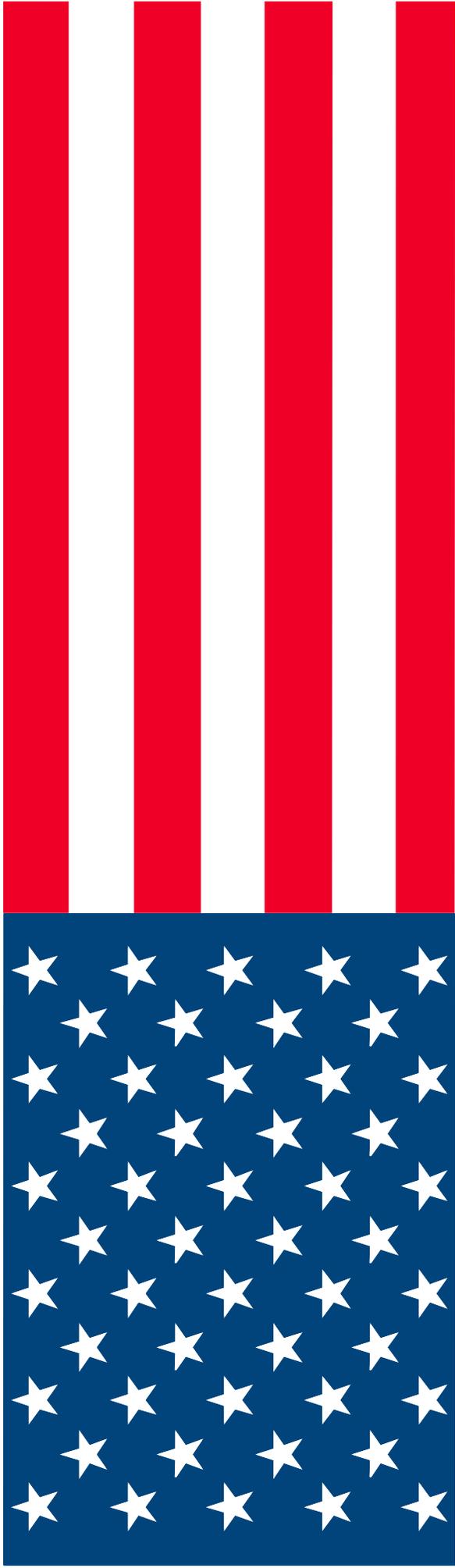
The Senate has initiated hearings on the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans after a state audit revealed mismanagement and neglect at the home.

I am deeply troubled by the findings in the report and want to work with the department to fix these problems. Our veterans deserve the best possible care and treatment.

Positive changes are taking place that address concerns of the Veterans Home and its operations. New leadership at both the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is an important step in providing a stable and caring home environment for our veterans. I have also introduced legislation to create a Veterans Ombudsman. Veterans need to know they have a voice and a process that will not only listen, but advocate for our veterans.

Michigan Veteran Resource Service Center

The Michigan Veteran Resource Service Center connects veterans to federal benefits, state programs and local services through a toll-free phone number — 800-MICH-VET (800-642-4838). The center is the first statewide program in the nation to offer round-the-clock assistance to veterans and their families by partnering with Michigan 2-1-1, Veterans Community Action Teams and accredited benefits counselors. Veterans who call 800-MICH-VET have access to benefits and services and the chance to discuss their questions with call center agents who are veterans themselves or related to a veteran.



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