



BLACK VETERANS EMPOWERMENT COUNCIL INC.

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The Honorable Joseph Solomon, Chair
House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith St
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

March 25, 2025

Dear Chairman Solomon and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Black Veterans Empowerment Council (BVEC), one of the Nation's largest Black Veterans groups, I am writing to express our strong support for Rhode Island House Bill 5419. This bill aims to establish critical protections for Rhode Island's Veterans and their families, ensuring they receive high-quality, transparent assistance when seeking Veterans' benefits.

BVEC recognizes the importance of clear regulatory standards for organizations and individuals offering Veterans' benefits services. This bill, which reinforces accredited representation and provides Veterans with essential information about service providers, aligns with our commitment to ethical and professional service. In particular, the requirement that Veterans' benefit service providers disclose their affiliations and compensation terms will significantly enhance transparency. By ensuring that only accredited individuals or those authorized by government agencies can represent Veterans, Rhode Island will protect its Veterans from unqualified or predatory actors.

These provisions are fundamental to preserving the integrity of Veterans' services across the state. Furthermore, we applaud the inclusion of privacy safeguards in the bill, such as prohibiting the use of international call centers for processing Veterans' personal information and requiring background checks for individuals handling sensitive data. BVEC believes these measures are essential to protecting Veterans' personal and financial information.

We appreciate your consideration of this important legislation and urge the Rhode Island Legislature to support its passage. BVEC stands ready to assist in any way possible to ensure that Rhode Island's Veterans have access to the highest standard of benefits services. Thank you for your commitment to Rhode Island's Veterans.

Sincerely,

Shawn L. Deadwiler
Chairman of the Board and President