

CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

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January 14, 2005

JAMES P. MAYER
Executive Director
Little Hoover Commission
925 "L" Street, Suite 805
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Your Letter of January 12, 2005, Inviting Testimony Before the Commission on the Governor's Executive Reorganization Plan for Boards and Commissions. (Hearing Date, Time, and Place: January 26, 2005; 1:00 p.m. Panel; State Capitol, Room 4203. Written Testimony Requested by January 14, 2005.)

Dear Mr. Mayer:

I have received your letter addressed to me as Vice Chair of the California Veterans Board, and I accept your invitation to testify. Chairman George G. Sinopoli sends his regrets that he is unable to attend.

Because of the timelines included in your invitation, the Board has not been able to schedule a meeting to consider the reorganization plan so I cannot present to you at this time a Board position on the plan. Therefore, I am writing this letter and will participate in your 1:00 p.m. panel discussion on the 26th as an individual member of the Board and as a veteran with some experience in veterans' organizations and on veterans' issues. As requested, I am attaching a brief biography.

As I understand it, the Commission is requesting my testimony on the proposals to eliminate three veteran-related commissions as set forth on Pages 48 and 49 of the Plan.

1. Governor's Commission on State Veterans' Cemeteries. It is my understanding that this commission has not been constituted and that no commission members have been appointed. It is also my understanding that existing legislation already authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to construct and maintain a veterans' cemetery in Northern California and to develop a master plan for a Central Coast (Monterey County) veterans' cemetery. I agree that this commission's duty to make recommendations for the number and sites of state veterans' cemeteries in California could be transferred appropriately to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Upon such transfer, the California Veterans Board could provide such policy guidance as may be necessary.

"VOICE OF CALIFORNIA VETERANS"

Chairman George Sinopoli (Fresno), Vice Chairman Leo Burke (Stockton) Members:
Judy Gaze (San Diego), Vernon Chong (Lincoln), Col James Crump (Folsom).
Executive Officer, Sandra Munoz

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12, 2005, etc.
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2. California Mexican American Veterans' Memorial Beautification and Enhancement Commission.
I agree that this commission's duty to "beautify and enhance" the existing memorial in Capitol Park could be transferred appropriately to the Department of General Services Building and Grounds Division, which is already responsible for the care and maintenance of Capitol Park and its improvements. However, if some sort of oversight by the California Veterans Board is desired, additional legislative authority may be required.

3. California Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission. This commission essentially completed its mission when the memorial was completed in Capitol Park in 1988. (It is my understanding that the care and maintenance of the memorial was assumed by the Department of General Services Building and Grounds Division at that time.) I agree that this commission's remaining duties, if any, could be transferred appropriately to the Department of General Services. However, if some sort of oversight by the California Veterans Board is desired, additional legislative authority may be required.

I hope that this information will be helpful to the Little Hoover Commission in its deliberations. Please regard this letter as my written testimony as requested.

Very truly yours,

LEO P. BURKE, Vice Chairman
California Veterans Board

cc: -Each Board Member
-Executive Officer
-Secretary of Veterans Affairs