



Utah Vietnam Veterans of America

Dennis Howland – President Utah State Council

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A Not-For-Profit Veterans Service Organization Chartered by the United States Congress

The Honorable Utah State Senator/Representative

XXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX, UT XXXXX

Senator/Representative :

Utah's Vietnam Veterans of America has launched a fundraising campaign to purchase a replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall to be placed in a permanent home in Utah. We are grateful for the partnership established with the City of Layton, Utah for having designated the land and for helping us make Commons Park the permanent home.

Our monument will be 80 percent of the size of the Wall in Washington, D.C. It will have inscribed all 58,000 plus names, and will be kept current with the changes of the National Monument. It is believed this will be the only 80 percent permanent replica in the Western United States.

There are many benefits to having the Vietnam Memorial Wall replica in a permanent home in Utah.

Among those are:

- People unable to travel to Washington, D.C., either financially, for health reasons or time-wise will make their journey to Layton to visit Utah's Wall.
- Those with family members lost in Vietnam can find peace and opportunities for reflection by visiting the Utah Wall.
- Vietnam Veterans will find it a place to be proud of and we believe they will travel to Utah from throughout the Western United States to visit. Perhaps our Wall will assist many of our Vietnam Veterans still trying to make that journey home.
- It will be a wonderful monument to honor the men and women lost in our War, as well as those who served and supported our War from duty stations around the world. Nearly 7 million in all.
- This monument will belong to Utah, each of you, and it will belong to every veteran and veteran's family in Utah and throughout the Mountain West. It will be a place of pride that belongs to all Utahans.
- We believe this monument can serve as an anchor in Commons Park that will lead to development of Veterans Memorials to honor all men and women who have served in past conflicts as well as those men and women serving in uniform today.

Why our community and what is the impact? We believe . . .

- Utah's Wall – your Wall - will make our community and our state a destination locally, regionally – even nationally recognized.
- Layton/Davis County will become a place people will travel to visit, host events, reunions and endless other possibilities being the home of a permanent memorial. Thru community held events, holiday programs and many other avenues, we anticipate 75,000 to 100,000 visitors to this memorial annually.

Educational Value. We believe the Replica Wall will . . .

- Create a platform to forever remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice along with the ability to teach future generations that freedom comes at a price. And that price is written on the Wall.
- Ensure that all Vietnam Veterans; those men and women of the Wall, those wounded, those with the invisible scars of war and those still trying to come home as they struggle through the nightmares of PTSD are never forgotten.

- Create a place for school field trips for area and regional schools as many of our children study the nation's history and try to understand the losses of war and value of peace.

With such an aggressive project we of course need to raise a substantial amount of money. We believe more than \$400,000. To do so we are reaching out to individuals and organizations throughout Utah, and our corporate and area business friends to help us with their generous donations. And we are receiving generous support.

As a part of our efforts I am asking the Utah Legislature for a one-time appropriation of \$212,640.00. I have asked Representative Curtis Oda to present this request to our Legislature on behalf of all Vietnam Veterans. And I respectfully ask you for your personal support of this request during the 2016 legislative session. I base this request on the results of my own experiences as a Vietnam Veteran and research of past military records.

For information:

On the average our Vietnam Veterans held the rank of E-2 or E-3 when arriving in Vietnam. Most were fresh out of basic Infantry Training with a base pay from \$78.10 to 95.00 a month. Add on combat or hazardous duty pay of \$65.00 it brings the average pay of the new combatant to roughly \$143.00 per month. That computes to about 18 cents an hour or \$4.42 per day. Of the 58,000 plus killed in Vietnam more than one-third were of those two pay-grades.

Based on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009-2013, 5-year American Community Survey there are nearly 45,000 Vietnam Veterans registered to vote in Utah's four Congressional Districts. The VA and other agencies estimate nearly 48,000 Vietnam Veterans now make their home in Utah. This is in relationship of the 29,700 young men who left their homes in Utah to join forces in the Vietnam War.

The \$212,640 figure reflects just one day's pay - \$4.42 - for each Vietnam Veteran living in Utah today. \$212,640 to help us develop and permanently place a replica of the Vietnam Memorial in a permanent home in Utah to honor all those who served, those lost and their families, the 300,000 wounded and the thousands still suffering today from the unseen scars of that War and the nightmares of PTSD.

We ask you to join us and assist in the development of this magnificent memorial to our military men and women with this one-time appropriation. We ask that you help us honor them for decades to come.

I am attaching an artist rendering of how the new memorial and park will appear when finished. I am available to visit with you regarding this request or to answer questions you may have. As in past Legislative sessions, I consider it an honor to be allowed to present testimony in support of requests of our Legislature. In regards to past legislation presented in support of honoring Vietnam Veterans I offer my sincerest appreciation and heartfelt thank you.

Please feel free to contact me at dennishowland@msn.com or 801-389-1893.
Thank you for your support.

Respectfully,



Dennis E. Howland
President Utah State Council
Vietnam Veterans of America

Enclosure – artist's rendering of how Layton Commons Park will appear upon completion.

"NEVER AGAIN WILL ONE GENERATION OF VETERANS ABANDON ANOTHER"



Utah State Council
Vietnam Veterans of America
50th Anniversary
Commemorative Partner

ARTIST RENDITION

REPLICA OF VIETNAM MEMORIAL WALL IN LAYTON'S COMMONS PARK



For Information contact Dennis Howland, Utah State Council President, Vietnam Veterans of America

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