

Resolution No. 1

SUPPORT THE TRANSFER OF THE MARE ISLAND CEMETERY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the Mare Island Naval Cemetery, located in Vallejo, California, has been identified as “the oldest military cemetery on the West Coast and the final resting place for more than 800 of our country’s heroes, some who served as far back as the War of 1812”; and

WHEREAS, no less than three (3) Medal of Honor recipients and Anna Arnold Key Turner, the daughter of Francis Scott Key, composer of “The Star-Spangled Banner” are among those buried at the Mare Island Cemetery established February 12, 1856; and two (2) years later action was completed designating the cemetery as a naval and military cemetery; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vallejo, which inherited the cemetery when the base closed, the mayor has said it should have been transferred to the Veterans Administration; further explaining the city of Vallejo does not have the funds to restore the cemetery or maintain it to an appropriate level, commensurate with its historical importance; and

WHEREAS, there is currently co-sponsored S. B. 2881 by Senators Harris and Feinstein of California directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with the city of Vallejo, CA for the transfer of Mare Island Naval Cemetery, and for other purposes and H. R. 5588 sponsored by Representative Mike Thompson CA-5 directing the Department of Veterans Affairs to enter into an agreement with the city of Vallejo, CA for transfer to the VA of Mare Island Naval Cemetery to be maintained as a national shire; and

WHEREAS, by law, the VA pays to maintain military cemeteries but they can only give money to federal or state entities, not city governments, thereby, causing the city of Vallejo, who has inferred the city does not have the resources to properly care for the hallowed ground and have taken the extraordinary action of asking the federal government to take back the land; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of California request the full support by the Veterans of Foreign Wars for this resolution, S. B. 2881, H. R. 5588 and to respectfully request passage of S.B 2881 and H.R. 5588 by the Congress of the United States and signed into law by President Trump transferring the control of the cemetery on Mare Island, Vallejo, CA. to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Submitted by the Department of California
To Committee on GENERAL RESOLUTIONS**