

**ORANGE COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT**

**Meeting Date:** September 6, 2022

**Action Agenda  
Item No.** 6-d

**SUBJECT:** Resolution Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans

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**DEPARTMENT:** County Commissioners

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**ATTACHMENT(S):**

Draft Resolution

**INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Renee Price, BOCC Chair, (919) 245-2130

Laura Jensen, (919) 245-2130

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**PURPOSE:** To consider a draft resolution expressing support for Operation Green Light for veterans.

**BACKGROUND:** Operation Green Light is a new national collaborative initiative of the National Association of Counties (NACo) to support military veterans, as well as raise awareness about the unique challenges faced by many veterans and the resources available to assist them and their families. Approximately 200,000 members transition out of the armed services each year. In the period following separation from the military, service members face the challenge of transitioning to a post-military civilian life. Tragically, evidence suggests that transitioning veterans are at higher risk for suicide, yet they often do not receive adequate support and resources. Veteran suicides have claimed over 30,000 lives since 2001 alone – four times more than the number of U.S. military personnel who died in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. Veterans make up roughly 11% of adults experiencing homelessness. Of that group, 70% of homeless veterans also experience substance abuse, and 50% live with mental illnesses like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In 2019, 61% (or 11.7 million) veterans were over the age of 65.

Beginning November 7<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup>, county buildings across the nation will be illuminated green, letting veterans know that they are seen, appreciated, and supported. November 11<sup>th</sup> is Veterans Day. Individuals and businesses are also encouraged to change one light bulb in the entryway of your house or business to a green bulb.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPACT:** There are no Orange County Social Justice Goals applicable to this item:

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:** There is no Orange County Environmental Responsibility Goal impact associated with this item.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** The Manager recommends the Board approve the attached resolution and authorize the Chair to sign the resolution.

**ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING**  
**OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR VETERANS**

WHEREAS, the residents of Orange County respect, admire, and appreciate the individuals who selflessly have served the United States of America in the Armed Forces by placing themselves in challenging or perilous situations for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of those individuals who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and ways of life that we enjoy in our local communities; and

WHEREAS, Orange County seeks to join other communities through Operation Green Light for Veterans in shining a light on the plight of veterans across the country who are having a hard time connecting with benefits after serving their country; and

WHEREAS, some seventy percent (70%) of veterans experiencing homelessness also experience substance use disorders, and fifty percent (50%) live with mental illnesses such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually, and an estimated twenty percent (20%) increase in service members will transition to civilian life in the near future; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 44-72 percent of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life, and Active Military Service Members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

WHEREAS, military veterans continue to serve our communities in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and as County Veteran Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties and the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Orange County Board of Commissioners accepts the designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, and hereby declares that the period from November 7, 2022 through November 13, 2022, including Veterans Day, November 11<sup>th</sup>, shall be a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifice of our individuals in uniform transitioning from Active Service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in observance of Operation Green Light, Orange County shall display green lights in the Orange County Courthouse and/or other public buildings, and encourages residents to recognize and honor those service members who have sacrificed immeasurably to preserve our freedoms by displaying a green light in a window of their place of business or residence from November 7, 2022 through November 13, 2022.

This 6<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2022.

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Renee Price, Chair  
Orange County Board of Commissioners