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Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery Approved by Veterans (USVA) Cemetery Grants Program (VCGP) Priority List

Santa Ana, CA (October 1, 2025) – The Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Veterans Alliance of Orange County (VALOR) released the following statements regarding the approval of Gypsum Canyon to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Veterans Cemetery Grants Program (VCGP) Priority II List:

Chair Doug Chaffee, Fourth District: "Today's decision by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs gives long-overdue hope to Orange County veterans and their families. However more work needs to be done to ensure we have funding for this very important project. After more than a decade of persistence from our veterans, their families, and bipartisan leaders at every level of government, we need the assistance from Governor Newsom and CalVet to ensure that Orange County deserves a veterans' cemetery."

Vice Chair Katrina Foley, Fifth District: "Our veterans deserve a final resting place here in Orange County. Finally, the hard work of our county leadership coalition and veterans paid off with the news that Gypsum Canyon is on VCGP's Priority II list. More work remains to be done with the help of our Governor and CalVet. With Governor Newsom's support, we can finish the fight and get shovels in the ground to build the Orange County Veterans Cemetery."

Supervisor Donald Wagner, Third District: "Orange County veterans and their families have been fighting for this cemetery for over a decade. With today's action by the USVA, the time for progress is now. While the land is set aside, funding for this project needs to be secured and the Governor's office can help to make this a reality."

Supervisor Janet Nguyen, First District: "Our men and women in uniform and their loved ones are so deserving of this veteran's cemetery. I am excited to hear about the grant but we need an extra step to ensure funding for this incredibly vital project. It's up to Sacramento to work with us on making this a reality."

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento, Second District: "Orange County's veterans and their families have been patiently waiting, and now is the time to recognize that we have reached an important milestone. It is my hope that Governor Newsom and CalVet will support the effort and will soon take the necessary next steps in making this long-awaited dream a reality."

Nick Berardino, President of VALOR: "For the first time, the Gypsum Canyon site has been placed on the U.S. Veterans Administration's Priority List, confirming that the cemetery project has met every federal requirement for construction. Yet the Administration has ranked Orange County only 13th, making clear that more work must be done in Washington. We call on California's Commander-in-Chief, Governor Gavin Newsom, to immediately take



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possession of the Gypsum Canyon property. Doing so will allow California to honor its veterans and advance construction while federal funding efforts continue. California's veterans must not be caught in the crossfire of disputes between Sacramento and Washington. This project must move forward without delay."

The Orange County Board of Supervisors and VALOR, together with our coalition of all 34 Orange County cities, more than 150 veterans' organizations and bipartisan state and federal leaders have supported the Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery site.

The County and VALOR thank Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva, Congresswoman Young Kim, and Congressman Lou Correa for their unwavering commitment to Orange County veterans and this project. Their perseverance has been critical to keeping this vision alive.

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