

Department of New York, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

“Rally Round the Flags Committee”

Committee

Richard E. Straight, Chairman, Camp # 154

Vincent M. Jockimo, Camp # 154

Leo McGuire, CC Camp # 154

April 30, 2016

Dear Commander LeMay and Brothers of the Department of New York,

June 25, 2015 The “Rally Round the Flags Committee” met with Senator Amedore’s, Legislative Director, Kaitlyn MacLeod, at Senator Amedore’s Office in Albany, she advised us that the Senator’s office needed to do more research into past legislation and funding before moving forward. We discussed some of the issues such as continuous funding until the collection was preserved and keeping the collection together in one storage area. **Brothers** Attending: Richard E. Straight, Vincent Jockimo, Leo McGuire

January 28, 2016 “Rally Round the Flags Committee” met with Senator George A. Amedore and his Legislative Director, Kaitlyn MacLeod, at Senator Amedore’s Office on Western Avenue, Albany. We discussed some of the history of the flag collection and past efforts to support their preservation through funding issues. We also considered other issues, such as continuous funding until the collection was preserved, and storing the complete collection together in one storage area. We were asked by the senator to recommend to his office how much money would be needed over a period of time to complete the preservation of the New York State Battle Flag Collection. **Brothers** Attending: Richard E. Straight, Vincent Jockimo, Leo McGuire and Lance Ingmire.

February 3, 2016 “Rally Round the Flags Committee” met at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga with curator Chris Morton to again discuss in his estimate how many flags and at what cost could be preserved in a year, based on past years of preservation. Determining the cost and time, as he explained involves many different factors, the size of the flag and the condition, which is hard to determine until the flag is actually laid out from its rolled up position of 150 years on its staff.

The Committee also contacted the Department of Parks and Recreation, where the previous conserved flags were worked on and spoke to conservator Sarah Stevens inquiring into how many flags could Parks and Recreation if given the opportunity conserve in a year. Her estimate was that Parks and Recreation could preserve 40 Civil War flags at a cost of 150,000.

Both parties that we consulted with also concurred that the best way to guarantee that the money goes to the flag collection would be through “The Natural Heritage Trust—DMNA Flag Project” <http://nysparks.com/natural-heritage-trust> Brothers Attending: Richard E. Straight, Vincent Jockimo, and Leo McGuire.

February 9, 2016, Based on the information gathered, the committee made the following recommendations to Senator George A. Amedore’s Office.

Letter mailed to Kaitlyn MacLeod, Legislative Director, for Senator George A. Amedore.

February 9, 2016

The “Rally Round the Flags Committee”, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War recommends that the line item number for the preservation and storage of the New York State Battle Flag Collection be set at \$ 150,000 per year until all (450-500) 19th century flags of the collection be completely conserved and housed in appropriately preservation conditions. We also recommend that the wording of the line item so indicate that the money allocated be used only for the Flag Preservation Project and for the preservation and storage of the flags of the New York State Battle Flag Collection. One way to guarantee that the money goes to the flag collection would be through “The Natural Heritage Trust—DMNA Flag

Project” <http://nysparks.com/natural-heritage-trust/> people at both the Military Museum and Parks and Recreation agreed that the Heritage Trust would be the way to go.

February 11, 2016, Text of attached letter from Senator Amedore to Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan requesting funding for the Battle Flag Collect.

February 11, 2016
The Honorable John Flanagan
Senate Majority Leader
New York State Senate
330 Capitol
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Senator Flanagan:

I respectfully request your assistance in securing \$ 150,000 for the New York State Battle Flag Collection located in the New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center in Saratoga Springs NY.

New York State has an extensive battle flag collection. Currently there are one thousand five hundred (1500) battle flags that need to be restored and preserved. There are about 500 battle flags from the 19th century that are deteriorating at a rapid rate. These flags need to be restored and preserved as soon as possible or we risk losing them. Each battle flag costs between \$ 8,000 and \$ 12,000 to repair and archive. This dedicated funding will enable the museum staff to begin working on preserving the oldest battle flags in our collection.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if you need additional information.

Sincerely,
George A. Amedore, Jr.
45th Senate District.

April 25, 2016, Received phone call from Senator Amedore, Legislative Director, Kaitlyn McLeod informing the committee that the line item directed for \$150,000 for flag preservation failed to be included in the 2016 budget.

The Senator's Office is still working to secure funding for the Battle Flag Collection, but as of now there will be no money allocated to the preservation and storage of the New York State Battle Flag Collection.

The Flag Committee will meet again and plan what action needs to be taken to help in securing the funding necessary to help reach the goals set for in the Department Resolution.

Contacting the State Senators and Assemblymen in the district where the infantry regiment or artillery unit was raised and who's Flags are the in need of preserving, might help in securing addition support for the next time.

The Committee will also arrange to meet within the next few weeks with the Adjutant General of the State of New York in hopes of obtaining what together the Department of Military and Naval Affairs and The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War can do to help in the preservation of the New York State Battle Flag Collection.

Respectfully submitted,

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Richard E. Straight,

Committee Chairman