

## Murphy Thanks Outpouring of Volunteers to Drive Danbury Area Disabled Veterans to Medical Appointments

Within days of Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) and Danbury area veterans' advocates calling for volunteers to assist in driving disabled veterans to medical appointments at the West Haven Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital, Murphy is pleased to report that his office has been contacted by fourteen volunteer drivers.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Within days of Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) and Danbury area veterans' advocates calling for volunteers to assist in driving disabled veterans to medical appointments at the West Haven Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital, Murphy is pleased to report that his office has been contacted by fourteen volunteer drivers.

"The number of volunteers and the speed at which they contacted my office is so heartwarming. The generosity and community spirit displayed by these fourteen individuals says a lot about the city of Danbury, and our veterans deserve nothing less," said Murphy.

Fairfield County is home to over 46,000 veterans; over 10,000 of those veterans are enrolled in the VA Healthcare System. The national DAV Hospital Service Coordinator/Transportation Network Program was established in 1987. From 1987 to 2008, DAV Departments and Chapters, together with the National Organization, have donated 2,109 vans to VA medical facilities nationwide at a cost of over \$41 million. In 2008, more than 795,000 veterans across the country benefitted from this program.

A DAV van is currently available and not being used regularly in the greater Danbury area because of a lack of volunteer drivers. The service takes veterans to medical appointments at the West Haven facility; the vans do not service outpatient VA clinics, like those in Danbury and Waterbury.

The DAV was in need of drivers on a part time or full time basis, and volunteers do not need to be a member of the DAV. To volunteer to drive DAV-owned vans, the fourteen new volunteers must complete the following before driving:

- Fill out a VA Form 10-7055, application for voluntary service. Forms will be available through Murphy's office and through the VA;
- Hold a valid driver's license;
- Prove that you are insurable (the VA insures the van); and
- Pass a VA physical.

Veterans who need rides can arrange them by calling Murphy's office at 203-798-2072, or the DAV Transportation office at the West Haven VA facility at (203) 932-5711 Ext 3575. To get a ride, a veteran:

- Must have a medical appointment (and therefore be eligible for VA treatment);
- Must be able to get in and out of the van without assistance; and
- May be required to bring a companion with him or her (if the patient has Alzheimer's).

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