

## LARSON TO HOLD FORUM ON POSSIBLE MOVE OF VA SERVICES FROM NEWINGTON TO WEST HAVEN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 5, 2002

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Congressman, Local Lawmakers to Seek Answers From VA Officials and Veterans

NEWINGTON—U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) will hold a field forum on reports that specialty care services will be moved from the Newington Veterans Administration (VA) healthcare facility to the West Haven facility. The forum will be held on Tuesday, February 19, 2002 from 9:30am to 11:30am in Newington Town Hall. Congressman Larson - who represents Newington and 19 other towns in the U.S. Congress - will be joined by State Sen. Biagio "Billy" Ciotto, State Rep. Patrick Flaherty and Newington Mayor Thomas McBride in conducting the forum in the Newington Town Hall Council Chambers. Larson will use the information he gains from the meeting in crafting legislation to address the problem.

Congressman Larson has asked several VA officials to appear at the forum so that he and the others lawmakers can seek answers from them on reports that VA services will be moved from the Newington facility to the West Haven facility, as well as on general issues surrounding healthcare for veterans in Connecticut. Larson has also invited local veteran advocates to appear to answer questions from the lawmakers on how area veterans would be affected by moving services. Time will be left at the end of the forum for public comment.

WHO: U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01); State Sen. Biagio "Billy" Ciotto; State Rep. Patrick Flaherty; Newington Mayor Thomas McBride; Dr. Bruce Gordon, Acting Director VA CT Healthcare; Dr. David Coleman of VA CT Healthcare; John Valenti of the National Association of Gov. Employees; Maurice Collin of the CT Dept. of Veterans Affairs; Woody Lechasseur of the CT Veterans Coalition; Michael Fox, Sr. Vice Commander of VFW Post 30, 3rd District and other veteran advocates will attend.

WHAT: The purpose of the forum is to allow Congressman Larson and local lawmakers to ask VA officials about reports that services may be moved from the Newington VA facility to West Haven. Larson and the lawmakers will also ask local veteran advocates to appear, to ask them how area veterans would be impacted by such a move.

WHERE: Newington Town Hall, Town Council Chambers -131 Cedar Street, Newington

WHEN: Tuesday, February 19, 2002 - from 9:30am until 11:30am

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