

Email to Sharon Bulova, chairman, Fairfax County, Virginia Board of Supervisors - 12/22/2015

Sharon,

Thanks for your reply and referral. It's great to hear that ending homelessness is one of your major priorities in leading Fairfax County.

My work these days centers on finding ways to include all Americans in our economy regardless of circumstances they find themselves in. Among the initiatives I'm exploring is finding a way to get everyone enrolled the retirement system just as they enter the workforce. The more that young people are equipped with incentives and tools to work, save, and invest as they enter the workforce, they less likely they will be to end up on the street.

Hope all have a great holiday season.

Karl

Karl Polzer  
Center on Capital & Social Equity  
[www.polzercapital.com](http://www.polzercapital.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: Bulova, Sharon S. [<mailto:Sharon.Bulova@fairfaxcounty.gov>]

Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 11:57 AM

To: Karl

Cc: Barnett, Thomas M.; Leslie, Matthew (DVS); Gregory Brandon; Brink, Robert (GOV); Simon, Marcus B.; Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV); Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS); Smyth, Linda; Klein, Dean H.; Mike O'Reilly

Subject: Re: Finding homeless veterans housing -- follow up

Karl,

Thanks for copying me on this and thank you for your concern for persons who are homeless.

I am copying our director for Fairfax County's Office to Prevent & End Homelessness, along with the Chairman of our governing board, of which I am a member.

Fairfax County has done a good job, I believe, in identifying members of our homeless population and we have had some success in getting folks into housing and hooked up with supportive services.

Dean Klein can share with you some of the specifics regarding the Mayors Challenge to end homelessness for Veterans.

I mentioned this challenge in my inaugural address last week. Ending homelessness is one of my major priorities.

Hope you have a great holiday season and thanks for copying me on your message.

Sharon

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 22, 2015, at 7:25 AM, Karl <[kpolzer1@verizon.net](mailto:kpolzer1@verizon.net)<<mailto:kpolzer1@verizon.net>>> wrote:

I appreciate the challenges of trying to provide services to such a large area with a very diverse population of about 1 million people and growing. Hopefully, Northern Virginia is receiving an appropriate share of whatever state funds are being provided to make Gov. McAuliffe's goal of providing housing to homeless people become a reality, both for veterans of the armed forces and other citizens. (I am cc'ing two members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors so they are aware of any potential resource constraints.)

I also understand that it's difficult to bring homeless people "living in the woods" into contact with needed services – a point that was made by more than one public official over the past couple weeks. But, then again, many people living outside -- including the veteran just admitted to temporary housing (six beds to a room) at the Bailey's Crossroad community shelter -- live on the street in plain view. In this case, he lived on a couple of benches with his bags and backpacks, near one of the busiest intersections in our area: the corner of Broad Street and Washington Street (Highway 29).

I also understand that this is an extremely complex issue and in no way am I trying to lay blame. Thank you all for your work on this.

Sincerely,

Karl Polzer  
Center on Capital & Social Equity  
[www.polzercapital.com](http://www.polzercapital.com)<<http://www.polzercapital.com>>

From: Barnett, Thomas M. [<mailto:Thomas.Barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov>]  
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 4:39 PM  
To: 'Karl!'; 'Leslie, Matthew (DVS)'; 'Gregory Brandon'  
Cc: 'Brink, Robert (GOV)'; 'Simon, Marcus B.'; 'Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)'; 'Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)'  
Subject: RE: Finding homeless veterans housing -- follow up

Good afternoon, Mr. Polzer:

I am glad that Alicia was helpful and the veteran was able to access an emergency shelter. We have been blessed with unseasonably warm weather but I suspect that it will not last long.

I appreciate your help in making the necessary connections. We have four outreach teams that consist of nurse practitioners, mental health workers, and nonprofit contractors that focus on securing housing connections. They routinely conduct homeless outreach at various drop-in centers across the county, areas known to have individuals sleeping unsheltered and other locations throughout the county. However, with a county that is over 400 square miles, we often rely on reports from community partners, including concerned citizens, to identify individuals who are yet unengaged.

Have a wonderful holiday season. Please feel free to contact me if you need any information or assistance in the future.

--

Tom Barnett  
Program Manager

Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness  
12000 Government Center Parkway, # 333, Fairfax, VA. 22035 Direct 703-324-9408 Mobile 703-493-0769 Main 703-324-9492 Fax 703-653-1365  
[thomas.barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:thomas.barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov)<<mailto:thomas.barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov>>  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless>

<image001.png><<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Fairfax-County-Office-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness/1487815184790102>>

Like us on Facebook <<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Fairfax-County-Office-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness/1487815184790102>>

From: Karl [<mailto:kpolzer1@verizon.net>]  
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 3:40 PM  
To: Barnett, Thomas M.; 'Leslie, Matthew (DVS)'; 'Gregory Brandon'  
Cc: 'Brink, Robert (GOV)'; 'Simon, Marcus B.'; 'Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)'; 'Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)'  
Subject: RE: Finding homeless veterans housing -- follow up

Mr. Barnett,

Hello. Thank you again for referring me to Alicia Pardo at the Bailey's Crossroad's facility. She was very helpful in beginning the process of trying to help Carl C----, an ex-Marine who's been living on the streets in Falls Church. He and I met with her this morning and he's agreed to stay there temporarily while she and her colleagues work to help him. Please see my thank you note to her below highlighted in yellow.

While thanking her for her help, I also express concerns about the need for more outreach to veterans living on the street by state and area officials. As I mention below: "I do remain concerned, however, that there are many more veterans and other people still living on the streets of Northern Virginia who don't know about services that might be available, including temporary and permanent housing. As you know, I originally started to try to help to Mr. C---- and another veteran (who is not yet ready to accept help) after reading in the Washington Post that Gov. McAuliffe announced that the state had "functionally" ended veteran homelessness. My experience with Mr. C---- reinforces the fact that, while some housing services may be available, there is a huge disconnect between many veterans living on the street and the system offering those services. If my friend and I had not stepped in to help Mr. C----, for example, it's likely that he would never have known about the state's commitment or available services and never would have come forward to seek services, unless perhaps he ended up in a hospital on a very cold night. As I mentioned in emails to county and state officials, they still need to develop outreach capacity including publishing readily available contact information where veterans and those helping them can quickly gain entry to the system. Also, the county might consider having a roving unit that proactively tries to find and assess the needs of people living on the streets who do not come to shelters on their own."

Again, thank you again for your help. When I left him at the facility, Mr. C---- was very happy to be out of the cold!

Karl Polzer  
Falls Church

From: Karl [<mailto:kpolder1@verizon.net>]  
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 3:23 PM  
To: 'Alicia Pardo'  
Cc: 'Virginia Araujo'; N.Conyers  
Subject: RE: Making contact on behalf of veteran

Alicia,

Thank you so much for meeting with Carl C---- and me today. It's terrific that, once having seen the temporary housing facility, he is now willing stay there and get out of the cold, even though he originally was very hesitant about staying in a "shelter." Thanks also for beginning to work on trying to recover his lost ID documents and take him to the Social Security office next Monday to try to get access to his SSDI funds. As I said, I plan on accompanying you and will be at the shelter at 8:30 am. Thanks also for referring his information to your colleague who will connect with VA officials to see if he might qualify for some kind of permanent subsidized housing. It's great that he has a warm place to stay while all this can be sorted out. My friend Nolan Conyers, who found Mr. C---- living near the intersection of Broad and Washington Streets in Falls Church (he's been there for about eight months) and I may come to see him this week to make sure everything is OK and he is adapting to his new environment. When I left him a few hours ago, he was very happy just to be out of the cold.

I appreciate everything you and your colleagues are doing to help Mr. C---- and am impressed with what I observed at the Bailey's Crossroads facility.

I do remain concerned, however, that there are many more veterans and other people still living on the streets of Northern Virginia who don't know about services that might be available, including temporary and permanent housing. As you know, I originally started to try to help to Mr. C---- and another veteran (who is not yet ready to accept help) after reading in the Washington Post that Gov. McAuliffe announced that the state had "functionally" ended veteran homelessness. My experience with Mr. C---- reinforces the fact that, while some housing services may be available, there is a huge disconnect between many veterans living on the street and the system offering those services. If my friend and I had not stepped in to help Mr. C----, for example, it's likely that he would never have known about the state's commitment or available services and never would have come forward to seek services, unless perhaps he ended up in a hospital on a very cold night. As I mentioned in emails to county and state officials, they still need to develop outreach capacity including publishing readily available contact information where veterans and those helping them can quickly gain entry to the system. Also, the county might consider having a roving unit that proactively tries to find and assess the needs of people living on the streets who do not come to shelters on their own.

Again, thank you for your help!!!

Karl

Karl Polzer  
Center on Capital & Social Equity  
[www.polzercapital.com](http://www.polzercapital.com)<<http://www.polzercapital.com>>

From: Alicia Pardo [<mailto:apardo@nvfs.org>]  
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 9:54 AM  
To: Karl  
Cc: Virginia Araujo  
Subject: RE: Making contact on behalf of veteran

Mr. Karl.

In order to help the client we can do.

1.- Client can met with me anytime from today until Thursday at the shelter from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm in order to get all his

His information.

2.- Or you can send me. \_ complete name

\_ Last four Social Security number

\_ Complete date of Birth

\_ How was his discharge ( honorable or not)

\_ Client has a DD 2, 14

\_ Client phone Number When I get all this information I will do the referral

to the VA housing worker. And I will let him Know When is going to be his appointment with that resource.

Thanks for your help. Please let me know a soon as possible.

From: Karl [<mailto:kpolder1@verizon.net>]  
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2015 4:09 PM  
To: Alicia Pardo <[apardo@nvfs.org](mailto:apardo@nvfs.org)<<mailto:apardo@nvfs.org>>>  
Subject: Making contact on behalf of veteran

Hi. I'm following up on recent emails regarding how to find housing for veterans living on the street.

One man I've talked with is Carl C----, who's been living in the Falls Church area. I just spoke with him today on a park bench near the intersection of Washington and Broad Streets, where he's been spending much of his time over the past 6-8 months. Mr. C---- says he is interested in finding permanent housing. He also says that:

- He spent six years in the U.S. Marine Corps.
- He is on Social Security and receives about \$900 a month, but is unable to access his funds because he lost his ID and can't use the bank.

- He does not want to live in a shelter.

I just called your office and the person there said you normally come to work around at 8 a.m., on weekdays.

Just thought I'd give you a heads up that I plan to call Monday about that time to see how to proceed. If that isn't a good time to talk, please let me when would better fit your schedule. (I told Mr. C---- that I'd meet him at noon on Monday.)

Thank you for your help!

Karl

Karl Polzer  
Falls Church. VA

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From: Barnett, Thomas M. [<mailto:Thomas.Barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov>]

Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2015 9:21 AM

To: 'Karl'; 'Leslie, Matthew (DVS)'; 'Gregory Brandon'

Cc: 'Brink, Robert (GOV)'; 'Simon, Marcus B.'; 'Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)'; 'Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)'

Subject: RE: Finding homeless veterans housing -- follow up

Good morning, Mr. Polzer:

Thank you, once again, for your interest and support in helping to end veterans homelessness in the Fairfax-Falls Church community and across the Commonwealth of Virginia. I enjoyed our discussion via phone last week and I am available to talk if you have any additional questions about how homeless assistance is coordinated and delivered.

We are fortunate to have a committed group of partners across the county, commonwealth and country that are working hard to deliver the resources that are available in the most effective and efficient way possible. The Mayors Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness has empowered us to make significant progress in not just setting up a better system for veterans but also learning how to better serve the larger homeless population.

We are continuously looking to improve our services and communication across the larger partnership so your insight is valuable. I think it is important to note, though, that your experience in navigating the homeless assistance system is naturally entirely different from the person who is literally homeless, whether sleeping in the woods, on the streets or in an emergency shelter. Once someone is identified we have a fairly robust network of providers that provide connections to case management, housing location, rental assistance, and, in some cases, supportive housing. For people who are at-risk of homelessness we have a relatively well-resourced and sophisticated information and referral hotline, called Coordinated Services Planning, that can assess individuals' housing status and needs then rapidly connect them to appropriate services.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Tom Barnett  
Program Manager

Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness  
12000 Government Center Parkway, # 333, Fairfax, VA. 22035 Direct 703-324-9408 Mobile 703-493-0769 Main 703-324-9492 Fax 703-653-1365  
[thomas.barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:thomas.barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov)<<mailto:thomas.barnett@fairfaxcounty.gov>>  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless>

From: Karl [<mailto:kpolzer1@verizon.net>]  
Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2015 8:30 AM  
To: 'Leslie, Matthew (DVS)'; 'Gregory Brandon'  
Cc: Barnett, Thomas M.; 'Brink, Robert (GOV)'; 'Simon, Marcus B.'; 'Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)'; 'Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)'  
Subject: RE: Finding homeless veterans housing -- follow up

Matt,

Thank you for the follow up and commitment by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) to reach out to its contacts in Northern Virginia to make sure that resources, including housing, are available to homeless veterans under the Governor's program to functionally end homelessness among veterans. Hopefully, this will lead to greater access to services for people who need them as the cold weather sets in. It's also good to hear the DVS intends to update its website so that veterans living on the street and those helping them have a way to find out about available services, as well as contact information where they can begin the process of applying for the services. I will forward this correspondence to Sharon Bulova, Chair of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and Linda Smyth, Supervisor of the country's Providence District, so they are aware of these issues.

Again, thanks for your commitment to helping these people and your responsiveness.

Karl Polzer  
Center on Capital & Social Equity  
[www.polzercapital.com](http://www.polzercapital.com)<<http://www.polzercapital.com>>

**From:** Leslie, Matthew (DVS) [<mailto:Matthew.Leslie@dvs.virginia.gov>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 09, 2015 10:34 AM  
**To:** Karl; 'Gregory Brandon'  
**Cc:** 'Barnett, Thomas M.'; Brink, Robert (GOV); Simon, Marcus B.; Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV); Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)  
**Subject:** RE: Finding homeless veterans housing -- follow up

Karl,

Thank you for raising this concern and suggestions and I am currently reaching out to our local contacts in Northern Virginia to address this. I have attached a spreadsheet of the Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) providers that are the main veteran providers in Northern Virginia housing veterans which veterans should be getting connected through the coordinated entry of the CoC whether that is through outreach or entering a shelter. I know that FACETS is a strong partner in Fairfax and veterans do get identified when entered through the Homeless Management Information System but agree that it needs to be more transparent on how to access the system for the consumer. We will be working on updating DVS website as well. If you know of veterans that are having difficulty navigating the system, they can be connected to Virginia Veteran and Family Support which assists veterans get care coordinated with community and VA resources in primarily behavioral health and rehabilitative services, but also supportive services including housing and homeless services. The contact number for that region is : [1-877-285-1299](tel:1-877-285-1299), Ext. 3

Matt Leslie, MSW  
Director, Housing Development for Veterans  
Virginia Veteran and Family Support  
Department of Veterans Services  
900 E. Main St. West Wing, 6th Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Office: 804-786-0599  
Cell: 804-347-2951  
Fax: 804-786-0585  
[matthew.leslie@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:matthew.leslie@dvs.virginia.gov)  
Virginia Veteran and Family Support (Direct Services): 877-285-1299

**From:** Karl [<mailto:kpolder1@verizon.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 08, 2015 3:27 PM  
**To:** 'Gregory Brandon'  
**Cc:** 'Barnett, Thomas M.'; Leslie, Matthew (DVS); Brink, Robert (GOV); Simon, Marcus B.; Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV); Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)  
**Subject:** RE: Finding homeless veterans housing -- follow up

To all addressees:

Everyone, thanks again for your help with this. In order to pursue this matter further, I have since contacted local community services staff in three jurisdictions in Northern Virginia: Fairfax County, Arlington, and Falls Church City. From what I've gathered so far, it's clear that intake officials have not heard very much, if anything, about the state government's functional elimination of veteran homelessness. Using the contact information supplied by Matt Leslie, I called Fairfax County. The person responding was very polite and tried to be helpful and said she had read something in the paper about what the Governor had said but didn't know much about it. She explained that to get services, a homeless person (including those who are veterans) needs to go a shelter and get involved with staff there to be assessed. She said Fairfax County (1 million residents) unfortunately only has three shelters – so entry to a shelter is not always available. In the winter, in fact, the county relies on volunteer hypothermia shelters including those run by churches to handle the overflow (the church I belong to brings

in about 40 homeless people, some veterans, one week every winter under this program run by FACETS). In other words, demand for emergency shelter is far greater than supply. The Fairfax County intake worker said that the VA might have special resources available for veterans, but she didn't know any details about such options.

Yesterday, I spoke with the social service person with the City of Falls Church, Ms. Barrow. She said that Falls Church falls under the umbrella of Fairfax County in providing services to the homeless and other social services that it doesn't have the infrastructure to provide. She said that she would be willing to personally do an "assessment" of a homeless veteran living on the street in Falls Church and see what services might be available. She hadn't heard about the Governor's commitment to provide housing for veterans and was interested seeing the Q&A sheet that the state officials had provided me – so I sent it to her. I also posted the information on the policy web site I operate under a new initiative ([www.polzercapital.com](http://www.polzercapital.com)) so that homeless people and their advocates can know whom to call (not many people use my web site, but at least I have an easy way to tell them where to find the information). She said that Falls Church operates a small shelter (12 beds) in the winter; anyone who shows up can stay overnight – and if they don't have space, they will bus him somewhere else.

I also called the contact number for Arlington County and within one day, a county staff person called me back. She was very thorough and knowledgeable. She said that to be considered for housing subsidies, which are not easy to get, in Arlington, a person has to prove they are a county resident. This can be done by going to a shelter and working with staff there for a period of time. She said that Arlington recently tightened up access to the system a bit (although more than one person on the streets of Falls Church has told me that Arlington will provide shelter regardless of where a person comes from – interesting, because officially, as noted above, Falls Church uses Fairfax County's social services system in this regard, not Arlington's). Like the Fairfax County contact person, the person from Arlington said that a person provided with housing would have trouble keeping it without income of some kind to pay rent.

A couple of these local staff people were aware of the "housing first" model mentioned by state officials (that is, house someone first, then provide other services like mental health and job training), but they said Northern Virginia is not working on that model.

In any event, from this very brief investigation, it's clear that, however well-intended, the campaign against veteran homeless in Northern Virginia has not reached the "Appomattox Court House" and in all likelihood remains in the early skirmish stage. In this region at least, there appears to be an array of barriers to functionally ending veteran homelessness including: lack of housing resources, high housing prices, lack of shelter space, unwillingness by street people to seek help (for a variety of reasons); coordination issues between state and local, local and local, and federal and state and local agencies; bottlenecks like having to go through shelters when shelter space is limited; and many other factors. It is also clear that this is a really hard problem to solve and that, as Greg Brandon points out, it is chronic in nature.

Like Greg, I am concerned that declaring victory over the problem may lead to complacency. However, I am hopeful that this is not what will happen. As I said earlier, the Governor's commitment to helping veterans find affordable housing is a good thing. Perhaps it should be framed as a work in progress, needing sustained thoughtfulness, effort, resources, and patience to get the job done.

Sincerely,

Karl Polzer  
Falls Church, VA

**From:** Gregory Brandon [<mailto:gbrandon1955@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Friday, December 04, 2015 11:17 AM

**To:** Karl

**Cc:** Barnett, Thomas M.; Leslie, Matthew (DVS); Brink, Robert (GOV); Simon, Marcus B.; Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV); Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)

**Subject:** Re: Finding homeless veterans housing

Thanks for this great support everyone is providing Karl and his homeless friend. Karl is compassionate kind of guy and well-versed in policy matters -- he has a MPA from Kennedy School of Government and has worked extensively in health care policy. However, as a Navy Veteran and skeptical that any social issue can be "effectively ended" I was prompted by the recent WaPo letter to the editor to do a google search on the term "[virginia homeless veterans](#)." There was lots of media and non-profit references to Governor McAuliffe's announcement and of course, something from U.S. Veterans Administration and Department of Labor, but nothing from any Virginia government website. Adding "fairfax" to the search term did return this media release: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/meeting-the-challenge-housing-homeless-veterans/> but that is all it was, just a media release.

This isn't just a Search Engine Optimization issue; I poked around the <http://www.dvs.virginia.gov/> and didn't see anything specific to this issue. Other than the above-mentioned media release, using the search function for the Fairfax County website I found this "hit": <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/2010-11-09-projectbasedpublicnotice.htm> from November 2010.

In other words, an actual homeless Veteran residing in Virginia, perhaps sitting at a computer in a local library, has nothing solid for finding help to get off the streets.

BTW, I firmly believe that within a week of the Governor's announcement a Veteran went homeless somewhere in Virginia. Right now, though, that Veteran has no way to do a self-referral to get some help.

Greg Brandon  
McLean, VA

On Wed, Dec 2, 2015 at 2:21 PM, Karl <[kpolder1@verizon.net](mailto:kpolder1@verizon.net)> wrote:

Mr. Barnett. Thanks for your prompt reply and for referring me to Alicia Pardo, at the Northern Virginia Family Services, who may be able to do an assessment of my friends situation and needs. Thanks also for your offer of continued assistance, if needed.

Karl

Karl Polzer

**From:** Karl [<mailto:kpolder1@verizon.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 2, 2015 11:55 AM  
**To:** 'Leslie, Matthew (DVS)'; Barnett, Thomas M.  
**Cc:** 'Brink, Robert (GOV)'; 'Simon, Marcus B.'; 'Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)'; 'Gregory Brandon'; 'Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)'  
**Subject:** RE: Finding homeless veterans housing

Dear Mr. Barnett,

After inquiring about how to access housing on behalf of a homeless veteran (and others in similar circumstances) in this area, I spoke with Matt Leslie, who provided information and suggested that I contact you. Would you have time to speak with me this sometime week?

Sincerely,

Karl Polzer

**From:** Leslie, Matthew (DVS) [<mailto:Matthew.Leslie@dvs.virginia.gov>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 01, 2015 2:47 PM  
**To:** Karl  
**Cc:** Brink, Robert (GOV); Simon, Marcus B.; Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV); 'Gregory Brandon'; Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS)  
**Subject:** RE: Finding homeless veterans housing

Karl,

It was great talking with you and I have attached the FAQs about the state initiative as well as an infographic that discusses the changes in the system. Below I have listed the lead contact for Fairfax County in regards to veteran homelessness. I also provided a link to the Virginia Department of Veterans Services Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) Program that assists in care coordinated veterans to services for behavioral health, rehabilitative, and supportive services (including housing). If you have contact information or location for the homeless veteran you were referring to, we can also make sure that an outreach worker can contact him. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Matt Leslie, MSW

Director, Housing Development for Veterans

Virginia Veteran and Family Support

Department of Veterans Services

900 E. Main St. West Wing, 6th Floor

Richmond, VA 23219

Office: [804-786-0599](tel:804-786-0599)

Cell: [804-347-2951](tel:804-347-2951)

Fax: [804-786-0585](tel:804-786-0585)

[matthew.leslie@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:matthew.leslie@dvs.virginia.gov)

Virginia Veteran and Family Support (Direct Services): [877-285-1299](tel:877-285-1299)

**From:** Karl [<mailto:kpolzer1@verizon.net>]

**Sent:** Monday, November 30, 2015 4:04 PM

**To:** Simon, Marcus B.; Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)

**Cc:** Brink, Robert (GOV); 'Gregory Brandon'; Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS); Leslie, Matthew (DVS)

**Subject:** RE: Finding homeless veterans housing

Thanks all. I look forward to working with you on this.

Karl

Karl Polzer

**From:** Marcus B Simon [<mailto:DelMSimon@house.virginia.gov>]

**Sent:** Monday, November 30, 2015 3:58 PM

**To:** Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)

**Cc:** Brink, Robert (GOV); Karl; Gregory Brandon; Jancaitis, Brandi (DVS); Leslie, Matthew (DVS)

**Subject:** Re: Finding homeless veterans housing

Thanks to all of you for being so responsive - I haven't had a chance to jump in and ask for your assistance because you all have so quickly and ably begun to provide it. Please continue to keep me in the loop as your conversations with my constituent Mr. Polzer continue.

Thanks again

Marcus Simon

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 30, 2015, at 3:53 PM, Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)  
<[Jaime.Areizaga@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:Jaime.Areizaga@governor.virginia.gov)> wrote:

Dear Mr. Polzer,

Thank you for reaching out to Mr. Brink regarding your friend in Fairfax County. You are completely correct regarding the importance of outreach in order to ensure the continued success of Governor McAuliffe's achievement of functionally ending veteran homelessness. The key aspect of our strategy is that we have the systems and local partners in place to make sure that veteran homelessness in the Commonwealth is rare, brief and non-recurring. Our Team is headed by Brandi Jancaitis, at the Virginia Veterans and Family Support (VVSF) division of the Department of Veterans Services (DVS), and the initiative is managed by Mr. Matt Leslie, both of which are copied here.

Brandi and/or Matt will be reaching out/contacting you regarding your email below in order to ensure your friend is contacted and connected with the appropriate local partners in NoVa to address his situation. I will let Brandi/Matt also address the issue regarding the ideal contact information for a website. Lastly, the "outreach unit" you refer to is the VVFS division which has offices/representatives throughout the Commonwealth.

Once again, thank you for reaching out and do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions/comments. One Team, One Fight!

Kind regards,

**Jaime Areizaga-Soto**

Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs

Office: [804-225-3826](tel:804-225-3826) (ext. 2)

Cel: [804-971-8517](tel:804-971-8517)

[Jaime.Areizaga@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:Jaime.Areizaga@governor.virginia.gov)

**From:** Brink, Robert (GOV)

**Sent:** Sunday, November 29, 2015 11:59 AM

**To:** Karl

**Cc:** Simon, Marcus B.; Gregory Brandon; Areizaga-Soto, Jaime (GOV)

**Subject:** Re: Finding homeless veterans housing

Mr. Polzer:

Thank you very much for your inquiry regarding veterans' homelessness and Governor McAuliffe's commitment to ensure that all veterans in the Commonwealth find adequate housing. We also appreciate your thoughtful suggestions. I am taking the liberty of forwarding your message to Jaime Areizaga-Soto, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, for that office's consideration.

**Robert H. Brink**

Senior Legislative Advisor

Office of the Governor

1111 East Broad Street

Richmond, Virginia 23219

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On Nov 29, 2015, at 7:01 AM, Karl <[kpolzer1@verizon.net](mailto:kpolzer1@verizon.net)> wrote:

Robert Brink

Senior Legislative Advisor

Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe

Dear Mr. Brink,

I live in Fairfax County within walking distance of the Starbucks coffee house closest to the Falls Church city hall, its police station, and a couple of hotels used to house homeless people on a temporary basis (either by local officials on their behalf or when they manage to come up with money to rent a room – about \$70 a night). I was pleased to recently read that Governor McAuliffe announced during a public event that the state of Virginia has developed a program to end homelessness among veterans of the United States armed forces. According to news reports, he said that all homeless veterans in our state have been offered subsidized housing under a new state program.

See: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/mcauliffe-to-announce-milestone-in-ending-veteran-homelessness/2015/11/11/3c6fdf32-87fb->

[11e5-be8b-1ae2e4f50f76\\_story.html](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/veteran-homelessness-has-been-ended-in-virginia/?utm_campaign=newsletters&utm_medium=weekly_mailout&utm_source=25-11-2015). Also see:  
[http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/veteran-homelessness-has-been-ended-in-virginia/?utm\\_campaign=newsletters&utm\\_medium=weekly\\_mailout&utm\\_source=25-11-2015](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/veteran-homelessness-has-been-ended-in-virginia/?utm_campaign=newsletters&utm_medium=weekly_mailout&utm_source=25-11-2015).

Yesterday, while at Starbucks, I asked a friend now living on the streets if he had heard of this new program. My friend served in the special forces, I believe in the U.S. Army. He had never heard of the state of Virginia's offer to provide people like him with housing and is interested in finding out more, especially now that the cold weather begins to set in. My friend describes himself as a "street preacher" and, through this activity, has made many connections in the Falls Church area. He would like to continue living here.

With this situation in mind, I would like to make the following requests:

- 1) Could someone in the Governor's office please provide contract information for my friend to find housing in this area for the winter?
- 2) Could the Governor's office please provide contact information that can be put on a web site so that all homeless veterans in the state know where to go to find housing?
- 3) Also, could the Governor establish an active outreach unit (and provide contact information to it) with the capacity to help veterans, and friends and family assisting them, in finding housing for them (under this program and whatever others are available)?

Outreach is critical to such a program's effectiveness, especially since many homeless veterans do not have the funds to buy and peruse newspapers and other media to find out about state resources available to them. Also, a good share of people living on the streets are socially isolated and have disabilities, both physical and cognitive. As has been noted in the press, it is likely that many veterans are still living on the street, despite new housing resources that the state has made available to them. (See: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/veteran-homelessness-is-still-a-significant-problem-in-virginia/2015/11/26/11625c2c-9235-11e5-befa-99ceebcbb272\\_story.html?postshare=2891448751117957&tid=ss\\_tu](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/veteran-homelessness-is-still-a-significant-problem-in-virginia/2015/11/26/11625c2c-9235-11e5-befa-99ceebcbb272_story.html?postshare=2891448751117957&tid=ss_tu).)

Governor McAuliffe and his administration should be commended for their efforts to find affordable housing for all veterans of the U.S. armed services living in our state as well as elevating this issue as a policy priority. However, to ensure that the goal of providing housing for these men and women is realized, it is likely that additional proactive steps need to be taken, including those outlined above.

I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Karl Polzer, Falls Church, VA

cc. Marcus Simon, Virginia House of Delegates; Andrea Tetrault; Gregory Brandon