**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

In 1954, President Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11 as Veteran’s Day, calling on the nation to “solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom, and let us reconsecrate ourselves to the task of promoting and enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain.”

In the nearly seven decades since, millions more Americans, including residents of Walworth County, have bravely taken up the call to protect and serve. This November 11, we will come together as a nation on Veterans Day to honor and celebrate these brave individuals who have served our country in uniform.

Now more than ever, our veterans and their families need our support. In a time when our country is divided on so many issues, we can all agree that these public servants who risked everything to protect our country and our way of life deserve our support and gratitude. That’s why this year, Walworth County is jo8ing the National Association of Counties (NaCo) and The National Association of County Veteran Service Officers (NACVSO) in launching *Operation Green Light for Veterans,* an initiative designed to shine a light on the service of our veterans.

Roughly 250,000 members transition out of the armed services each year. In the period following separation from the military, service members face the challenge of transitioning to a post-military civilian life. Tragically, evidence suggests that transitioning veterans are at higher risk for suicide, yet they often do not receive adequate support and resources. Veteran suicides have claimed over 30,000 lives since 2001 alone – four times more than the number of U.S. military personnel who died in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As part of *Operation Green Light for Veterans,* Walworth County is illuminating the Courthouse green beginning on November 7, 2022 to remind the veterans and their families in our community that we are here for them. We encourage individuals and businesses to join us by changing one light bulb in the entryway of your house or business to a green bulb.

By shining a green light, you let veterans know that they are seen, appreciated, and supported. While this event is focused on the week of Veterans Day (November 7th -13th), we encourage individuals to continue to shine the light year-round.

Operation Green Light is also an opportunity to raise awareness of the resources available to veterans and their families. Here in Walworth County, we’re proud to serve veterans through our Walworth County Veterans Service Office. Throughout the year, our county staff are bush connecting our veterans to federal and state benefits, helping them manage employment needs and doctors’ appointments, as well as helping them find veteran peers who can assist with the transition back to civilian life. Veterans and family members can learn more about services at the Walworth County Veterans Service Office.

This Veterans Day, join us in shining a light of hope and support. Join Operation Green Light and let’s turn Walworth County green for our veterans.