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For Immediate Release:

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NATIONAL VETERANS' RIGHTS GROUP TO HOLD TEN CITY RALLIES IN SUPPORT OF VETERANS

Falls Church, VA-- Beginning in December 2007 and running through February 2008, the president of the Circle of Friends will again lead a circuit of rallies across America to raise support for the homeless veterans on our streets. The rallies will feature a color guard, speakers, an open bar, and recognition of veterans who are in attendance. Invited speakers include 2008 Presidential candidates or their representatives. A complete schedule of rallies can be found at the end of this press release.

According to the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), there are approximately 300,000 homeless veterans on our streets any given night. About 3,000 of the valiant troops who served in Iraq and Afghanistan are now homeless veterans. The VA only funds 12,000 beds a years for these homeless veterans.

The burden for supporting homeless veterans comes to rest on the approximately 250 not-for-profit transitional facilities in our country. Only about 50 of these receive any kind of VA funding, and even then, this funding is inadequate. Closer to home, the VA funds only 56 beds for homeless veterans for the entire state of Iowa.

“We want to help everyone we can, but we have to start with the core,” said MAJ Brian Hampton USAR (ret), President of the Circle of Friends for American Veterans.

The Circle of Friends for American Veterans, a 501-c(3) non-profit organization since 1993, is considered the foremost grass-roots advocacy organization for homeless veterans in America. The Circle of Friends lobbies Congress on behalf of homeless veterans across America. Thus far their efforts have succeeded in raising well over a million dollars in earmarked appropriations. These efforts virtually doubled the bed capacity for the only facility for homeless veterans in the Washington DC area, the Southeast Veterans Service Center.

During the ten city rallies, the president of the Circle of Friends, among other things, will raise support for the “Veterans’ Bill of Rights” drafted by the organization. One of the provisions in the Bill of Rights includes increasing the per diem VA support for all these transitional facilities from \$30 a day per bed (a modest amount!) up to \$60 a day (*from 1/10th of 1% of the VA budget to 2/10ths of 1%*).

Another provision of the Veterans Bill of Rights requests adequate counseling for Post-Traumatic Stress (PTSD), a leading cause of homelessness for returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. Only half of the VA medical centers provide such counseling now. According to the Government Accountability Office, six of the seven centers are not prepared for the case load.

Members of Congress and local politicians have, in the past, come forward at the rallies to offer their support for our country's homeless veterans. At these rallies, the Circle of Friends promulgates the Veterans' Bill of Rights and challenges all Members of Congress to affirm their support for it.

Thus far, the organization has garnered support from 25 members Congress representing both Houses of Congress and both major political parties. Presidential candidates of both political parties are also invited to attend the rallies or send a representative. One goal of the rallies is to obtain support from Presidential candidates. The Veterans' Bill of Rights continues to move forward with resounding community and political support. Major Hampton will travel more than 25,000 miles across America during the 2007-2008 series of rallies, in the process of obtaining support for veterans nationwide.

Once the Circle of Friends has secured the support of several hundred Members of Congress, they will go to the Congress with all the names and tell them it is time to support their words with actions by passing legislation with adequate appropriations.

Additional information on the Circle of Friends can be found at www.vetsvision.org. For further details, please phone 1-800-528-5385 or e-mail info@vetsvision.org.

Tour Schedule:

- Cedar Rapids, Iowa.....**Thursday, December 27th at 7:00PM**
Knights of Columbus Council 909 - 716 A Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
- Des Moines, Iowa.....**Saturday, December 29th at 7:00PM**
Holiday Inn Des Moines – Downtown on 1050 6th Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa
- Manchester, New Hampshire.....**Friday, January 4th at 7:00PM**
The Alpine Club – 175 Putnam Street, Manchester, New Hampshire
- Las Vegas, Nevada.....**Wednesday, January 9th at 7:00PM**
American Legion Post #8 - 733 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Las Vegas, Nevada
- Detroit, Michigan.....**Friday, January 11th at 7:00PM**
Michigan Veterans Foundation - 2770 Park Avenue, Detroit, Michigan
- Charleston, South Carolina.....**Tuesday, January 15th at 7:00PM**
William Aiken House – The American Theater – 454 King Street, Charleston, South Carolina
- Columbia, South Carolina.....**Thursday, January 17th at 7:00PM**
American Legion Post #6 - 200 Pickens Street, Columbia, South Carolina
- Tampa, Florida.....**Thursday, January 24th at 7:00PM**

Elks Lodge – 3616 West Gandy Boulevard, Tampa, Florida

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.....Thursday, January 31st at 7:00PM
The National Liberty Museum – 321 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Arlington, Virginia.....Friday, February 8th at 7:00PM
Site to Be Determined