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House Passes Legislation to Support and Honor Military Personnel and Veterans

BOSTON – Representative Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means) joined his colleagues in the House of Representatives to pass multiple bills to protect the identities and legacies of active-duty military personnel and veterans. These bills build upon existing legislation to expand opportunities and services for military personnel, veterans and their families.

The Stolen Valor Act criminalizes falsely representing oneself as military personnel, a veteran or a recipient of specific military honors in order to receive money, property or a tangible benefit. This crime would be punishable by a fine of \$1,000 and imprisonment of not more than one year.

“With Veterans Day fast approaching, it is only fitting that we act now to honor those who have proudly served our country and have fought to preserve the many freedoms we all enjoy,” said Representative Smola. “I am proud to support these bills on behalf of the Commonwealth’s veterans and their families, including those who have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our state and our country.”

In addition to the Stolen Valor Act, the House also approved An Act Relative to Veterans’ Grave Markers, which would impose a fine of up to \$5,000 against any unauthorized individual who sells or attempts to sell a veteran’s grave marker. Under legislation passed today, Purple Heart Recipients would have free access to state parks, forests and reservations. The House also passed bills related to stealing, damaging or desecrating veterans’ graves.

For additional information please contact Representative Smola at Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov or (617)722-2100.

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