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Contact: Dennis Buden, Tournament Director, (860) 558-0514  
[dennis@goldenkielbasa.org](mailto:dennis@goldenkielbasa.org)

### **Connecticut Veterans Affairs Commissioner Sean Connolly to be Special Guest at Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open**

*DAV, Farmington Bank Event is Region's Largest Veterans Charity Golf Tourney*

**New Britain, Conn., August 26, 2016** – Connecticut Veterans Affairs Commissioner Sean M. Connolly will be a special guest as DAV Hardware City Chapter 8 honors service and sacrifice at its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual [Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open](#), the region's largest veterans charity golf event, on Thursday, September 29 at Tunxis Plantation Country Club in Farmington.

Some 200 golfers and nearly 300 post-golf barbeque dinner guests are expected to attend the tournament, presented by [Farmington Bank](#), which will honor [Bristol Vietnam combat veteran and Distinguished Service Cross recipient John Hogan](#).

"Farmington Bank is honored to again serve as the Presenting Sponsor of the Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open and we welcome the opportunity to join with Commissioner Connolly in honoring Mr. Hogan and all Connecticut vets," said John Patrick, chairman, president and CEO of Farmington Bank. "As the region's largest veterans charity golf tournament, the Golden Kielbasa embodies the values we share in honoring those who have given so much to our country,"

"This event is one of the premier veterans charity events in the state and it will be my pleasure and privilege to join with so many others as we honor Mr. Hogan and his fellow Connecticut veterans who have given so much for our country," added Commissioner Connolly.

The Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open has raised more than \$62,000 for causes including the [DAV, House of Heroes Connecticut and Friends of Fisher House Connecticut](#). This year's fundraising goal, according to Founder and Tournament Director Dennis Buden, is 200 golfers and \$25,000 in net proceeds.

"We indeed have our fundraising goals, but what makes the Golden Kielbasa stand out from other charity golf events is that it is about more than raising money. It is about honoring service," said Buden.

Hogan is the recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross, the Bronze Star, three Purple Hearts and multiple additional medals for his service in Vietnam between 1966 and 1974. In May of 1967, while

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-serving as a U.S. Army infantryman with Company C, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion (Airborne), 502<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, Specialist Four Hogan, as his Distinguished Service Cross citation states, distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions while serving as fire team leader on combat operations near Duc Pho. In the midst of a heavy attack by Viet Cong forces, Hogan took matters into his own hands and made multiple rushes under heavy fire to both rescue wounded comrades and destroy enemy bunkers.

States Hogan's Distinguished Service Cross citation: "Specialist Four Hogan's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army."

In addition to Farmington Bank, other major sponsors of the Golden Kielbasa include Stanley Black & Decker, the Tomasso Group, the Creed Law Firm, Atlantic Restoration & Remodeling Group, the Petit Family Foundation, Frontier Communications, Whitson's School Nutrition and more. A shotgun start is slated for 11 a.m., with dinner at approximately 5:30 followed by ceremonies.

Commissioner Connolly, who is also a Lieutenant Colonel with the U.S. Army Reserve 655<sup>th</sup> Regional Support Group at Westover Air Reserve Base in Massachusetts, assumed his position in March, 2015. An East Harford native and veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Commissioner Connolly has a long history of service, serving on active duty for more than seven years as an Army Judge Advocate, Assistant Legal Advisor and Executive Officer for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of the Appointing Authority for Military Commissions.

He has also served as a Prosecutor and Brigade Legal Advisor with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and in Kuwait and Iraq, where he tried all courts-martial, non-judicial punishment, elimination boards, and administrative separation actions for two brigades and advised on operational and administrative law matters.

Commissioner Connolly has taught as an Adjunct Lecturer at the Catholic University of America and Columbus School of Law; served as an elected member of the National Board of Directors of the Federal Bar Association; served as President of the Pentagon Chapter of the Federal Bar Association; and is currently an appointed member of the Federal Bar Association's National Council. His military awards include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, and Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Commissioner Connolly holds an undergraduate degree from Bryant University (cum laude) and Juris Doctor from the Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law. He is a member of American Legion, Post 95 in Hebron; the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 8776 in Hebron; the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division Association; the Association of the United States Army; and the Army Aviation Association of America.

Limited golf openings remain for the Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open, and it is not too late to become an event sponsor. For more information, please contact Dennis Buden at [dennis@goldenkielbasa.org](mailto:dennis@goldenkielbasa.org) or 860-558-0514, or visit [www.goldenkielbasa.org](http://www.goldenkielbasa.org).