

# **Letter Supporting the Varnum House Museum from Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri**

**Governor of Rhode Island (January 7, 2003 – January 4, 2011)**

**Governor Carcieri married his late wife, Suzanne,  
on the Varnum House Grounds in 1965.**

Dear Varnum Continentals Board,

I was born, educated, and lived most of my life in East Greenwich. My parents were born, educated, and lived most of their lives in East Greenwich. My Swedish grandparents were born, educated, and lived their entire lives in East Greenwich. My Italian grandparents came to East Greenwich in their early 20s and lived here their entire lives. My roots are long and deep in this very special town. The Varnum House was the site for Sue and my wedding reception, and our 50th Anniversary celebration. It holds a special place in my heart.

Being one of the oldest towns in Rhode Island, East Greenwich is steeped in our nation's history. I don't need to tell you how critical our town was in our nation's Revolutionary War. We are home to two of the most important colonial militias, and produced two generals who were outstanding warriors in the Continental Army, without whom George Washington would not have succeeded.

I was fortunate to be Governor at the celebration of the 225th anniversary of General Rochambeau's arrival in Newport with 5,000 French troops to support our quest for independence. It was 4 days of special commemoration, including the French ambassador to the US. Among our honored guests was famed historian, David McCullough. Over lunch he took pains to make sure I was aware of the historical treasures that existed in Nathaniel Greene's home, and the role he and Varnum played in our Revolutionary War. In his research for his famous '1776', he spent considerable time in East Greenwich understanding its role in our history.

I fully understand the difficulties of overseeing historical properties as a small not-for-profit. I am sure there are other possible alternatives to the sale of the Varnum House. It is inextricably tied to the Armory, and is really the soul of the Continentals.

I respectfully ask you to explore all other options before undertaking this course. East Greenwich will soon be celebrating its 350th anniversary. Our history is our identity.

Very truly yours,  
Governor Donald L. Carcieri