

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
MAY 10 - 11, 2017**

Resolution No. 24: Caregiver Program

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion is an organization of wartime veterans who have dedicated themselves to the service of the community, state and nation; and

WHEREAS, Due to advances in military medical field treatment, over 95 percent of severely injured military personnel are able to be saved and return home, but many will require in-home type care; and

WHEREAS, These wounded and disabled veterans often have horrific service and non-service connected medical conditions, including, but not limited to, multiple amputations, spinal cord injuries, complete loss of vision and/or hearing; and

WHEREAS, According to the RAND study there are 5.5 million caregivers throughout the United States and 1.1 million of those are caring for someone who served in the military after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, Family members often give up their own employment to be caregivers and in many households they are now the primary source of income; and

WHEREAS, Caregivers are reportedly having problems with health care, depression, access to services, employment and finding support in the community; and

WHEREAS, The burden for providing care places a disproportionate amount of the focus on the care recipient, which often distracts the caregiver from addressing their own needs (e.g. personal wellness, support, benefits assistance) and can have an impact on the caregiver's ability to provide sustained assistance to the wounded or disabled veteran; and

WHEREAS, Veterans sometimes require the aid and assistance of another person in order to perform personal functions required in everyday living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, attending to the wants of nature, adjusting prosthetic devices, or protecting himself/herself from the hazards of his/her daily environment; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), under Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations § 3.352, provides a special monthly compensation benefit, known as an Aid and Attendance allowance, in addition to the monthly service-connected disability compensation; and

WHEREAS, The VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers is a clinical program administered by the Veterans Health Administration which focuses on the needs of both the eligible veteran/servicemember and primary and secondary caregiver; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 10-11, 2017, That The American Legion establish a Caregiver Program; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion's Caregiver Program would fall under the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion's Caregiver Program primary mission is to address the needs of military and veteran caregivers by assisting with, but not limited to, employment/vocational referral, federal and state education assistance, Post 9/11 caregiver benefit support, veteran directed care, partner support with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation and various caregiver support organizations, assistance with death gratuity (benefit), and terminal illness.