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...At 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 17, 2018, the National Executive Committee was called to order by National Commander Reistad.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I call this meeting of the National Executive Committee to order. Please join me in a salute to the colors of our country by the numbers: One, two. Please uncover. I call on Philip Salois, national chaplain from Massachusetts, for the invocation.

Invocation
Philip G. Salois, Massachusetts, National Chaplain

Heavenly Father, we give You thanks for bringing us here together this morning as we begin our National Executive Committee meetings. We ask You to bless each and every member from The American Legion as represented here, representing all of their departments. We ask You to bless our deliberations today. Also I ask You to bless all of our troops who are currently in war zones in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq. Protect them and bring them safely home to their loved ones. We make this prayer in Your Holy Name. Amen.

POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony
Philip G. Salois, Massachusetts, National Chaplain

Resolution 288 adopted at the 67th Annual National Convention requires the designation of a POW/MIA chair at all officials meetings of The American Legion. This is a symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving our nation. With the POW/MIA flag positioned to my left, let it serve as a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners, the repatriation of the remains of those who have been killed in action, and a full accounting of those who are still missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor. A moment of silence for our POWs and MIAs.

...The National Executive Committee observed a moment of silence.

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN SALOIS: Amen.

Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion
Willie Ransom, Virginia, National Sergeant-at-Arms

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I call on National Sergeant-at-Arms Willie Ransom from Virginia to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS RANSOM: Ladies and gentlemen, join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our country.

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I now call on National Adjutant Daniel Wheeler for roll call.
Roll Call
National Officers

National Commander
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia

National Adjutant
Daniel S. Wheeler, Virginia

National Vice Commanders
Paul I. Spedaliere, Connecticut
James E. Wallace, Michigan
James E. Pisa, Alaska
John F. Milburn, Maryland
Steve Sweet, Mississippi

Past National Commanders
Clarence M. Bacon, Maryland (Excused)
John P. 'Jake' Comer, Massachusetts
Miles S. Epling, West Virginia
Robert S. Turner, Georgia
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, Pennsylvania (Excused)
Bruce Thiesen, California
William M. Detweiler, Louisiana
Daniel A. Ludwig, Minnesota
Joseph J. Frank, Missouri (Excused)
Anthony G. Jordan, Maine
Butch L. Miller, Virginia
Hon. Alan G. Lance, Sr., Idaho (Excused)
Richard J. Santos, Maryland
Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania
Hon. John A. Brieden, III, Texas
Thomas L. Bock, Colorado
Paul A. Morin, Massachusetts
Martin F. Conatser, Illinois
Robert W. Spanogle, Michigan
David K. Rehbein, Iowa
Clarence E. Hill, Florida
Jimmie L. Foster, Alaska
Fang A. Wong, New York
James E. Koutz, Indiana
Daniel M. Dellinger, Virginia
Michael D. Helm, Nebraska
Harold D. Barnett, Georgia
Charles E. Schmidt, Oregon
Denise H. Rohan, Wisconsin

National Executive Committeemen

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<tr>
<th>Department</th>
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Louisiana  Charles D. Aucoin  
Maine  Lloyd Woods  
Maryland  Lewis E. Trott, Jr.  
Massachusetts  Louis E. Brault, Jr.  
Mexico  Michael D. Wood  
Michigan  Raymond W. Moore  
Minnesota  Marland A. Ronning  
Mississippi  Robert E. Gosa  
Missouri  Kenneth J. Goth  
Montana  David A. Driver  
Nebraska  William D. Crosier, Jr.  
Nevada  Ronald L. Michalski  
New Hampshire  William R. Roy  
New Jersey  Charles K. Robbins  
New Mexico  Felix M. Trujillo  
New York  Edward Bertrand  
North Carolina  Jeff W. Joyner  
North Dakota  Robert L. Krause  
Ohio  Robert M. Klostermeier  
Oklahoma  Timothy W. Smith  
Oregon  Robert D. Liebenow  
Pennsylvania  Dennis C. Haas  
Philippines  Lawrence E. Wade  
Puerto Rico  Angel O. Narvaez-Negron  
Rhode Island  Cory D. Bates  
South Carolina  Michael D. Strauss  
South Dakota  James Huls  
Tennessee  Don E. Mathis  
Texas  C. W. Sparks, Jr.  
Utah  Terry D. Schow (Excused)  Richard G. Fisher  
Vermont  Marlys A. Lemnah  
Virginia  Michael F. Mitrione  
Washington  Ken C. Lee  
West Virginia  William W. Kile  
Wisconsin  Robert L. Shappell  
Wyoming  Terry E. Miller  

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: That completes the roll call, Mr. Commander. You have a quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you.

...National Vice Commander Wallace assumed the chair.

Opening Remarks
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia, National Commander

Good morning, national officers, past national commanders, members of the NEC, and all our guests. Next month we celebrate Veterans Day. This year is particularly significant. Exactly 100 years ago, Americans were losing their lives in massive numbers during an unprecedented and horrific war. November 11 will mark the anniversary of the armistice which ended World War I.

I am proud that delegates to our convention in Minneapolis passed Resolution 107 which encourages communities and houses of worship to toll their bells at 11 a.m. on November 11. But even if you’re not near ceremonial bells, you can still be a part of this. In other words, there's an app for that. You can search "Bells of Peace" in your app store
or visit legion.org for a download. The app, which is part of the World War I Centennial Commission's campaign, includes a built-in countdown timer, a choice of different bell sounds, links to World War I websites, and the ability to post photos about your local or personal commemoration. If you don't have access to church bells, you can listen to your smartphone for a solemn observance of that special moment.

As we listen to the bells of peace, we must not forget this is still a time of war. I was struck by a column that I read last week by Kevin Baron of "Defense One." It said, "While we were debating the future supreme court, exercising the right to assemble and protest via rule of law, an American soldier protecting that right was killed in Afghanistan by an IED. His name was Specialist James A. Slape from Morehead City, North Carolina. He was 23 years old."

This is the core of why we exist, to advocate for heroes like Specialist Slape and the grieving families that they leave behind. We exist not just to support families of the fallen, but Blue Star Families and our American Legion Family as well. And we offer support in all kinds of situations.

We need to especially remember the people of the Carolinas, Florida, Georgia, and the entire southeastern United States, as they recover from Hurricanes Florence and Michael. Post 82 in Shelby, North Carolina, and Post 34 in Rock Hill, South Carolina, have been particularly active in relief efforts. We will, no doubt, be hearing more about Florida, Georgia, and other areas in the coming days. But these frequent and powerful storms are reminders of why we must always have a robust and strong National Emergency Fund: to help our families with essential expenses during times of great needs.

Shortly after Hurricane Florence hit, North Carolina adjutant Randy Cash told national headquarters that the best way to show support is to donate to the National Emergency Fund. The generosity shown by your departments is very much appreciated, and I know that it will continue during these very difficult times.

We are still a very powerful force, but our membership numbers are not nearly as high as they should be. As of last Friday, we had 63,528 fewer members than the same time last year. This is our last meeting before we officially turn 100 years old. So if we wish to leave the name of the post and department out of this because I think that this situation's far more serious than just one incident at one particular post.

The message stated, "After a few days of thinking about it, I decided to write this letter to you all, explaining my experience thus far with The American Legion."

"First of all, let me tell you about myself and where I come from. I served from April 25, 1975, to November 2, 1979, and was discharged honorably as an E5 in the United States Army Infantry, both airborne and mechanized.

"I come from an Army family, as my father retired after some 30 years of service as a sergeant major in the United States Army Special Forces and is now laid to rest at Arlington. My sister served as an Army intelligence officer in the first Gulf War and also taught at West Point. To say the least, we're very proud of our service.

"I've never been much for joining clubs and I'm happily retired and living here in," an unnamed city and state "with my wife. I recently decided to join The American Legion, so I applied online, paid my dues, and received my membership card in the mail several weeks later.

"On October 5, I decided to drop in to the local American Legion post here" again, in the unnamed city and state, "and was looking forward to my first visit and to be welcomed
to the post. What I got instead was a bit of a surprise. 
"After they buzzed me in, I went to the bartender, greeted him, told him my name, that I was a new member, and showed him my card. He looked at my card and said I was not a post member because my card was from a different city, the state's capital."

He applied online and followed the instructions by providing his local address.
"The bartender asked some other members who were sitting at a table and they replied, 'If the card doesn't say our town and post number, then he can't be a member here.' The bartender then told me I can have a beer, but that they could not accept my membership card.

"What took me by surprise was that not one other member took the time to get up, walk over, and introduce himself to me, and maybe try to resolve the issue or give me some advice on how I could get my local membership card. I felt as though I was irrelevant and a waste of their time.

"I told the bartender, 'No problem, and I don't want to cause anybody any headaches,' and just walked out and went home.

"From what I can see, if this is how The American Legion portrays themselves to new and prospective members, good luck. Sincerely," name withheld.

Now, we've asked the department adjutant to reach out to this gentleman and see if we can do a better job of making this Legioinnaire feel welcome. Even so, that member has asked that his dues be refunded. At the very least, if something doesn't change, he probably won't renew. It's a great department and a great adjutant, but I fear that similar incidents occur way too often in each of our departments. If we want people to remain in our organization, we have to make them feel like they're valued parts of our organization, and nothing is more important than a relationship that they have with their local post.

Speaking of posts, we need more of them. Posts that welcome members, retain members, and actively devote themselves to working the Four Pillars. We still have approximately 5,400 current posts that were chartered in 1919. That's amazing. Wouldn't it be another great milestone to form brand-new posts and have each of your departments charter these new posts as Centennial Post 2019? Kudos to the Department of Alabama for chartering the first of which I hope will be many. Maybe, when The American Legion celebrates its sesquicentennial or bicentennial, these posts will be able to look back with similar pride about their legacies.

Some of you may recall, a couple of years ago there was the ice bucket challenge which went viral on social media and raised money and awareness to fight ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease. Wouldn't it be nice if we can raise similar awareness about something good and positive like our American Legion?

All you need is one of these. Assuming your phone has a video camera on it, gather members of your post together, holler your post name, and announce, "We are Team 100," then post it on Facebook, Twitter, and your website. Post 15 in Loveland, Colorado, did just this and it's being shared all over. If you tag me in it, I'll be sure to share it with my Facebook friends.

Now, you may be asking, "What is Team 100 and how can I join?" If you're a member of the American Legion Family, and that includes every member of this great body, you're already a member of Team 100. Team 100 refers to the long tradition of American Legionnaires serving their country by advocating for the needs of veterans, a strong national defense, patriotic youth programs, and Americanism. Whether you are a longtime NEC member or a brand-new member of the American Legion Family, everybody has had a part in our century of success, and we all have a stake in the future of this organization.

So in the coming days, I know that I'll be seeing plenty of Team 100 challenges all over social media. Branding and awareness are important and they're part of our strategic membership plan.

One issue that we will discuss during this meeting is the creation of The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. Consider it as Endowment Fund 2.0, but with a much more descriptive name. It will renew our commitment to children by delivering Temporary Financial Assistance to those in needs. It will provide expert assistance for
service officers to help veterans and their families navigate the complexities that go hand in hand with obtaining benefits that they have earned. I hope you will consider supporting this next evolution on how we can support veterans, children, and their families.

I talked about the core of why we exist, but what mission could be nobler than keeping veterans alive? The VA recently estimated that there are still 20 veterans a day who commit suicide. That's every day and from every modern war era. Of these 20 veterans a day, 14 have not sought treatment through the VA. We need to absolutely ensure that veterans who are depressed get some help long before thoughts of suicide take over.

Recent VA statistics also reveal that more than 1 million veterans are currently diagnosed with PTSD. Do you think there's a connection? We can be that friendly ear that these veterans need to talk to. We can be their comrades, their mentors, their friends. And we need a strong VA to help us on the professional and medical side of the equation. Preventing suicides, treating PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, burns, prosthetics, Agent Orange-related cancers, hepatitis C; I can go on and on listing reasons why a strong VA health system is so essential.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie promised in Minneapolis that the VA would never be privatized. He said, "For your service to America, you deserve to come to and be treated by those who know what you and your families have gone through."

Not all of us are combat veterans, but we all know what it's like to serve during a time of war. While each military experience is unique, we have far more in common than anything that sets us apart.

We must also remember that the current generation of veterans grew up in a different world than we did. They communicate differently. Many have used social media for their entire adult lives. We should never change our core values, but we should be open to new approaches, fresh perspectives, and maybe even a better way of conducting business.

The political parties and pundits always talk about having a big tent. Well, some of us actually have lived in tents. And I'm very proud that The American Legion has had a big tent since our founding. Women and minorities were part of our ranks long before they were welcome into other organizations. But that doesn't mean our tent can't be bigger. The way to grow our tent is to listen to each other respectfully. Younger veterans should respect the experience, legacies, knowledge, and longtime service of the older veterans. Older veterans should welcome the energy, enthusiasm, intelligence, and skill of the current generation.

There usually is more than one right way to do things, and by working together, valuing each other equally, regardless of war era, service branch, or background, we are a stronger American Legion. We constantly say membership is the lifeblood of The American Legion. But without a strong retention program, that vascular system will quickly run dry.

It seems as if we have been envisioning and planning our centennial for the better part of a decade; it's now upon us. This is truly an exciting time to have our meeting and to be a Legionnaire. Team...

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: "100!"
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Team...
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: "100!"
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Team...
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: "100!"
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, and let's have a great meeting. (Standing applause) ...National Commander Reistad resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: At this time I call on our sergeant-at-arms to please escort to the front our national president of the American Legion Auxiliary, Kathy Dungan from the great state of Mississippi. (Standing applause)
Greetings: Kathy Dungan  
National President, American Legion Auxiliary

Good morning. I want to thank you for this opportunity to address you today. I'm honored to be here. I bring you greetings on behalf of the nearly 700,000 Auxiliary members. And I am here today to offer our support to you in any way possible. I hope to develop a strong relationship as a Legion Family.

Up until a couple of weeks ago, I was under the impression that the Auxiliary and The American Legion had a good relationship, but now I hear that is not entirely true. Just know that I am committed to doing our part, my part, to become and stay a Legion Family, working toward our mission: the veterans, active-duty military, their families and children.

So please don't judge me by any actions of past Auxiliary predecessors. I will represent the national organization to the best of my ability. Our motto is "Service, Not Self." I am here to serve.

And speaking of Legion Family, I had the opportunity last week to travel with National Commander Reistad across the state of Indiana on their Race to 100, and promote the Legion Family by visiting local posts and units. What an awesome trip it was, and it was very rewarding.

And most of all to you, I want to thank you for giving me such a wonderful national commander to work with. I am truly blessed to be serving with him. I want to give a shout out to our Mississippi department NEC, Robert Gosa. (Applause)

Mississippi is so proud to have National Vice Commander Steve Sweet from our state representing the Legion this year. (Applause)

I love my Legion family. National Commander Brett, I wish you an awesome year. I know that you are going to do great things. And members of the NEC, I wish you a most successful meeting. Thank you all, and God bless you as we continue serving our heroes. Thank you. (Standing applause)

Introduction of National Officers

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I'm honored at this time to introduce our national officers. When I call your name, please rise and remain standing, and hold your applause, if you will, until the last is recognized.

First, our national vice commanders. James E. Pisa, from Alaska, Paul I. Spedaliere, from Connecticut, John F. Milburn, from Maryland, James E. Wallace, from Michigan, and Steve Sweet, from Mississippi. Father Philip G. Salois, from Massachusetts, our national chaplain. Frederick S. Doten, from Nevada, our national historian. Willie D. Ransom, from Virginia, our national sergeant-at-arms. Please give them a hand. (Applause)

Gentlemen, thank you for your service. I now call for the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.

Reading of Minutes of Previous Meetings

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, the minutes have been printed in digest form and have been distributed. I move that they be approved without being read. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor that the minutes be approved without being read, there's a discussion. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Opposed? The ayes have it. Thank you.

I call on National Adjutant Daniel S. Wheeler, from Virginia, for announcements.

Announcements

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: The National Commander's Dinner honoring the NEC is tonight at the Sheraton City Centre, Indianapolis. The reception will be held in
the Circle Suites at 5:00 p.m. The dinner will be served in the Meridian Ballroom at 6:15 p.m. This is earlier than what we usually have because we have an award-winning entertainment being presented tonight, I think it's called "I am a Soldier" and it's really a fantastic one-man show.

NECmen who haven't yet submitted names of their attendees will find a bright yellow form on their desk. This needs to be completed and returned to Kevin Long, who is in the back of the room, always smiling. The cutoff for seating requests is 10:00 this morning. So if you have a yellow form, please complete it and turn it in immediately. Tickets will be available for pickup in the front office on the south end of the third floor during the luncheon recess. That completes the announcements, Mr. Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, sir. I now call on the chairman of the Resolutions Subcommittee, David O. Warnken from Kansas for a report on resolutions.

Oral Report: Subcommittee on Resolutions
David O. Warnken, Kansas, Chairman

Thank you, Commander. Good morning. Mr. Commander, your Subcommittee on Resolutions has been in session for the last two days. We have 26 resolutions that will be presented, coming from the commissions and the committees who will make the reports. Any resolution seeking National Executive Committee approval will follow the report of that commission. All resolutions which have been disposed of by other action or held for further study will be reported on an addendum.

Our thanks to the commissions for their efforts and accurate handling of the resolutions during this meeting. This has had a positive impact on the work of your Subcommittee. Mr. Commander, I ask that you prepare the NEC for memorializing resolutions. Please uncover.

Memorial Resolutions
Terry D. Lewis, Pennsylvania

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God, the Great Commander, to summon to His immortal legions our beloved comrade, Terry D. Lewis - Department Vice Commander, 1995 to 1996; Department Commander, 2000 to 2001; National Vice Commander, 2001 to 2002; Media & Communications Commission National Commander's Representative, 2013 to 2018; and

WHEREAS, We humbly bow to the will of Divine Providence while ever cherishing in our hearts the memory of his distinguished service to our country and his outstanding contributions to American Legion comradeship; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled on this 17th day of October in the year of our Lord 2018, does mourn the passing of our distinguished Legionnaire Terry D. Lewis, that we commend to all men his works and to God his spirit; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That in token of our common grief, a token of this resolution will be presented to his family.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I ask that the body be seated at this time. Please be seated. Commander, I ask that you recognize Past National Commander Ron Conley for the purpose of a eulogy.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Past National Commander Conley.
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CONLEY: Probably one of the hardest things to do is to stand before this body and talk about a Legionnaire that has gone and reported to the Supreme Commander of us all.

Almost everybody in this room knew Terry Lewis. He touched each and every one of us. He had a common thread that was connected to other people who have gone before him, and that is his love and his dedication of The American Legion.

Terry was a great family man. He loved his daughters, his grandkids, his wife, his community, his brother. Terry was, I believe, an extraordinary person. He never had a bad word about anybody. He always had a smile and he always greeted everybody.

I know the first time that Commander Comer met Terry Lewis, and that's when he came to Philadelphia for the centennial convention. All the national commanders at that time were there for the centennial celebration of our constitution. Terry was picked to be Jake's driver. But the thing was, there was a little bit of confusion that day, and Terry never dropped Jake off where he was supposed to be. (Laughter)

So I got a phone call from Eddie Hoke and wanted to know what happened, that that driver did not deliver Comer to his designated point of contact. So I looked into it, and that's probably the first time I really got to meet Terry Lewis. But Terry was one of those guys that you could not get mad at. He was embarrassed but he was a true gentleman, apologized, and I know he since had several conversations with Commander Comer since that time.

Terry loved coming to the executive meetings. He always wanted to be here, he always wanted to participate in the media committee. He always wanted to sit there and greet all his friends. It's a sad note for us in Pennsylvania, as well it is a sad note for this national organization, that we lost such an individual as Terry Lewis.

Terry was one of those guys that liked to stop on the way back to Pennsylvania and we had to stop at Popeye Chicken. He always wanted to stop at that place and get himself some chicken. He had his chauffeur, Mr. Watson, make sure that we were there and they had the exact exit marked on in his wallet.

But it is heartfelt to sit there and talk about Terry, talk about his family and his life, his dedication, his love of everybody, but most of all, his love of the United States Marine Corps, his love of his family, and the love of The American Legion.

If you want to remember Terry Lewis, you can best do it by signing up a new member in The American Legion, mentoring them to be a Terry Lewis.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SANTOS: Commander, may I approach?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Yes.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SANTOS: I rise to echo the words of PNC Conley. But I rise for Terry Lewis, he was one of my vice commanders, of the five. We each had names for our vice commanders and Terry was "Tiny One." Tiny One. (Laughter)

I had a Tiny Two, national vice commander from Nevada. Two large gentlemen, to say the least; felt well protected in their midst.

But with Terry, he had a pleasant personality, to say the least. Took on assignments with enthusiasm, completed them thoroughly, and greeted all with a smile. He was a big man, big smile, big heart. If anyone knew Terry closely, he would help anyone if he could and when he could.

He also had another nickname, "Boot Man," for, I guess, his job in the city of Philadelphia, taking on parked cars. But I remember Terry, again, for his smile, big heart, enthusiasm, and love of The American Legion. This organization will sorely miss him, and I know the Department of Pennsylvania has and will. Thank you, commander.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Well, I, too, enjoyed Terry's friendship. We first met when we were department commanders together, in this very room. We started out with a friendly relationship that continued on for as long as I knew him. I will always treasure and cherish his friendship.
I'd ask you to all please rise.

Similar resolutions will be presented to the families of William A. Rakestraw, Jr., New Jersey; Lawrence Strainege, Florida; O.N. "Butch" Haggard, Jr., Maryland; Luis R. Quiles-Barrios, Puerto Rico; Richard Reed, Mississippi.

THE BROKEN CHAIN
We little knew the day that
God was going to call your name.
In life we loved you dearly;
In death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to lose you.
But you didn't go alone.
For part of us went with you
the day God called you home.

You left us peaceful memories
your love is still our guide.
And though we cannot see you,
you are always at our side.

Our family chain is broken
and nothing seems the same,
but as God calls us one by one,
the chain will link again.

--Ron Tranmer

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: At this time, the chair recognizes our national judge advocate, Kevin J. Bartlett from Michigan, for his report.

Oral Report: National Judge Advocate
Kevin J. Bartlett, Michigan

Commander, national vice commanders, past national commanders, National Executive Committee members, I welcome you and appreciate the opportunity to serve our great organization as national judge advocate.

From January 1 through September 30, 2018, as your national judge advocate, I have managed a number of legal proceedings and lawsuits throughout the country in which The American Legion has been served and/or contacted for legal purposes. All of these matters are being handled as required and in conjunction with our co-counsel contracted under our insurance coverage.

This year so far, I've rendered over 450 written and oral opinions on questions which have been submitted by the several departments and/or posts of The American Legion, national officers, staff members, and individual members of our organization. These opinions involved legal matters such as contracts, probate, federal tax questions, torts, insurance matters, articles of incorporation, civil rights, retirement benefits, and other matters of a legal nature, policy matters, problems concerning the interpretation of the construction of the national constitution and the bylaws.

In each instance, when appropriate, a copy of the opinion was rendered and furnished to each NEC committeeman, department commander, department adjutant, and the department judge advocate, so that they will be acquainted with the opinions affecting their department.
Many oral opinions were also rendered to the national officers, national commission chairmen, department officers, and to staff of the national organization upon subjects involving legal, financial, administration, and policy matters.

Regarding my position as the general counsel for the American Legion Auxiliary, there are at least 17 written opinions, five contracts renewed, and numerous oral opinions rendered during the six in-person meetings, countless telephone consultations, and over 62 hours of work thus far this year, with the national secretary of the American Legion Auxiliary, in response to questions submitted to her.

As the national judge advocate, in accordance with established policy, I have reviewed the manuscripts of every single article destined for future publication in The American Legion Magazine, The Dispatch, and other American Legion publications, for the purpose of expunging statements or materials questionable in character contained therein, which might subject The American Legion to a libel suit.

For the reported date, 1,469 manuscripts have been reviewed, and appropriate comments in connection therewith were transmitted when necessary to the publisher or editor of The American Legion Magazine. As national judge advocate, I also reviewed 67 videos posted on the American Legion website, and I've reviewed 631 veteran memorials prior to their publication.

As NJA, I am a member of the National Retirement Committee of national headquarters and have attended all meetings in accordance with the requirements of law. And in such, The American Legion has filed all the necessary returns, reports, and documents for the calendar year with the IRS in connection with this plan. Also in accordance with the ERISA provisions, The American Legion has filed all the necessary annual reports and documents with the IRS, along with everything related to the 401(k) plan.

The national office here has also reviewed the summary annual report for the employee savings plan and arranged for the distribution thereof as required.

In accordance with improving efficiency, I switched our legal trademark counsel to the firm of Barnes & Thornburg here in Indianapolis, and this was done to decrease our legal costs.

As your national judge advocate, I attended the past National Convention of The American Legion, the Washington, DC conference and spring meetings of the NEC, and served both bodies as national parliamentarian.

I also serve as counsel on matters involving labor issues, real estate law, postal regulations, corporate organizations, and insurance. Over 201 DD-214s and/or proofs of honorable service were reviewed from numerous departments.

We issued 31 list protection agreements, 42 cease-and-desist letters, and over 200 post tax letters were drafted and sent out. Forty-eight resolutions were consulted on and at least eight were drafted.

In addition, as your national judge advocate, I function as counsel for and a director of the Citizens Flag Alliance and American Legion Charities. In these capacities I attended all board meetings.

Also as national judge advocate, I visited, lectured, and taught at two different department conventions this summer.

Now, as your chief compliance officer, I was given the management responsibility for Internal Affairs, Membership, Library, and the Insurance divisions, and since then, we've had numerous division requests that were dealt with and managed.

Lastly, I'd like all of you to please note, in your packet there is a conflict of interest form. Please complete this, fill it out, and turn it in to my office, as this is required by the IRS and we are audited on that form.

In conclusion, commander, I wish to thank you, all the national officers, and the National Executive Committee for this opportunity to serve our great organization as national judge advocate. Thank you. (Applause)
Report: National Judge Advocate  
Kevin J. Bartlett, Michigan

Employee Salary Savings Plan – 401(k)  
There has been no change.

The American Legion Retirement Plan  
There has been no change.

Current Litigation

- United States Court of Appeals – 4th Circuit – From US D/Ct. for Maryland (#cv-14-550)
  American Humanist Association (Plaintiffs/Appellants) vs. Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Com. (Defendant/Appellee) & The American Legion et al (Defendants/Appellees) – Michael Carvin (Pro Bono) Jones Day - Washington, DC
  The American Humanist Association sued to compel destruction of the “Bladensburg Cross” which is on Maryland State land. It was erected on private property that was taken to enlarge a road intersection. It was erected by The American Legion in 1925 as a veteran’s memorial. One of the plaintiffs is “upset” to see it. National, the Department of Maryland and the Bladensburg post are amici and filed to protect the cross.
  Our brief has been filed to seek Summary Judgement. Summary Judgement was granted.
  The plaintiffs appealed to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals and we lost 1-2.
  Our brief was filed for a re-hearing before all members of the 4th Circuit and we lost. Petitions for sending this to the U.S. Supreme Court were filed by our attorneys on June 25, 2018. The American Humanist Association filed their brief July 30, 2018. Upon review with our Counsel we noticed that they misconstrued numerous facts within their brief. A response brief will be forthcoming from our Counsel.
  Additionally 16 different groups have filed friend-of-the-court briefs (amici) in support of our appeal. These groups include the VFW, the National WW1 Museum, 109 Members of Congress, 28 States, several Medal of Honor recipients, 25 retired General/Flag Officers, a Jewish group, a Muslim group and several Maryland elected officials.
  The U.S. Supreme Court still has not determined if they will hear the case.

- Philadelphia County Ct. of Common Pleas (#17-11060643)
  Estate of Ellington vs. TAL, et al – Francis Deasey, Philadelphia (Insurance Atty.)
  Another Philadelphia post lawsuit that dragged TAL into the fray. We filed an insurance claim for our defense. I requested, and received, the same attorney as in the Silva matter above.
  The family representative of Mr. Ellington, who was shot outside a local Post, filed this matter against everyone that they could file against. We filed numerous preliminary objections to Plaintiff’s original complaint on the basis that Plaintiff did not plead sufficient facts against The American Legion. In response the Court granted our Preliminary Objections and gave Plaintiff twenty days to file an Amended Complaint. The Plaintiff filed an Amended Complaint. Unfortunately, this Amended Complaint contains no material differences with respect to the allegations against the American Legion as contained in the initial Complaint. As a result, we have filed an Answer and Preliminary Objections to the Amended Complaint seeking dismissal of several allegations against TAL. We are still awaiting the disposition by the Court.
  At the same time, the Court has scheduled a Case Management Conference at which time the Court will establish discovery deadlines; deadlines for production of expert reports, date for settlement and pretrial conference and estimated trial date. Given the number of parties in this case, I do not believe the case will be considered trial ready until sometime in 2019.
Proceedings of Wednesday, October 17, 2018

• Texas matter regarding Sally Kraynick and Post #490.
  We received notice that a firm has been retained to represent the estate and family of Sally A. Kraynick in their alleged claim that Ms. Kraynick was overserved at Texas Post 490 and then “let her drive away while intoxicated causing a motor vehicle accident” in which she lost her life. Their demand is for Ten Million dollars ($10,000,000.00). Our insurance carrier has been notified, counsel was assigned and discussions have started.

• Dusso, Kathryn vs. A/L and Legionnaires Insurance Trust – Minnesota, Ramsey County
  This matter came about because LIT did not pay on an accidental death matter. Life Insurance Company of North American has assumed defense and indemnification for The American Legion. The answer is filed.

• Massachusetts matter regarding Dawn Fanning, former A/L Post 331 member.
  A demand letter pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 93A, Section 9 was received. Ms. Fanning was involved in a situation at Post 331 with a guest. Our attorney has responded to the demand letter with an explanation of TAL organization, a full denial of any involvement and a request to remove TAL from any further involvement.

• Estate of Eli Samuel Battistini-Mercado v. Guy E. Shelley, Jr., Post #974
  PA matter that occurred on, or about, April 2, 2017 at PA Post 974. The attorney for the Estate is asking for video surveillance – which of course we do not have. After we responded to the plaintiff’s demands our insurance carrier was notified. Nevertheless the plaintiff’s moved forward with filing a cause of action. Our claims representative has made several attempts to speak with the plaintiff’s counsel to educate counsel on TAL organization.

• Roxanne Flores vs. American Legion – Post #241
  This claim relates to a Ms. R. Flores that appears to have fallen down in the parking lot of A/L Post #241 in Baldwin Park, CA. Plaintiff’s counsel is requesting that “we” (at National HQ) save any evidence relating to the incident be saved and there be no spoliation of evidence. We responded that we do not have any evidence, informed them of TAL organization and contacted our insurance carrier.

• Thompson v. C. Baker, Texas Post 629 (#D-1-GN-18-001965) Travis County, Texas
  Mr. Thompson was stabbed while in Texas Post 629 and his attorney has blamed everyone for his injuries. Our insurance carrier was notified and an attorney was appointed. She has answered the complaint and sent the plaintiff our first set of interrogatories, requests for production and rule 194 request for disclosure.

• TAL Post 1833, New York
  A matter in which we received notice of NY Post 1833 is an alleged trespasser at some property in Brooklyn, NY. We sent a letter denying our involvement.

International Headquarters Activities

We have completed the HQ voluntary separation and reorganization. I have been named TAL Chief Compliance Officer. This additional title comes with the additional management responsibilities over the Internal Affairs division, Membership division, Library/Museum and Risk Management.

All legal documents, contracts and TAL books/brochures are continually being reviewed and updated as needed.

Additionally attached to this report is the 2018 Fall Library Discard List and the 2018 Fall Museum Discard List.
Additional Duties

Since January 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018 the following events have taken place through the office of Judge Advocate: 1,068 media articles were read and reviewed prior to publishing; 574 U.S. Memorial website submissions were reviewed; watched and reviewed 42 on-line videos; read, reviewed and worked on 77 contracts; issued 111 oral opinions; issued 180 written opinions; been consulted on 8 Resolutions; wrote 6 Resolutions; issued 60 Department/Post correspondence opinions; reviewed and issued 28 List Protection Agreements; received and given 27 litigation updates; researched and issued 34 TAL Emblem violation “Cease and Desist” letters; researched and issued 169 Post tax letters; reviewed 112 DD-214’s; attended 6 TAL Divisional meetings; attended 12 Special Committee meetings; participated in 8 various trademark activities; assisted the Ladies Auxiliary on 3 contracts and 18 opinions; attended 3 Ladies Auxiliary meetings (including their National Convention); performed 42.50 hours of Ladies Auxiliary work; attended 3 Retirement committee events; attended 1 Citizens Flag Amendment meetings; visited 5 Districts and/or Posts; and attended, taught classes at and spoke at 2 Department Conventions amongst varies other duties as your National Judge Advocate.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of National Judge Advocate Kevin Bartlett. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to receive the report of National Judge Advocate Kevin Bartlett. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it.

The chair now recognizes Chairman Gaither M. Keener, Jr., of North Carolina, for a report of the Finance Commission.

Oral Report: Finance Commission

Gaither M. Keener, Jr., North Carolina, Chairman

Commander, national officers, past national commanders, members of the NEC and guests. Your Finance Commission met Monday and Tuesday, October 15 and 16. All commission members were present. Also present were Daniel S. Wheeler, national adjutant; George S. Buskirk, Jr., national treasurer; James Baca, marketing & communication executive director; Lou Celli, government and veterans affairs executive director; Shawn Long, finance director; and David Warnken, Edward Bertrand, Robert Krause, Don Mathis, and Michael Mitrione, of the Finance NEC Liaison Committee. Several guests joined us throughout the course of the meeting.

Reports were received from the national adjutant, the national treasurer, the finance director, the national judge advocate, the executive directors, the Convention Commission, the Marketing Commission, the Internal Affairs Commission, the Media & Communications Commission, Membership & Post Activities Committee, the Information Technology Division. We also received updates concerning fundraising and the American Legion Baseball World Series.

Jimmy A. Luther was named agent of record for the health and life coverage of the national headquarters employees. With the addition of the machine operator that we acquired from Xerox when we changed contractors, our authorized strength is currently 254. That's 40 people less than previously reported at the convention.

The commission approved a recommendation that Crowe Horwath LLP, certified public accountants, be employed to prepare The American Legion 2018 fiscal year-end report and audit.

The commission recommends that the 2019 dues be allocated as follows: $3 to The American Legion Magazine, and $15.50 to the general fund. It hasn't changed.

A resolution is recommended for NEC approval which will allow The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation to engage in a $25 million financial campaign doing business as "The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation" to further increase the Endowment Fund's trust fund principal. The financial campaign will begin immediately
and continue until such time as the $25 million monetary goal is achieved to the corpus. The increased trust fund earnings would be used in perpetuity, to exclusively support the DSO programs of the VA&R Commission and the TFA programs of Americanism's Children and Youth Committee, without paying any of the programs' support costs, as such costs will be covered by the general fund.

A resolution is recommended for NEC approval which set the maximum balance at the National Convention Stabilization Fund at $300,000. On January 1, 2019, any excess over $300,000 in the National Convention Stabilization Fund will be transferred into the general fund, to be applied to the national organization's convention expenses in 2019. Each subsequent year, any balance exceeding the maximum of $300,000 will be transferred into the general fund on or about January 1 to be applied to the national organization's convention expenses of that year.

Membership, fundraising, and marketing strategies of The American Legion required the collection and analysis of data not available on our current MMIS membership computer environment; you heard me discuss that over a year and a half ago. It relies on an older, 40-year-old, software technology that is more complex and costly to develop and maintain. In addition, we can't find anybody to come in and do this. Therefore, a resolution is recommended for NEC approval which allows The American Legion to recapitalize the computer system and license the use of Personify 360, with Personify Corporation, as a replacement membership system. One-time implementation costs not to exceed $1.5 million will be capitalized and expensed over a period of seven years. I initially reported to you that a replacement system might cost up to $5 million.

I chaired an IT oversight committee which was appointed by then National Commander Rohan one year ago. Our members included David Warnken of Kansas, Randy Goodman of Georgia, Ken Danilson of Iowa, and Paul Evenson of South Dakota. We met many times, either in person or via teleconference, and I can tell you that I am completely satisfied with this recommendation.

You know my history as a general counsel of a Fortune 500 company, 40 years of my life was dealing with IT technology as any other corporation. I'd really like to thank the members of my committee, and also Shawn Long and IT staff with whom we worked, for their meticulous effort on this project.

Attached is a report that provides a breakdown of payments to, or for the benefit of all your departments.

A one percent cost-of-living increase for all graded employees was approved for 2019. Here's the big paragraph: We expect to end the 2018 budget with a net operating surplus of $2,699,294 compared to a budgeted surplus of $1,606,000. If you remember when I stood up here last year, the surplus was $264,000. We asked you to think about a resolution allowing us to market and do marketing, and that marketing has brought in excess of over a million dollars more to the surplus.

The 2019 budget request is based on a membership of 1,850,000. The request calls for revenues of $88,613,563 and expenses of $81,516,256, for an operating surplus for 2019 of $7,097,307.

I will tell you that if we are successful on our coins, it will be more than $7 million. I'll repeat: If we are successful, as we should be, in selling our coins, it will be way more than seven. You can add another three million to that. But if we hit the peak, you add six million to that, then you can think about what kind of dues increase you may not have. (Applause)

A list of resolutions recommended for your approval follows the report; they came from the different commissions and committees that reported their information to us.

Commander, that is my report.
The Finance Commission met Monday and Tuesday, October 15-16. All commission members were present. Also present were: Daniel S. Wheeler, National Adjutant; George A. Buskirk, Jr., National Treasurer; James Baca, Marketing & Communications Executive Director; Lou Celli, Government & Veterans Affairs Executive Director; Shawn Long, Finance Director; and David Warnken, Edward Bertrand, Robert Krause, Don Mathis and Michael Mitrione of the Finance NEC Liaison Committee. Several guests joined us throughout the course of the meeting.

Reports were received from the National Adjutant; National Treasurer; Finance Director; National Judge Advocate; the Executive Directors; the Convention, Marketing, Internal Affairs and Media & Communications Commissions; the Membership & Post Activities Committee; the Information Technology Division. We also received updates concerning fundraising and the American Legion Baseball World Series.

Jimmy A. Luther was named agent-of-record for the health and life coverage of National Headquarters employees. With the addition of the machine operator that we acquired from Xerox when we changed contractors, our authorized strength is currently 254 – 40 less than previously.

The commission approved a recommendation that Crowe Horwath LLP, certified public accountants, be employed to prepare The American Legion’s 2018 fiscal year audit.

The commission recommends that 2019 dues be allocated as follows: $3 to The American Legion Magazine and $15.50 to the general fund.

A resolution is recommended for NEC approval which will allow The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation to engage in a $25 million financial campaign doing business as “The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation” to further increase the Endowment Fund’s trust fund principal. The financial campaign would begin immediately and continue until such time as the $25 million monetary goal is achieved. The increased trust fund earnings would be used, in perpetuity, to exclusively support the DSO programs of the VA&R Commission and the TFA program of Americanism’s Children & Youth Committee without paying any of the programs’ supporting costs, as such costs will be covered by the general fund.

A resolution is recommended for NEC approval which will set the maximum balance of the National Convention Stabilization Fund at $300,000. On January 1, 2019, any excess over $300,000 in the National Convention Stabilization Fund would be transferred into the general fund to be applied to the national organization’s convention expenses in 2019. Each subsequent year, any balance exceeding the maximum $300,000 will be transferred into the general fund on or about January 1 to be applied to the national organization’s convention expenses for said year.

Membership, fundraising and marketing strategies of The American Legion require the collection and analysis of data not available in our current MMIS membership computer environment. It relies on older software technology that is more complex and costly to develop and maintain. Therefore, a resolution is recommended for NEC approval which allow The American Legion to recapitalize the computer system and license the use of Personify 360 with Personify Corp as a replacement membership system. One-time implementation costs not to exceed $1.5 million will be capitalized and expensed over a period of seven years. I initially reported to you that a replacement system might cost up to $5 million. I chaired an IT Oversight Committee which was appointed by National Commander Rohan one year ago. Our members included Dave Warnken of Kansas, Randy Goodman of Georgia, Ken Danilson of Iowa, and Paul Evenson of South Dakota. We met many times either in person or via teleconference, and I can tell you that I am completely satisfied with this recommendation. I’d like to thank the members of my committee and also Shawn Long and the IT staff with whom we worked, for their meticulous effort on this project.
Attached is a report that provides a breakdown of payments to, or for the benefit of, all departments.

A 1% cost-of-living increase for all graded employees was approved for 2019.

We expect to end 2018 budget year with a net operating surplus of $2,699,294 compared to a budgeted surplus of $1,606,056. The 2019 budget request is based on a membership of 1,850,000. The request calls for revenues of $88,613,563 and expenses of $81,516,256 for an operating surplus of $7,097,307.

A list of resolutions recommended for your approval follows this report.

Resolutions

The Finance Commission recommends the NEC approve and adopt the resolutions listed below. Copies of the resolutions accompany this report.

- Resolution #3: The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation. Authorizes The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation to engage in a $25 million financial campaign doing business as “The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation” to further increase the Endowment Fund’s trust fund principal. The financial campaign would begin immediately and continue until such time as the $25 million monetary goal is achieved.

- Resolution #4: Membership System Upgrade. The American Legion license the use of Personify 360 with Personify Corp as a replacement membership system with one-time implementation costs not to exceed $1,500,000 which will be capitalized and expensed over a period of seven years.

- Resolution #5: 2019 Enhancements to National Headquarters Computing Environment. Authorizes The American Legion National Headquarters to acquire hardware and software to meet the present needs of the National Headquarters computer environment at a cost not to exceed $17,100.

- Resolution #6: Media & Communications Division Advertising Contract with James G. Elliott Co., Inc. Authorizes The American Legion to enter into a one-year contract with provision for renewal each year for a period of no more than five years, commencing November 11 of each year, concluding on November 10, 2023, with James G. Elliott Co.

- Resolution #7: National Convention Stabilization Funds Transfer. Beginning January 1, 2019, sets the annual maximum balance of the National Convention Stabilization Fund at $300,000. On or about January 1 of each year, any excess over $300,000 in the National Convention Stabilization Fund would be transferred into the general fund to be applied to the national organization’s convention expenses for said year.

- Resolution #8: Modification of Agreement for Permanent Site of The American Legion Baseball World Series. Upon the automatic renewal of The American Legion and Cleveland County ALWS (American Legion World Series) Baseball, Inc. contract in 2019 and any succeeding renewal term(s), the contract termination terms will be mutually modified to require a two year termination notice of automatic renewal given to the other party on or prior to the last day of the most recent American Legion World Series.
RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion to approve the report of the Finance Commission with the exception of six resolutions. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor to approve the report. Any discussion? All those in favor, aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it.
Inasmuch as this is an ongoing process, I wish at this time to reappoint the following members to the IT Oversight Committee: Gaither M. Keener, Jr., of North Carolina as chairman; David O. Warnken of Kansas as vice chairman; Randy Goodman of Georgia as a member; Kenneth D. Danilson of Iowa, member; Paul A. Evenson of South Dakota, a member, and request a motion to that effect.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that those appointments be approved. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion to approve those appointments. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Ayes have it.

Resolution No. 3: The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation
Origin: Marketing Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion and The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation on March 30, 1925, established The American Legion Endowment Fund; and

WHEREAS, Said fund is deposited in a trust with The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation exists to provide financial support to the Department Service Officer School programs of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission (VA&R) and the Temporary Financial Assistance program of the Children & Youth (C&Y) Committee of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation is connected to The American Legion by its use of the words "The American Legion" in its corporate name and is permitted use of The American Legion Emblem; and

WHEREAS, The corporate charter of The American Legion gives The American Legion the sole and exclusive right to use the name "The American Legion"; and

WHEREAS, The amount of The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation's financial support provided to each program area is only the net investment income derived from the principal of the trust; and

WHEREAS, The revenue for The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation cannot continue to fully support the VA&R Department Service Officer schools and the C&Y Temporary Financial Assistance programs areas without the dual practice of using the trust fund interest and the general fund; and

WHEREAS, Increasing The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation's trust fund principal would in turn increase the amount of income earned to be shared between the VA&R Department Service Officer schools and the C&Y Temporary Financial Assistance program areas that both directly assist veterans and their families by reducing the financial pressure on the general fund; and

WHEREAS, This increased financial support to said programs benefits the entire organization of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, General membership contributions to The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation have provided only small principal trust fund growth; and

WHEREAS, This resolution has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors of The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation, and reviewed by the Marketing Commission and the Finance Commission which recommends its adoption; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation engage in a Twenty-Five Million Dollar ($25,000,000.00) financial campaign doing business as "The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation" to further increase The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation's trust fund principle; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That this financial campaign will start immediately and continue until such time as "The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation" monetary goal is achieved; and, be it finally
RESOLVED, That said increased trust fund earnings will be used to exclusively, and only, support the Department Service Officer programs of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission and the Temporary Financial Assistance program of the Americanism Commission's Children & Youth Committee of The American Legion in perpetuity without paying any of the programs' supporting costs as such costs will be covered by the general fund.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Marketing Commission, the Finance Commission, and your Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its approval. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second for approval of the resolution. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Approved.

Resolution No. 4: Membership System Upgrade
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, Membership, fundraising and marketing strategies of The American Legion require the collection and analysis of data not available in the current MMIS membership computer environment; and

WHEREAS, The MMIS membership computer environment relies on older software technology that is more complex and costly to develop, deploy and maintain; and

WHEREAS, Data safety and integrity is of critical importance requiring individuals with specialized knowledge, skills and experience that is not cost effective to have on staff; and

WHEREAS, Current membership systems known as customer relationship management systems are developed utilizing software and data structures widely in use by system developers today; and

WHEREAS, These new systems have already developed the capabilities to collect in usable formats the data needed by The American Legion; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion license the use of Personify 360 with Personify Corp as a replacement membership system with one-time implementation costs not to exceed $1,500,000 which will be capitalized and expensed over a period of seven years; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the national commander, after review and approval by the national judge advocate, is hereby authorized and directed to execute appropriate contracts to secure the aforementioned services and the national adjutant is hereby authorized and directed to attest the same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Resolution No. 4 has the approval of the Finance Commission, and the Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its approval. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion and a second for the approval of Resolution No. 4. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Carried.

Resolution No. 5: 2019 Enhancements to the National Headquarters Computing Environment
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, Many job functions, production processes and communications within the national headquarters rely heavily on electronic equipment and computerization; and

WHEREAS, The technology related to the equipment used in performing these functions changes at a rapid rate, forcing replacement every three to five years; and
WHEREAS, New equipment and software must be implemented each year to enhance the performance and expand the capabilities of our various computer systems and production equipment; and

WHEREAS, The Finance Commission has reviewed the detailed listing of products (“2019 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES”) proposed to accomplish these needed enhancements and has recommended approval by the National Executive Committee; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion National Headquarters acquire during the 2019 calendar year at a purchase price not to exceed $17,100 the necessary hardware and software to meet the present and foreseeable capacity needs of the national headquarters computer environment; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion negotiates and enters into appropriate maintenance agreements for all equipment and applicable software; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the national commander, after review and approval by the national judge advocate, is hereby authorized and directed to execute appropriate purchase contracts and/or lease agreements to acquire the aforementioned and the national adjutant is hereby authorized and directed to attest the same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Resolution No. 5 has the approval of your national Finance Commission, and your Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its approval. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second for the approval of Resolution No. 5. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it.

Resolution No. 6: Media & Communications Division Advertising Contract with James G. Elliott Co., Inc.

Origin: Media & Communications Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, James G. Elliott Co., Inc., of Los Angeles, California, has served as The American Legion Magazine’s publisher’s representative (and for digital media after 2009) for advertising sales since December 1, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Established American Legion policy requires that any contract representing $1 million or more in annual revenue or expense cannot be automatically renewed after five continuous years without a market survey and/or bidding process; and

WHEREAS, A survey of the market concludes that an extremely limited number of firms can provide advertising sales and representation services to meet the business needs of The American Legion Magazine and its portfolio of digital media products and channels; and

WHEREAS, The current contract with The American Legion Magazine’s publisher’s representative for advertising sales, James G. Elliott Co., Inc., of Los Angeles, California, will expire on November 10, 2018; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Media & Communications Commission, in regular fall meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 15, 2018, expressed its desire that James G. Elliott Co., Inc., should continue to serve as The American Legion Media & Communications Division’s publisher’s representative for advertising sales; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Media & Communications Commission did authorize the Media & Communications Division director and The American Legion Media & Communications Commission chairman, with advice from the national judge advocate, to negotiate a new contract with James G. Elliott Co., Inc., for the period from November 11, 2018, to November 10, 2019, with appropriate provisions for subsequent one-year renewals, for a period not to exceed five years total; and
WHEREAS, The American Legion Finance Commission has reviewed and recommended approval of the recommendations of The American Legion Media & Communications Commission; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion enter into a one-year contract, with provision for renewal each year for a period of no more than five years, commencing November 11 of each year, concluding on November 10, 2023, with James G. Elliott Co., Inc.; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the national commander be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute said contract when approved as to legal sufficiency by the national judge advocate, and the national adjutant be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest the same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: This resolution has the approval of the Media & Communications Commission, the Finance Commission, and your Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to accept Resolution No. 6. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it, thank you.

Resolution No. 7: National Convention Stabilization Funds Transfer
Origin: Convention Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The National Convention Stabilization Fund has a balance currently in excess of eight hundred thousand dollars ($800,000.00) and this amount is far more than ever anticipated; and

WHEREAS, The suggested maximum need in this fund is three hundred thousand dollars ($300,000.00) even though this amount has never been necessary nor spent; and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of The American Legion to make every effort to properly manage their funds; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That the National Executive Committee hereby approves that the maximum balance of the National Convention Stabilization Fund shall be three hundred thousand dollars ($300,000.00); and, be it further

RESOLVED, That any amount of money in excess of this maximum balance shall be transferred from the National Conventions Stabilization Fund into the general fund on, or about, January 1, 2019 to be applied to the national organization’s convention expenses in 2019; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That for each subsequent year the fund balance exceeds the maximum the excess funds will be transferred into the general fund on, or about, January 1, to be applied to the national organization’s convention expenses for said year.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Resolution No. 7 has the approval of the Convention Commission, the Finance Commission, and your Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 7. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Passed.
Resolution No. 8: Modification of Agreement for Permanent Site of The American Legion Baseball World Series

Origin: Americanism Commission

Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 2012, adopted Resolution No 14 titled “Replacement and Extension of Agreement for Permanent Site of The American Legion Baseball World Series” which provided for the automatic extension designating Shelby, North Carolina as the permanent home of The American Legion Baseball (ALB) World Series; and

WHEREAS, The local Shelby, North Carolina, organizing committee, Cleveland County ALWS (American Legion World Series) Baseball, Inc., continues to exceed all goals and expectations in terms of growth, accessibility and affordability of American Legion Baseball; and

WHEREAS, Cleveland County ALWS Baseball, Inc., continues to express its strong desire to remain the permanent host of the ALB World Series; and

WHEREAS, Cleveland County ALWS Baseball, Inc., has attracted long-term sponsors, advertisers and media broadcasts outlets; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion’s current contract with Cleveland County ALSW Baseball, Inc., is set to automatically renew in 2019; and

WHEREAS, Modifying said contract, and all subsequent contracts, will strengthen all relationships and contracts involved in the ALWS; and

WHEREAS, This resolution has been reviewed and approved by the national Americanism Commission, and with concurrence from the national Finance Commission, so it is recommended to the National Executive Committee for favorable action; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17–18, 2018, That upon this automatic renewal of The American Legion and Cleveland County ALWS (American Legion World Series) Baseball, Inc. contract in 2019 and any succeeding renewal term(s), the contract termination terms will be mutually modified to require a two (2) year termination notice of automatic renewal given to the other party on or prior to the last day of the most recent American Legion World Series; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national commander, after review and approval by the national judge advocate, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute such contract modification referenced herein and the national adjutant be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest same; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the remaining terms within Resolution No. 14 of the National Executive Committee, October 2012, titled “Replacement and Extension of Agreement for Permanent Site of The American Legion Baseball World Series” are continued.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: This resolution has the approval of the Americanism Commission, the Finance Commission, and the Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its approval. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion to approve Resolution No. 8. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, at this time I would ask if Past National Commander Jake Comer have permission to approach the podium.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Commander Comer.
WHEREAS, Kenneth D. Danilson is a U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran of the Vietnam War; and
WHEREAS, Danilson is a 49-year member of The American Legion Department of Iowa; and
WHEREAS, Danilson has held numerous department offices including post adjutant, department media & communications chairman, and department finance chairman; and
WHEREAS, At the national level, Danilson served on the Advisory Committee to the National Commander for 19 years; the Overseas Graves Decoration Trust; the Legislative Council; the Child Welfare Foundation; and the Citizens Flag Alliance Advisory Committee; and
WHEREAS, Danilson also served as chairman of the Centennial Task Force for the Future, and chairman of The American Legion Charities Board of Directors; and
WHEREAS, In addition, Danilson has served as chairman of the Marketing Commission for the past three years; and
WHEREAS, Prior to his service on the Marketing Commission, Danilson served for 27 years on the National Finance Commission, 17 of which were as chairman, making him the longest-serving National Finance Commission chairman in the history of The American Legion; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That in honor of Kenneth D. Danilson’s long and exemplary service to The American Legion and America’s veterans and their families, that Room 111, located in The American Legion National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, be hereafter named the “Kenneth D. Danilson – National Finance Commission Conference Room”; and, be it finally
RESOLVED, That a suitable plaque attesting to this honor be affixed to the door of said conference room.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: This resolution has the approval of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its approval. ...Second. NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There’s a motion on the floor to adopt Resolution No. 27 in honor of Kenneth D. Danilson. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it.
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MORIN: Let the record show it was a unanimous vote.
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Can I have Ken Danilson approach the podium, please? (Standing applause)

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN DANILSON: Well, I'm very surprised and I'm very pleased. I had no idea this was going to happen. And now I've got to give a report, which is going to be interesting. (Laughter)
Thanks for setting this up, Jake. But it's been a good haul. I don't know who all knows it, but I am kind of walking away from national duties; other people need to get involved and do stuff. So thank you very much. (Standing applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: At this time the chair recognizes Kenneth D. Danilson from Iowa, chairman of the Marketing Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Marketing Commission
Kenneth D. Danilson, Iowa, Chairman

Thank you. Commanders, ladies and gentlemen of the National Executive Committee, and national officers and guests. You have my written report, so I will just hit a few high points here.

The United States Mint presented the designs for the 2019 American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin program at our national convention. A first strike ceremony is slated for January 2019 at the Philadelphia Mint to commemorate the launch of the coin program. The Marketing Division continues to work with the U.S. Mint to build a robust marketing plan leading up to the sale of the coins in March 2019. Please visit legion.org/coin to be added to The American Legion's mailing list for updates regarding this program.

A new broadcast public service announcement campaign was created that highlights the mission, programs, and services of The American Legion. The PSA is available in 15- and 30-section lengths to encourage repeat airings and rotations by TV stations that download the spot. The PSAs have been well received by regional and national outlets. As of October 1, there were 16,268 airings, yielding an advertising value of $3.5 million. 116 stations are currently airing the "We Believe" PSAs, and over 415 have run a "We Believe" PSA since May 2018.

Outdoor media companies often have unsold space and will donate billboard placements to nonprofit organizations to ensure the creative is being changed on a regular basis. Last February, The American Legion was provided with placement in 500 bus shelters in the New York City metropolitan area. One month of exposure yielded an advertising value of more than $550,000.

Following the creation of the "We Believe" broadcast PSA, four new billboard and bus shelter designs were developed. To date, donated advertising space for the "We Believe" campaign has been received for 225 total placements in 16 states with anticipated results and an ad value of $1.4 million. The "We Believe" campaign will continue through December and has an expected ad value of more than $2 million.

The 2019 Tournament of Rose Parade will be held on January 1, 2019, and will be aired on national TV. The American Legion - Still Serving America float is a patriotic celebration of the organization's 100th Anniversary.

Also, I want to let you know that the national fundraising program enters the fourth quarter on pace to meet or exceed the 2018 goal. Gross revenue is tracking very closely to projection at about $8.3 million out of the $11.2 million budget. Some of our best-performing packages are scheduled during the giving season, which will help to ensure hitting our net goal of $2.8 million.

The planned giving platform on legion.org has been operational going into its third year. Leads continue to be funneled to the national treasurer for processing. Additional digital and direct mail efforts are being developed for implementation in the near future.

The 2019 membership cycle began July 1, 2018, with direct mail and other digital campaigns. To date, The American Legion has recruited or reactivated approximately 34,000 members of our 120,000-member goal. The fall campaign will be in homes throughout the month of October and into early November. We are expecting this campaign to yield another 20,000 members.
Digital efforts continue throughout the membership cycle, whereas our physical direct mail will resume in January and continue through April of 2019. The combination of the remaining efforts are key for the program to reach its goal.

The direct renewal cycle has begun again in July to start renewing the membership for 2019. The same series of communications is planned. However, new creative is being developed for future implementation. As part of this implementation, we will develop and activate a response analysis system that will allow us to perform response analysis on segments being processed at national headquarters. This will help to determine the effectiveness of the new creative as compared to the current efforts.

The Paid Up For Life program has adopted an all-digital format for 2018 in an effort to reduce expenses. Year to date, we have converted approximately 6,200 PUFL members, and we continue to be on pace to meet our goal of 8,000 conversions by the end of the year. We are currently developing a direct mail appeal that can be injected into the fourth quarter this year as well as utilized for enhanced results in 2019 when our mail/email responses decline.

The Marketing Commission reviewed three resolutions for consideration. One was rejected, one was referred for further study, and the resolution regarding The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation was approved and forwarded to the National Finance Commission for their consideration, of which you just approved.

Commander and ladies and gentlemen of the NEC, on behalf of the national Marketing Committee I would like to thank you for your support as we continue to work hard and raise awareness and revenue for The American Legion. I also want to personally thank Scott Miller and James Baca for everything they have done to make the marketing efforts what they are today.

Mr. Commander, this concludes my report. Once my report has been voted on, I would like to show a brief video highlighting The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation, and then I would ask that you please call on past national commander and chairman of the Endowment Fund, Bill Detweiler, who will share some insight on the foundation itself. That concludes my report.

Report: Marketing Commission
Kenneth D. Danilson, Iowa, Chairman

The Marketing Commission continues to work diligently using all marketing tactics available to raise public awareness of The American Legion emblem, brand and our efforts on behalf of veteran issues. The intent of this report is to outline the newest marketing, strategic alliances and business development initiatives that the marketing commission and division are pursuing since the last report at National Convention.

National Fundraising Program (Non-member)
The national fundraising program enters the fourth quarter on pace to meet or exceed the 2018 goal. Gross revenue is tracking very closely to projection at about $8.3 million of the $11.2 million budget. Some of our best performing packages are scheduled to complete the year during the giving season which will help to insure hitting our net goal of 2,825,000 (before the department profit share distribution).

Planned Giving
The planned giving platform on Legion.org has been operational going into its third year, increased activity has been seen from this platform as well as monthly advertisements being placed in the magazine. Leads continue to be funneled to the National Treasurer for processing. Additional digital and direct-mail efforts are being developed for implementation in the near future.

American Legion Charities
The new fundraising cycle for American Legion Charities began with the installation of the new national commander. We are far too early in the cycle to have collected any meaningful data at this time.
Membership – DMS Marketing Activities

The 2019 membership cycle began July 1, 2018 with the distribution of physical direct mail and other digital campaigns. To date we have recruited or reactivated approximately 34,000 members of our 120,000 goal. The fall campaign will be in homes throughout the month of October and into early November. We are expecting this campaign to yield another 20,000 members. Digital efforts continue throughout the membership cycle whereas our physical direct mail will resume in January and continue through April of 2019. The combination of the remaining efforts, both digital and physical are key for the program to reach its goal.

Membership – Direct Renewal

As with the DMS cycle, the Direct Renewal cycle also began again in July to start renewing the membership for 2019. The same series of communications is planned, however, new creative and copy is being developed for future implementation. As part of this implementation we will develop and activate a response analysis system that will allow us to perform response analysis on segments being processed at national headquarters. This will help to determine the effectiveness of the new creative as compared to the current efforts.

Membership – Paid Up For Life (PUFL)

The Paid Up For Life Program has adopted an all-digital format for 2018 in an effort to reduce expenses. Year-to-date we have converted approximately 6,200 PUFL members and we continue to be on pace to meet our goal of 8,000 conversions by the end of the year. We are currently developing a direct mail appeal that can be injected into the fourth quarter of this year or be utilized for enhanced results in 2019 when our email responses are expected to decline and not able to achieve our end goal on their own.

National Poppy Day®:

This year, The American Legion worked in tandem with the American Legion Auxiliary to raise awareness about this special day and the historical significance of the red poppy. A new poppy flower, logo and Emblem Sales merchandise were designed for The American Legion Family and promoted through internal channels to membership of both organizations.

Another goal for 2018 was to increase awareness about National Poppy Day® in the weeks and months leading up to May 25. In February, the Veteranprenuer Contest was launched and was promoted through outreach to organizations that work with veterans. Product entries were reviewed by The American Legion Family and three finalists were featured on Fox & Friends during interviews that took place on National Poppy Day® and Memorial Day. In addition, poppy patches were sent to television stations in select markets across the country and were worn on National Poppy Day® by news broadcasters in Los Angeles and New York, among other cities. Interviews with members of The American Legion Family were secured in San Diego, Austin, and Terre Haute and took place throughout the week.

All media efforts combined totaled more than 15 million broadcast and print impressions and an advertising value of $1.48 million. In addition, poppy pins and stickers were sent to members of the House and Senate through a Congressional mailing that encouraged Hill staff to participate in recognizing the day.

U.S. Minted Coin Update

The United States Mint presented the designs for the 2019 American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin program on Wednesday, August 29th. Surcharges are authorized to be paid to The American Legion to support the Legion’s programs for veterans, members of the Armed Forces, and other purposes specified by the authorizing legislation.

A first strike ceremony is slated for January 2019 in at the Philadelphia Mint to commemorate the launch of the coin program. The marketing division continues to work with the U.S. Mint to build a marketing plan around the strike event as well as other events leading up to the sale of the coins in Q1 of 2019 in an effort to maximize ROI.
In July 2018, AbbVie, a global pharmaceutical company, continued their commitment to The American Legion as a 2018 national corporate alliance. Their commitment included a $200,000 donation to The American Legion as well as $690,000 in financial resources dedicated to fund a hepatitis C (hep C) awareness campaign. Hep C is one of the most significant health concerns facing U.S. military veterans.

Sturgis, South Dakota, marked the first stop for The American Legion and AbbVie’s TAKE ON HEP C — a nationwide movement to bring free hepatitis C (hep C) antibody testing to veterans and their communities while also building awareness of American Legion programs. While at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, 188 veterans and others were tested. This was followed by stops at National Convention in Minneapolis, where 133 people were tested, and at the Harley Davidson 115th Anniversary Celebration event in Milwaukee, where 70 people were tested.

The mobile veterans outreach center is a 45’ motor coach that includes a front salon for medical testing and a back room for The American Legion to conduct veterans benefit counseling in person or via video conference. The American Legion and the Sturgis Rally conducted a dedicated press conference on the topic and two television stations came to the motor coach for on-camera interviews.

The TAKE ON HEP C tour bus is being utilized to provide educational resources about the disease and bring free hep C testing to veterans. The tour is scheduled to run through December and each stop provides The American Legion with media exposure, interaction with local posts and departments, membership outreach and an opportunity for service officers to talk with and assist veterans attending each event. Future stops include Daytona and Galveston. Working with AbbVie on this project is providing significant awareness and financial impact to The American Legion.

Broadcast PSAs:
Utilizing existing imagery and video content from The American Legion media library, a new broadcast PSA was created that highlights the mission, programs and services of The American Legion. The PSA is available in 15- and 30-second lengths to encourage repeat airings and rotation by TV stations that download the spot, as the stations provide airtime at no charge to fill up unsold advertising space. The We Believe message is referenced in the voiceover throughout the spots and the Legion.org/WeBelieve URL is included at the end of each spot as a call to action for viewers.

The PSAs have been well received by regional and national outlets. As of October 1, there were 16,268 airings, yielding 128 million impressions and an advertising value of $3.5 million. 116 stations are currently airing the We Believe PSAs and over 415 have ran a We Believe PSA since May 2018.

Billboards and Bus Shelters:
Featuring attention getting images and a brief amount of text, billboards are a strong platform to further awareness about The American Legion. Considered 24/7 “always on” media, the Outdoor Advertising Association of America reports that 58% of people buy a product after seeing it on a billboard 5 times. In addition, a recent Nielsen study found that 8 out of 10 adults polled had seen a billboard advertisement in the past month. Of those, 22% visited the website, 26% talked about the product, and 35% searched for additional brand information.

Outdoor media companies often have unsold space and will donate billboard placements to nonprofit organizations to ensure the creative is being changed on a regular basis. Last February, The American Legion was provided with placement in 500 bus shelters in the New City metropolitan area. One month of exposure yielded 98.7 million impressions and an advertising value of more than $550,000.

Following the creation of the We Believe broadcast PSA, four new billboard and bus shelter designs were developed this summer. Each design highlights an aspect of The American Legion — patriotism, advocacy and support for veterans, and the centennial. The
Legion.org/WeBelieve URL is included on each billboard as a call to action to drive traffic online to learn more about The American Legion and the landing page features articles and information specific to the benefits of membership. To date, donated advertising space for the We Believe campaign has been received for 225 total placements in Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin with anticipated results of 225 million impressions and an ad value of $1.4 million. The We Believe campaign will continue through December and has an expected outcome of more than 350 million impressions and $2 million in value.

Tournament of Roses Parade Update

The 2019 Tournament of Roses Rose Parade will be held on January 1, 2019 and will be aired on national TV. The American Legion – Still Serving America float is a patriotic celebration of the organization’s 100th anniversary. On the float, the eagle is the national emblem of America and represents our nation’s strength and freedom. Its soaring wings are spread in protection of those standing below. Underneath the wings are the participants which include Medal of Honor recipients from multiple wars, representatives from Boys Nation and Girls Nation and leadership from The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion. The riders are standing upon four pillars. Red poppy flowers adorn the front of the float. Emblems for The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Riders showcase all branches of the organization.

Resolution #2 from May 2017 authorized and directed The National Adjutant to invest up to $300,000 to plan, design, construct and enter an American Legion centennial-themed float in the Jan. 1, 2019, Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. The national organization also received a $25,000 donation to help cover additional expenses. Due to travel costs, transportation and purchasing additional parade tickets for rider’s family members, the total cost of this initiative is expected to near $335K.

The marketing division as well as local points of contacts in Pasadena are working hard to ensure maximum exposure and return on investment.

Emblem Sales

As of the August 2018 profit and loss statement, The American Legion Emblem Sales had year-to-date revenue of $10.367 million vs. $10.335 million over the same period in 2017. Net year-to-date profit was $1.681 million vs. $1.777 million in 2017.

Flag sales continue to be strong in 2018 with $2,091,000 in flags sold through the end of September. This is a 2% increase over same period last year. Currently, 1,887 posts are registered in the “Flag Rewards” program and 20,300 schools, businesses, churches and individuals have signed up to sponsor a post.

Emblem Sales continues to market items to members and patriotic Americans electronically and in print. So far in 2018, Emblem Sales has sent out over 983,00 emails at a cost of only $2,949. These marketing emails have resulted in $205,486 revenue.

The 2018 National Convention generated net sales of $352,599 vs. $283,613 in 2017. In addition, a post National Convention marketing email offered 6 popular 100th National Convention items resulting in revenue of $31,745.

The 2019 catalog will hit mailboxes mid-November and will feature over 30 new items.

With a small staff, the marketing division has relied heavily on agency support, which has helped leverage experience without having to carry a labor burden on the organization. Additionally, The American Legion marketing team continues to work closely with the Media & Communications Division under the new organizational chart that converted the national Marketing, Media & Communications Division into two separate divisions each with its own director since March 2017.
Addendum A

Held for further study

Resolution No. 33 (MS) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Proposed Renaming of the Oratorical Contest National Finals

Rejected

Resolution No. 91 (CO) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Advertising during the Army Navy Collegiate Football Game

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Marketing Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor to receive and file a report from the Marketing Commission. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, attached to the report is Addendum A. I move the actions of the Marketing Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor that the actions of the Marketing Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

...A video, "Veterans and Children Foundation," was shown to the National Executive Committee. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: The chair recognizes Past National Commander Detweiler.

Oral Report: The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation
William M. Detweiler, Louisiana, Chairman

Thank you, commander, and members of the NEC and guests. I have the great privilege and have had it for a number of years to chair the National Endowment Fund of The American Legion.

I won't be repetitious. We all know, many of us should know, all in this room should know, if you've done any work on the history of this organization, that that fund was established in 1924-1925, and $5 million was raised in a very short period of time. As you saw, it's worth about $71 or $72 million in today's values.

But since the early days of the fund, over 30 million has been distributed to children of eligible veterans; gifts and donations are added to the corpus of the trust and administered by the Endowment Fund board. The corporation, whose members are selected by the National Executive Committee, takes great care to ensure that the gifts are wisely invested.

Income from the fund is then passed to our client, The American Legion. You, The American Legion, are the client of the Endowment Fund. That money is given to administer the programs of Children and Youth and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation that include the Temporary Financial Assistance program and Department Service Officer School and Board of Veterans Appeal.

Of course, over the years we have not been able to cover all those costs, and the generosity of the organization is represented in the national adjutant, always looking at, when we get to the point, well, we don't know how much money we have, or we have requests that exceed the amount of the income being produced by the fund, the national adjutant has always been very generous in reviewing those requests and, at the same time, trying to help make those veterans whole.

Under the 1969 Tax Reform Act, The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation retained its tax-exempt status. Gifts are, therefore, deducted from federal
income tax for purposes, to the extent permitted by law, and bequests are deductible for federal inheritance tax purposes, again, to the extent permitted by the federal tax act.

Let me explain to you that there is no intention to change the name of the Endowment Fund. To do so, in my opinion, would be an insult to those who worked very hard in those early days to develop and create the fund and to raise those moneys of $5 million.

Also, if we decided to change the name, we would incur a lot of legal expense, time and delays, because we would have to go back to court, file necessary paperwork to request the court to authorize a change of the name. In addition, if we created a new nonprofit corporation, first thing we'd have to do is what? We got to get another exemption. So that's more paperwork.

So we've come up with the idea, and it's been in discussion over a number of months, that this is going to be The American Legion Endowment Fund d/b/a, doing business as, The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. So no, we're not changing the name. We're just operating under that name of The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation.

The keywords have been added over a period of time in discussion, including the word "children" and the word "veterans." If you could go out and try to explain "endowment" to anybody in this room, maybe not. But to the guy in the field or the gal in the field, go try to raise money for an endowment. What the hell is that? And so we've always, since I've been around on the Endowment Fund, talked about TFA, because people understand Temporary Financial Assistance.

You have a white paper that was put on your desk this morning, explains a lot more about the reasons and what this fund is going to do. It's going to be a well-planned capital fund. You don't raise $25 million without a well-planned capital fund. This will give us an opportunity also, there are a lot of corporations, foundations, and individuals that are willing to give to something so important and such as the children and welfare fund.

So it's going to be a very coordinated campaign. And to begin that campaign, where is the sergeant-at-arms? There he is. Lock the doors. You don't think you're going to get out of here without a little something. So I would ask a couple of our staff members if they would be so kind as to pass the helmet. So dig deep. So as most politicians say, "Can you help me?" You can help me by digging in your pocket a little bit. We take change, but we also like those green ones and we'll even take checks eventually.

I want you to understand, as we're passing the helmet, that the video you just saw as well as the pamphlet that's on your desk, these are rough, this is a beginning. We'll be working to refine that video and working probably to refine these handouts.

With your permission, commander, may I call upon Chairman Gaither Keener of the Finance Commission for the purpose of a presentation?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Yes, you may, commander.

...National vice commander Milburn assumed the chair.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: Commander, I ask the members of the American Legion Charities Board to come forward. I know George Lussier is here. George. Anybody else on that board here, our board of directors? Paul? Those people have probably left. (Laughter)

For those of you who do not know, there is an American Legion Charities. There are board members, and we seek funds and we give them to the right places. On behalf of the American Legion Charities, it is our privilege to provide a $500,000 to the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. (Standing applause)

If I may, commander. As you know, TFA normally costs our dues $779,000 after the funds are expended from the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. Twenty-five million dollars is nothing compared to what our ancestors did in '23, '24, and '25.

Twenty-five million is just the beginning. This will endow the DSO school, TFA, where it doesn't affect your budget. When we have 50 million, just think what we can do.

Not only is it that part, but we can provide supplements to service officers, and that is one of the main pillars of The American Legion. And our charity will come back again down the road. Thank you. (Applause)
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: While I'm up here, I would like to announce that, effective today, my charity will be the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation through the month of March when we will refocus on our centennial coins. (Applause) ...National Commander Reistad resumed the chair.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DETWEILER: So there will be an interruption in the coming years as we focus on the coins, but immediately after that we will go back. There's no time limit on the raising of the 25 million, but the idea is to raise it as quickly as possible. So we thank you very much. It's a big project. With your help across the entire membership, with a good capital team in place, I'm sure without any problem, we'll raise that 25 million. Thank you very much. Thank you, commander. (Applause)

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion to receive and file the report of Chairman Detweiler. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor to receive and file the report of Past National Commander Detweiler. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

The chair calls on Jeffrey L. Olson of Minnesota, president of the Minnesota Convention Corporation, for a report of the 2018 National Convention. (Applause)

Oral Report: National Convention Corporation of Minnesota
Jeffrey L. Olson, Minnesota, President

National Commander, members of the National Executive Committee, it's a pleasure to be here today to give a preliminary report on the 100th Convention of The American Legion held about a month ago in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

First, let me just say, I hope you had a good time. I saw a lot of people in restaurants, on the street, smiling, running around. There's a rumor that there's still one or two Legionnaires stuck in the gerbil tubes, trying to get from one place to another. (Laughter)

We started the convention with 16 hotels. The adjutants did their normal good work, sent in the forms saying how many rooms they were going to need for each department. And I don't know, about two weeks out, almost every department had exceeded their contracted room block. Now, that's generally good news, but it puts a lot of pressure on Bridget and Andrea and Ellen, our very talented staff. They were able to work with every one of our 16 hotels to increase the room blocks only a couple of weeks out. So that's a big, big effort; we appreciate it.

We were very fortunate in that every one of our chairmen had done it before. So they came in with experience, they came in with their volunteers mostly in place. Everybody was asking me how stressed out I was; I wasn't stressed at all. Had the best chairmen in the world, had the great volunteers. It was seamless, it was wonderful.

I'd like to be able to present a check, but moneys are still rolling in, and we'll do something in the spring meeting. Can't even give you a guess what it's going to be.

I hope everybody got one of our special badges that the Department of Minnesota gave everyone. We were very fortunate there, as well, in that we got a grant from the State of Minnesota to pay for those. So no Legion money was really involved. And just our adjutant, Randy Tesdahl, did a great job, worked with the right people, and got a grant that paid for some other things as well.

I believe that concludes my report for this meeting. I look forward to seeing you in the spring and presenting a check. Commander, that concludes my report. (Applause)

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the 2018 National Convention. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor to receive and file the report of the 2018 National Convention. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

The chair now recognizes Michael E. Walton of Illinois, chairman of the Convention Commission, for the purpose of a report.
Oral Report: Convention Commission
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman

Good morning, commander and members of the NEC. Although our written report is in your packet, I’d like to touch on some of the highlights of our meeting.

Mr. David Priester, the chief judge of contests, gave an excellent report and updated the commission on the contests that were conducted at our national convention this year. He also provided a video and conducted an extensive briefing on the judging process, and made recommendations on how we might improve our contests.

We held a question-and-answer period with Mr. Priester. And the commission voted to start the color guard contest at 4 p.m. instead of 5 p.m. due to the number of participants. We did this per the judge's recommendation. Mr. Priester was reappointed as our chief judge and he has accepted that appointment. We look forward to our continued professional involvement with Mr. Priester as the contest judge.

As you just heard, Jeff Olson, president of The American Legion Convention Corporation of Minnesota, gave us a preliminary report of the national convention in Minneapolis. And as he mentioned, his final report will be given at our spring meetings this May.

I hope that all of you were able to experience that opening ceremony which was orchestrated by our own director, Bridget Robinson; team member Reggie Mathis, with assistance from Jeff Stoffer and John Raughter. Along with the redesign of the exhibit hall by our deputy director, Andrea Watson, we believe that this really added to the overall experience and wonderful reception by all of our attendees in Minneapolis. It was a great convention.

Also, as you know, due to the impending weather forecast on that Sunday morning, the outdoor parade was canceled. Being a first responder myself for a couple more months, until I retire, safety and security is of the utmost importance to us. The Minneapolis Police Department thanked Past National Commander Rohan for her fortitude to make that decision in a timely manner, as it was really appreciated by everyone, because we wanted to keep everybody safe from any potential weather threat.

With the suggestion of Director Robinson and subsequent approval of our commander, our parade was moved inside, as you know. With the hard work of our convention team, our commission members, and national staff, although very, very shortened, it was very well received by those in attendance at the convention and went well. Overall, we believe the 100th National Convention of The American Legion in Minneapolis was a tremendous success.

As we mention parades, the commission discussed the possibility of alternative options for a parade type of event. We’ve asked the commission to think about the pros and cons of having an alternative option to the parade, whether it is an outdoor or indoor parade or a festival alternative to a parade.

Additionally, we will be sending a survey to all the departments, asking for their input and recommendations on whether to continue an outdoor parade or move to some type of alternative option. At our spring meetings this coming May, we plan on continuing that discussion and possibly provide you all with a recommendation at the spring meetings.

The members of the commission each submitted a written report and then verbal reports regarding each of their assignments at the 100th National Convention in Minneapolis. Past National Commander Jim Koutz, president of The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana, gave an initial report regarding our upcoming 101st National Convention in Indianapolis, which will be August 23 through the 29. We're all looking forward to another outstanding convention, similar to that of 2012 here in Indianapolis.

A resolution regarding the convention stabilization fund was approved by the commission and forwarded to the Finance Commission for their approval.

In your packet you will find Addendum A, which includes two resolutions that were received and recorded from the Department of Missouri for possibly hosting the 2025
national convention: one for Kansas City, Missouri, and the other for St. Louis, Missouri. All departments and cities have until April of 2019 to submit a resolution of support if they desire to bid on the 2025 National Convention of The American Legion.

All of the future convention dates and cities are in your written report. Commander and members of the NEC, that concludes my report, and I thank you for allowing me to serve, sir.

Report: Convention Commission
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman
October 15, 2018

Chairman Michael E. Walton, Illinois, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m., Monday, October 15, 2018. Roll call was taken with all members either excused or present.

There were items which required action by the National Executive Committee discussed during the meeting:

Items Requiring NEC Action:

Resolution No. 7 – National Convention Stabilization Funds Transfer – Reviewed and approved by the Convention Commission and forwarded to Finance Commission for approval.

Addendum A:

Resolution No. 89 – submitted by the Department of Missouri supporting a bid for the 2025 National Convention from the city of St. Louis, Missouri. Received and Recorded

Resolution No. 90 – submitted by the Department of Missouri supporting a bid for the 2025 National Convention from the city of Kansas City, Missouri. Received and Recorded

Chief Judge David Priester spoke to the Convention Commission regarding the National Color Guard Contests, which was held on Friday evening, the first day of convention. The Color Guard contests were well attended by contestants and observers. Fourteen color guards competed in four categories with Harrisburg Post 472 from Houston, Texas, being crowned again as National Champions. Additionally, six bands participated in the Competitive Concert Band Contest with Band of the Tonawandas being crowned National Champions. The Chief Judge provided videos of the judging process and recommendations on how to improve the Contests. Questions were then entertained by the Convention Commission. With the number of Color Guard Units anticipated for 2019, the Commission approved to start the competition at 4:00PM for 2019.

The Convention Commission reappointed Mr. Priester (SAL – CO) as Chief Judge of Contests to serve through the 2019 Fall Meetings. Mr. Priester informed the Commission that he proudly accepts the reappointment to serve as the Chief Judge of Contests for The American Legion.

President of The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Minnesota, Inc., Jeff Olson, gave a preliminary report on the 2018 National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mr. Olson thanked the Convention Commission for their support and reported that, in his opinion, the 2018 National Convention was a huge success. He reported almost all invoices have been paid. At this time, five of the sixteen hotels have sent in their rebates.

Mr. Olson will provide a final report at the 2019 Spring Meetings. Chairman Walton thanked Jeff Olson and his 120 volunteers for conducting the 2018 National Convention.

Convention Commission members reported on their assignments during the 2018 National Convention. Reports indicated that the local Convention Corporation conducted their duties in outstanding fashion and greatly contributed to the overall success of the National Convention. Chairman Walton and Commission members thanked Jeff Olson and his entire Minnesota team for their support to make the Minneapolis Convention a success.
Chairman Walton also thanked the Convention Division staff on the entire convention; from the wonderful creative vision of the Opening Ceremonies remastered by staff members, Audio Visual Stage Coordinator Reggie Mathis and Director Bridget Robinson to the redesign of the exhibit hall by Deputy Director Andrea Watson and the indoor parade adjustment by the whole team.

One item of discussion was the parade. Chairman Walton discussed with the Commission the possibility of alternative options for a parade type event. He asked the Commission to look at the pros and cons of an outdoor, indoor, or festival type event and to report back at the Spring Meetings. A survey will be sent in the next month to all Departments for their input regarding the future of parades subsequent to 2019.

Jim Koutz, President of The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana, gave an initial report on the planning process for the 2019 101st National Convention in Indianapolis, IN, August 23–29, 2019. Planning for the 101st National Convention of The American Legion is on schedule. The headquarters hotel for The American Legion is the JW Marriott. The American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters will be the Westin. The Sons of The American Legion will be the Indianapolis Marriott. Past National Commander Koutz informed the Convention Commission that almost all contracts between the hotels and the assigned Departments of The American Legion have been completed. Chairman Walton, Convention Corporation personnel, the convention and meetings planning staff and our convention technical companies will conduct a site visit to Indianapolis in December.

We have one Departments of The American Legion that has submitted the proper resolution expressing their interest in bidding on the 2025 National Convention. The cities being supported by the appropriate resolution are Kansas City, Missouri and St. Louis, Missouri. Departments have until April 2019 to submit their Resolution of Support if interested in bidding on the 2025 National Convention.

Dates for future Conventions are the following:
- Indianapolis, Indiana Aug. 23 – 29, 2019
- Louisville, Kentucky Aug. 28 – Sept. 3, 2020
- Phoenix, Arizona Aug. 27 – Sept. 2, 2021
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin Aug. 26 – Sept. 1, 2022
- Charlotte, North Carolina August 25 – 31, 2023
- New Orleans, Louisiana August 23 – 29, 2024

Addendum A

Received and Recorded

Resolution No. 89 (MO) (2018 Natl. Conv.): City of St. Louis offers to host the 2025 National Convention

Resolution No. 90 (MO) (2018 Natl. Conv.): City of Kansas City offers to host the 2025 National Convention

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion to receive and file the report of the Convention Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the Convention Commission. Is there any discussion?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: Yes.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Chair recognizing Past National Commander Dan Dellinger.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: In his report, it was stated that they were going to send a survey out to the departments. I think a fourth category other than just outdoor/indoor parade or a festival. There should be a fourth category added to that which would be no event, in order to get the most accurate survey possible.
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Is there any further discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, attached to the Convention Commission report is Addendum A. I move that the action of the Convention Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor that the actions of the Convention Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed. The chair now recognizes Paul E. Dillard of Texas, chairman of the Legislative Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Legislative Commission
Paul E. Dillard, Texas, Chairman

Commander Reistad, past national commanders, members of the NEC, Adjutant Wheeler, and guests, good morning. It's a true and humbling honor to stand before you today. Each of you should have a copy of the commission's written report. Attached to the report is Addendum I listing resolutions with legislative intent that were approved at the 100th National Convention and at this NEC. The American Legion legislative program is in accordance with Rule 8-b of the rules of the National Executive Committee.

Since the beginning of the 115th Congress in January of 2017, we have testified a total of 54 times. Outside of a federal agency, we know of no other organization that testifies before Congress more than The American Legion. And we have conducted and/or attended hundreds of meetings on Capitol Hill to drive forward the pure and simple mission of The American Legion.

The 115th Congress has been particularly active; it's an active session of Congress for veterans. Some have gone on to say this session of Congress has been the most beneficial Congress for veterans' legislation and policy in the last two to three decades.

Soon after the commencement in January of last year, they passed the Accountability and Whistleblowers Protection Act, granting the VA secretary the ability to rid the agency of employees who did not truly have a servant's heart to help veterans.

Next was the Appeals Modernization Act, which gave the VA a designed path to modernize the antiquated appeals process for the VA, to render a decision on an appeal within one year. Once this program is fully operational, veterans will see progress.

Early in 2017, both the authorization and funding to keep the Choice Program functional was required, and Congress stepped up again to pass the Choice Extension Act, ensuring this community care program continued to serve veterans seeking care closer to home.

The next bill is directly out of The American Legion history book, as it was named after our past national commander, Harry W. Colmery. Congress passed the Harry W. Colmery GI Bill, which is the most updated version of the GI Bill. This package fixed several issues within the benefits. Most notably, the 15-year cap on utilization, and inserted protection for student veterans just as the civilian veterans already had.

The last major bill passed was the VA Mission Act. This is a massive bill as it truly reforms VA in ways that will make the agency better for veterans. It streamlines the eight community care programs into one commonsense program. It expands the caregiver support program, creates a review board for the VA infrastructure, and allocated billions of dollars needed to operate the second-largest agency in U.S. government. This package took nearly two years to get past that finish line and, once implemented, will help millions of veterans and their families.

A theme of the next Congress will be the congressional oversight and implementation of all of these bills and others that I have not mentioned. But know this: Congress did not pass these bills alone. If it were not for The American Legion, many, if not all of those bills would have either not been created or advocated for or passed nearly as easily. In fact, The
American Legion crafted many provisions of those bills and spent many late nights and early mornings on Capitol Hill to get them done. Quite literally, hundreds of hours went into The American Legion working on these bills, with only one desire: to help veterans.

It is because of the men and women in this very room that this organization continues to have the respect and fortitude to fight for veterans, and it is because of the men and women in this very room that Capitol Hill knows what The American Legion wants and demands, and it is because of men and women in this room that these bills received the signature of the president of the United States, making them law.

As the 115th Congress begins wrapping up, we must all make sure that our lawmakers understand The American Legion is thankful for a great and active session of Congress. But more importantly, this is the new standard. Congress must continue making veterans a priority.

In closing, I leave you with this: Election Day is 19 days away from today. That means, if you have not already begun engaging your officials, making sure they know exactly where The American Legion stands, you have 19 days to do so. Encourage those in your state to engage their lawmakers. That's your neighbors, your friends, your family, everyone. If you need contact information or advice on how to engage lawmakers in Congress, contact our fantastic Legislative Division in Washington and they'll be glad to assist you.

Commander Reistad and members of the NEC, on behalf of the Legislative Commission, I want to thank you for your outstanding leadership and for entrusting me with the leadership of this commission. It has been my privilege and honor to serve The American Legion as your legislative chairman. This completes my report. Thank you. (Applause)

Report: Legislative Commission
Paul Dillard, Texas, Chairman
October 17-18, 2018

The National Legislative Commission did not meet during this time.
Attached to this report is Addendum I listing resolutions with Legislative Intent that were approved at this NEC and the 100th National Convention. The American Legion’s legislative program is in accordance with Rule 8-b of the Rules of the National Executive Committee.

The remainder of this report provides a summary of congressional actions since the 100th National Convention on issues of particular concern to The American Legion.

115th Congress, Second Session

To date, The American Legion has testified 54 times during the 115th Congress.

AMERICANISM

On February 8, 2017 Representative Steve Womack (AR) introduced House Joint Resolution (HJ Res.) 61, a flag protection constitutional amendment for the 115th Congress. It was assigned to the House Judiciary Committee. The measure currently boasts 31 cosponsors. A Senate companion measure, Senate Joint Resolution (SJ Res.) 46 was introduced on June 14 by Senator Steve Daines (MT). That measure now has 13 cosponsors. The American Legion will continue to seek passage of a constitutional amendment to protect the American flag because it is the right thing to do. Let “We the People” decide.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Senator Jim Inhofe (OK) has been tapped to become the next chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee following the death of Sen. McCain (AZ). Inhofe was leading the committee on a temporary basis in McCain’s absence, and ushered the National
Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) through the process this year. He told reporters that he hopes to make greater use of the subcommittees. In recent years, almost all of the committee’s hearings have been with the full complement of Senators. Sen. Inhofe’s intention to have the subcommittees do more of the work reflects the way the House Armed Services Committee operates. Senator Inhofe said that he has been wanting to do more along these lines “for a long period of time.”

Senator McCain’s replacement, former Senator Jon Kyl, was sworn into the Senate and will take McCain’s seat on the SASC.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Suicide Prevention:
On Thursday, September 27th, the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee held a hearing on suicide prevention in the veteran population, and The American Legion submitted a statement for the record. This was the last hearing for those Members who are not returning in the next session, including Rep. Walz, Ranking Member for the Committee during the 115th Congress. Chairman Roe made a point of praising the committee’s members for their high level of participation and hard work. He told Rep. Walz “it has been a privilege to serve with you,” and praised his “tremendous work” during his time in Congress.

Committee Chairman Rep. Roe (TN) noted that much of the information about veteran suicide rates has not changed. It continues to be true that 14 of the 20 veterans who commit suicide each day are not actively receiving care from the Department of Veterans Affairs. He would like to know what prevents those veterans from going to the VA for help.

Committee Ranking Member Rep. Walz (MN) described the increasing rate of suicide among younger veterans “tragic”. He said that everyone needs to work together to turn the tide on these issues. He related the experience of a young veteran who reached out to the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL), and was referred to the VA medical center. However, he did not get the help he needed at the Minneapolis center, where clinicians did not use available tools to flag him and ensure he gets the services he needs. Specifically, REACH was never utilized, and no one worked with him to ensure that a safety plan was in place when he was discharged three days later. As a result, he killed himself in his car in the center’s parking lot when he was discharged. “It should outrage all of us,” said Rep. Walz, that the health care system failed this young man.

Rep. Walz stressed the importance of Congress conducting strict oversight as the Department implements the MISSION Act.

VA Medical Center Improvement:
On September 18, 2018, the VA announced that, based on its internal scorecard, 71% of its medical centers have improved in overall quality. Only seven facilities, or 5% of the total, saw small decreases in quality.

Of the 15 medical centers that had been subject to the Strategic Action for Transformation (StAT), five are no longer considered to be high-risk concerning their quality of care. Overall, 73% of the centers subject to StAT (11 centers) showed “meaningful improvements” since the program started at the beginning of 2018.

The findings are based on the VA’s Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) system. This web-based scorecard measures, evaluates, and benchmarks quality and efficiency at VA medical centers. Secretary Wilkie called the results “a major step in the right direction to improving our quality of services” for veterans. He added that he is “extremely proud” of the VA employees’ progress in improving the Department’s performance.

Congressional Hearings:
The American Legion on September 13 testified before the House Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Health, to consider two pieces of legislation:

HR 5413: Improving Veterans Access to Congressional Services Act of 2018, by Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL): requiring that the VA allow Members of Congress to use VA Medical
Center facilities to meet with and help constituents. [Rep. Mast, a wounded veteran himself, has a district office within the West Palm Beach VAMC]

HR 6418: VA Website accessibility Act of 2018, by Rep. Elizabeth Esty (CT): VA to report to Congress on the accessibility of its websites for individuals with disabilities, including a plan for improving the situation, where necessary.

The American Legion testified that the VA Secretary already has the authority to make office space available to Members of Congress in medical centers. Incremental steps have been taken in opening Rep. Mast’s office, but “there is still much to be done.”

While having a Member’s office in the medical facility would have benefits, there could also be drawbacks. The American Legion is concerned that providing this office space means that other services will have less space within the medical center. The American Legion called upon the VA to collect data on the benefits and drawbacks of these actions as they craft new policy.

The American Legion also supports the legislation to make VA websites accessible to those with disabilities. This legislation will make the VA, in time, more user friendly to those in need. The American Legion believe that Mast and his staff are in the office one day a week that they are allowed. The other three Members using the space are there closer to once a month. This is why The American Legion is concerned that the space could be under-utilized. In addition, they do not want any medical center to be forced to provide this space if there is a shortage of space in general. Mast said that he would be willing to meet with constituents in a boiler room, if that was the only space available.

House Veterans Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Infrastructure and Technology:

The House Veterans Affairs Committee’s new Subcommittee on Technology Modernization held its first hearing on September 13th. The subcommittee has jurisdiction over all of the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) information technology modernization projects. It was formed, however, with the specific goal of keeping a close eye on the Department’s acquisition and implementation of the new Cerner electronic health record (EHR) system.

The hearing helped the Members of Congress better understand the processes through which the VA and the Department of Defense (DoD) are working towards ensuring their Electronic Health Records are interoperable, as both Departments move to the Cerner system.

Implementation of this system must be “people oriented,” and built from the bottom up. Chairman Banks said that the VA must learn from DoD’s implementation of its GENESIS system, also from Cerner. However, even with that implementation, much remains unknown on how the system should be implemented and the full extent of disruption it will cause in the health care system.

In looking at the Interagency Program Office (IPO), Rep. Banks wants to know just how it operates, and what happens when personnel change. He noted that Congress is counting on the IPO to bridge the gaps between DoD and VA. Over the years, the IPO has been many things, including the creator of standards and a contributor to the Joint Legacy Viewer. Today, it is truly working towards real interoperability between the two Departments. If the IPO is not up to the task, he wants to know what needs to be done to bring it to that point.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

President Trump on August 16 enacted PL 115-48, the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2017 – familiarly known as the “Forever GI Bill” – would make significant changes to the Post-9/11 GI Bill. These changes include:

• Eliminating a requirement that veterans use their benefits within 15 years of leaving active-duty service;
• Expanding benefits for reservists, Purple Heart recipients and surviving dependents;
• Retroactively restoring benefits to veterans affected by school closures, and;
• Providing additional funds to GI Bill users pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering and math.

Many of the provisions of this law do not go into effect until next year, with others becoming effective in 2-4 years. This legislation received expedited action; it was introduced on July 13, approved by the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee on July 19, and received final House approval on July 24 by a vote of 405-0. The bill then went to the Senate, where it was passed by unanimous consent five days later.

This concludes The American Legion National Legislative Commission’s Report to the National Executive Committee.

Addendum I

The National Legislative Commission is required, under Rule 8-b of the National Executive Committee, to compile a list of resolutions with legislative intent adopted during meetings of The American Legion National Convention and The American Legion National Executive Committee. The following resolutions constitute an ongoing list of all resolutions that are legislative in nature. This list of resolutions will constitute part of The American Legion’s legislative program through the 116th Congress.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT THE FALL MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OCTOBER 17-18, 2018

INTERNAL AFFAIRS
Res. No. 1 Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Recognition
Res. No. 2 Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Membership Date Change

NATIONAL SECURITY
Res. No. 12 Survivor Benefit Plan
Res. No. 15 Expedited Citizenship through Military Service
Res. No. 16 Recognition for Afghan and Iraqi Combat Translators

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION
Res. No. 21 Support Reasonable Set-Aside of Federal Procurements and Contracts
Res. No. 22 Expanding Post-9/11 GI Bill for Student Loan Repayments
Res. No. 23 Close the GI Bill Flight School Loophole
Res. No. 24 Support Funding and Changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs Grant and Per Diem Program
Res. No. 26 Eliminate GI Bill Transferability Maximum Year Caps

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT THE 100TH NATIONAL CONVENTION IN MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA AUGUST 28-30, 2018

AMERICANISM
Res. No. 111 English Language Be Declared as the Official United States Language
Res. No. 112 Funding for Drug Trafficking Prevention Programs
Res. No. 113 Locate Missing Children and Prevent Child Victimization
Res. No. 114  Support for the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

Res. No. 26  Award Congressional Gold Medal to the Crew of the USS Indianapolis
Res. No. 50  Increase Income Tax Deduction for Volunteer Mileage
Res. No. 86  Award Congressional Gold Medal to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133rd Signal Service Company
Res. No. 108  Support for Legislation to Introduce Atomic Veterans Service Medal
Res. No. 109  Support for Review of Minority Awards of Medal Honor WWI
Res. No. 110  Support for Congressional Gold Medal for Signal Corps Female Telephone Operators of WWI

**NATIONAL SECURITY**

Res. No. 5  Publicize and Promote the Armed Services Retirement Homes
Res. No. 34  Support for Department of Defense Stabilization activities
Res. No. 35  National Defense Budget
Res. No. 37  Taiwan Defense Arms Sales
Res. No. 38  Taiwan Straights Dialogue
Res. No. 98  Continuation of Military Death Benefits During Government Shutdown
Res. No. 117  Japan Arms Sales
Res. No. 118  Sustaining United States Commitments in the Indo-Pacific

**VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION**

Res. No. 11  Agent Orange and kidney Disease
Res. No. 18  Amend Set Dates of Agent Orange Illness
Res. No. 48  Dependency and Indemnity Compensation for Surviving Spouses
Res. No. 49  Exempt Certain Income from VA Pension Rate Determination
Res. No. 53  Means Test for married Veterans
Res. No. 58  Compensation for Veterans Requiring Hearing Aids for Service Connected Hearing Loss
Res. No. 59  Automatic Waiver for Over-Payment of $300 or Less
Res. No. 64  Department of Veterans Affairs Dental Care for Rating of 50% or More
Res. No. 73  Allow Beneficiaries to Retain $900 of their Benefits while in Medicaid-Covered Nursing Homes
Res. No. 74  Amend the Eligibility Requirements and Extend the Eligibility Time Period for Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
Res. No. 75  Increase Maximum Coverage under the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
Res. No. 79  Improve Special Monthly Compensation (K) Award
Res. No. 85  Designate Prisoner of War, Purple heart and Medal of Honor Recipients as Priority Group I Veterans
Res. No. 93  Agent Orange
Res. No. 115  Outdoor and Adaptive Sports Programs for Veterans

**VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION**

Res. No. 100  Accountability of the Department of Defense’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP)
Res. No. 101  Support for Continuation of Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program
Res. No.  102  Expansion of the Department of Defense’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to include Ancillary Programs and Services
Res. No.  103  Support and Expand Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
Res. No.  104  GI Bill Fairness for Activated National Guard Servicemembers
Res. No.  105  Support and Expand Warrior Transition Advancement Course (WARTAC)

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED IN THE SPRING MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MAY 9-10, 2018

NATIONAL SECURITY
Res. No.  9  Military Commissaries
Res. No.  10  Expedited Citizenship Applications for Deported Veterans

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION
Res. No.  16  Beneficiary Travel Philippines
Res. No.  18  Furnish Hospital Care and Medical Services to Veterans and Family Members who were Stationed at Military Installations at which the Veterans and Dependents were Exposed to Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
Res. No.  19  Burn Pits and Environmental Exposures

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION
Res. No.  11  Support Veteran and Reserve Servicemember Financial Protections
Res. No.  12  Accountability and Enhancements of Transition Assistance Program; Outcomes and Delivery for Today’s Digital Transitioning Servicemembers
Res. No.  14  Oppose the Cessation of The Department of Defense Hiring Heroes Program

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT THE FALL MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OCTOBER 11-12, 2017

INTERNAL AFFAIRS
Res. No.  9  Transfer Custodianship of Pershing Hall Building and Artifacts to the American Battle Monuments Commission
Res. No.  11  National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass for Honorably Discharged Veterans

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION
Res. No.  12  Department of Veterans Affairs Drug Pricing Policy

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Res. No.  19  Expanding Employment Services to Non-Service Connected Disabled Veterans
Res. No.  20  Support of An Acting Operator for Deployed Servicemember’s Small Business

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT THE 99TH NATIONAL CONVENTION IN RENO, NEVADA AUGUST 22-24, 2017

INTERNAL AFFAIRS
Res. No.  88  National Veterans Memorial and Museum
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NATIONAL SECURITY
Res. No. 17 Counter Transnational Organized Crime
Res. No. 19 Homeland Security and the Opioid Epidemic
Res. No. 20 National Cybersecurity Strategy
Res. No. 22 POW/MIA Policies

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION
Res. No. 3 WWII Veterans Hospital and Medical Eligibility
Res. No. 8 Expand the Presumptive Period for Veterans Who served in South Korea
Res. No. 13 Improve VA Communication with Service Officers
Res. No. 14 Extend Allotted Time for Claims Review by Service Officers
Res. No. 16 Department of Veterans Affairs Automobile Allowance Program
Res. No. 41 Radiation-Exposed Veterans
Res. No. 47 Research into Hearing Loss Due to Loud or Constant Noise Exposure in the Military
Res. No. 74 Air Carrier Access
Res. No. 75 Department of Veterans Affairs Rural Health Care Program
Res. No. 76 Veterans Emergency Room or Urgent Care Facility Relief

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Res. No. 26 Support Effort of the Small Business Administration’s Office of Veterans Business Development and Veterans Business Outreach Centers
Res. No. 78 Support Greater GI Bill Outcomes by Closing 90-10 Loophole
Res. No. 81 Military Spouse Employment
Res. No. 82 Preserve Veteran and Servicemember Rights to Gainful Employment and Borrower Defense Protections
Res. No. 83 Protect Veteran and Servicemember Rights to Fair Consumer Arbitration
Res. No. 84 Support and Strengthen the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA)
Res. No. 85 Support Employment and Reemployment Rights of National Guard and Reservists Returning from Deployment

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED IN THE SPRING MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MAY 8-9, 2017

INTERNAL AFFAIRS
Res. No. 16 National Global War On Terrorism Memorial

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Res. No. 23 Department of Veterans Affairs Provide Mental Health Services for Veterans with other than Honorable and General Discharges
Res. No. 25 Department of Veterans Affairs Maintained Medical and Dental School
Res. No. 27 Amend Title 38, United States Code, To Clarify The Treatment of A Veteran as Adjudicated Mentally Incompetent for Certain Purposes
Res. No. 29 Department of Veterans Affairs Establish An Opioid Treatment Program to include An Opioid Detox Unit at every VA Medical Center

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION
Res. No. 21 Support State and National Funding for Troops to Teachers Program

**AMERICANISM**

Res. No. 19 Flag Code Amendment

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

Res. No. 9 Award Congressional Gold Medal to the Chinese American Veterans of World War II
Res. No. 11 Support and Defend Veteran and Military Memorials

**VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION**

Res. No. 22 Surviving Families Benefits
Res. No. 23 Add Agent Orange Component to Code of Federal Regulations 4.16
Res. No. 24 Improve Special Monthly Compensation (K) Award

**VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION**

Res. No. 20 Oppose Efforts to Downgrade Low-Level Wage Positions within the Department of Veterans Affairs

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**AMERICANISM**

Res. No. 278 Financially Assist Families Faced by Catastrophic Illness of Their Children
Res. No. 279 Support Funding Comprehensive Health Care for Children & Youth
Res. No. 281 Prevention of Child Sexual Exploitation
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Res. No. 283 Establish “National Family Week”
Res. No. 285 National School Lunch Program
Res. No. 286 Prevent Child Maltreatment
Res. No. 287 Programs and Organizations that Promote Child Safety
Res. No. 288 Reducing or Preventing Teenage Pregnancy
Res. No. 291 School Prayer
Res. No. 292 Return Patriotic Holidays to Traditional Dates
Res. No. 293 Oppose Importation of Foreign Manufactured American Flags
Res. No. 294 Boy Scouts of America and The Department Of Defense
Res. No. 295 Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance
Res. No. 296 Support Fairness for Immigrant Spouses
Res. No. 297 Conscientious Objectors Tax Diversion
Res. No. 299 Pledge of Allegiance
Res. No. 300 Star Spangled Banner
Res. No. 301 Eliminate Damages and Attorney Fees in Establishment Clause Lawsuits
Res. No. 302 Oppose Flag Code Changes for Hoisting, Lowering or Passing of The Flag, The National Anthem, and The Pledge of Allegiance
Res. No. 303 Constitutional Amendment to Protect The Flag of The United States

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Res. No. 130 Radiation Exposure

Res. No. 131 Recognize Operations in Lebanon (1958, Grenada (1983), and Panama (1989-1990) as Periods of War for Department of Veterans Affairs Pension Purposes

Res. No. 132 Request Congress Provide the Department of Veterans Affairs Adequate Funding for Medical and Prosthetic Research

Res. No. 134 Service Dogs for Injured Service Personnel and Veterans with Mental Health Conditions

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Res. No. 137 Support Legislation to Place Mariner Medal Recipients in Priority Group 3 for the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care

Res. No. 138 Support Medicare Reimbursement for the Department of Veterans Affairs

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Res. No. 141 Department of Veterans Affairs Enhanced-Use Leasing

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Res. No. 145 Veteran Treatment Courts

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Res. No. 339 Support the Rollover of Ira Account Penalty of Tax Liability of a Permanent and Total 100 Percent Service-Disabled Veteran with Individual Unemployability

Res. No. 340 Support Permanent Authorization for the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

Res. No. 341 Support Recognition of Military and Pay when Calculating Starting Federal Civilian Salaries

Res. No. 342 Support and Strengthen the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA)

Res. No. 343 Support Student-Veterans Return-On Investment Education Outcomes

Res. No. 344 Support Federal Legislation that Protects the Employment of Veterans in the U.S. Postal Services Mail Processing Facilities that are Slated for Closure

Res. No. 345 Support for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program Hiring more Counselors and Employment Coordinators


Res. No. 347 Veterans Education Debt Forgiveness

Res. No. 348 Support Legislation that Bolsters the Hiring of Veterans in the Public and Private Sectors

Res. No. 349 Support Legislation to improve the Post-9/11 GI Bill

Res. No. 351 Support Tax Credit for certain Employers

Res. No. 352 Transitional Housing Allotments for returning Combat Veterans

Res. No. 353 Support a Veteran-Centric Website for Employment

Res. No. 354 Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program

Res. No. 355 Veterans Employment Initiative

Res. No. 356 Veterans Home Loans

Res. No. 357 Support Veterans Housing Repair and Modification for Pilot Program

Res. No. 358 Support Veterans’ Preference in Public Employment

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of the Legislative Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second on the floor to receive and file the report of the Legislative Commission. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The motion is passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, pursuant to Rule 8-b of the National Executive Committee, I move that resolutions on Addendum I with legislative intent be ratified for distribution, as part of the legislative program, to the 116th Congress. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second on the floor. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Before we move on to the next report, I'd just like to mention to you that, in addition to the $500,000 that was donated earlier to the Veterans and Children Foundation, the passing of the hat also netted an amount of $2,415, for a grand total of $502,415. (Applause)

The chair now recognizes Robert E. Newman of Indiana, chairman of the Internal Affairs Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Internal Affairs Commission

Robert E. Newman, Indiana, Chairman

Commander, thank you for the opportunity to serve as your chairman. Members of the National Executive Committee, fellow Legionnaires, ladies and gentlemen, as in all
areas of The American Legion national headquarters, the staff overseen by the Internal Affairs Commission has seen some adjustment of late. I am excited to say that the two divisions under the oversight of the Internal Affairs Commission -- Internal Affairs and Membership -- have combined to meet the similarity of mission to produce the programs and operations of both.

The Internal Affairs and Membership Division now houses all operations which interfaces with members of the department, district, and the post level in The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Riders, Samsung, and the Legion College alumni associations. It is where we develop training, maintain publications, and design the programs which directly affect members' operations.

While our current division name may not reflect the member operations development produced here, I assure you that the uniting of Internal Affairs and Membership Divisions is a great fit. We look forward to leaders at all levels, including commissions and committees, to join with us in engaging members by supporting the American Legion Strategic Plan for Membership Growth, so we can improve our retention rate and grow our great American Legion. You will hear more from Chairman Goodman on this subject later.

You have my report of our actions and deliberations before you. I draw your attention to the great work the Sons of The American Legion have accomplished, and I commend very department for supporting this great program.

You all know the American Legion Riders for developing awareness within their home communities and for the Legacy Scholarship at the national level. I commend their report for your reading. Our Riders deserve your appreciation for what the 2,000 national chapters have accomplished back in our communities. We thank the departments and the many volunteers involved with supporting the annual Legacy Run to convention. We have started the planning for the 2019 ride to Indianapolis.

My next topic is the National Emergency Fund. Our members were recently hit with some terrible storms. We are positioned to provide our members and their families with assistance if they were displaced from their primary residence. Thank you again for your support of this very critical program.

You'll act shortly on two resolutions. Resolution No. 1, "Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Recognition," and Resolution No. 2, "Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Membership Date Change." These two resolutions recognize those armed hostile events which have not been declared an act of war, and ask Congress to acknowledge and direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to qualify the period from December 7, 1941 to present, as wartime, so all military service personnel who served honorably under Title X for at least one day can be declared wartime veterans. Resolution No. 2 will only be activated once the action in Resolution 1 is approved by Congress.

I also call your attention to the comments in my report on page 11, concerning our recommendation for the rejections of Resolutions 25 and 28 from Texas.

At this time, commander, I ask permission for Past National Commander Rehbein, chairman of the 100th Anniversary, to give a short update.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Please come forward.

Oral Report: 100th Anniversary Observance Committee
David K. Rehbein, Iowa, Chairman

Commander Reistad, national officers, members of the National Executive Committee. You have our written report as included in the Internal Affairs report, but I want to hit a few highlights with you this morning.

Five years ago when we began this journey, our committee made our highest priority the local post and department. We did that for the very simple reason that that is where every good thing that The American Legion has done has originated, out there in the local posts and in the departments. Things like Boys State, Legion Riders, Overseas Graves Decoration Trust, the Vietnam Women's Memorial, all of those began in the post. That's a very diverse set of achievements, and that tells you what our posts are capable of.
We asked our staff to build the kind of buzz-builders that would help educate and motivate the posts and bring them on board. Through an understanding of history, we have tried to increase awareness and appreciation of the identity of The American Legion, so that those who joined this organization in our second century will understand where we came from, what we do, but more importantly, why we do what we do.

We asked posts to begin building web profiles to share their history, their photos, their achievements. More than 3,000 posts responded and built those web profiles. We asked post members to visit their veterans and military memorials and monuments, to take photographs, to upload those photographs into a national database so we knew where our veterans memorials were in this country and around the world. So far, more than 2,200 of those memorials have been uploaded, and I think there are more to come.

Promotional materials have been produced and published. You've seen them across the country and around your post, in celebration of our 100th anniversary, at least I hope you have seen them in your post. If you haven't seen them in your post, make sure that your post members see them in your post. In Texas alone, there are now two memorials of The American Legion's 100th Anniversary. That's something I hope we will see more of; we will see that develop in the future.

One recent media story. That's a Navy veteran in New York, a Legion member. He's fighting cancer. One of the ways that he's fighting his cancer is by climbing the highest peaks in the Adirondack Mountains, carrying a banner of The American Legion with him. As he reaches each of those peaks, and there are 46 of them, he's taking a picture, a selfie, with that banner. He intends to do the final climb on the American Legion birthday.

I think that's an example that a lot of us could follow: Not only dedication to veteran status, but dedication to The American Legion. Forty-six of those peaks at the same time he's fighting cancer treatments. Just think about that. You've all had family members, some of you have gone through that.

The GI Bill exhibit that was created has now traveled to quite a number of places: New Orleans; San Antonio; Los Angeles; Helena, Montana; Johnston, Iowa; College Station; Dallas, Texas. It's in the George W. Bush Museum and Library right now. We need to keep that on the road, folks. If you've got a place for that GI Bill exhibit to go for 30 to 60 to 90 days, please contact our staff. We think 500,000 people have seen that exhibit. We think 500,000 people now understand better the story of The American Legion's role not only in creation of the GI Bill, but in the continuing improvement of the GI Bill.

There's a smaller, lighter version, because not everybody has the space for that big one, or the funds for the shipping. But the demand for that smaller, lighter version has occupied a lot of our staff's time during the last couple of days, as people have begun to become aware of it. You'll see that at department conventions, you'll see it at midwinter conferences. I hope you will see it on college campuses. I hope you will see it in the veterans clubs there, because that's really the kind of audience that needs to see that.

Three more traveling displays are in the works, because there are other issues that we can trace through our history where The American Legion has made a very significant impact. We started out thinking about Agent Orange and then realized it was broader than just Agent Orange, that it's toxic substances. It starts with the atomic veterans in the '50s and through Agent Orange and continues into burn pits. So there will be an exhibit on that, and we need to get that one on the road. There will be an exhibit on American Legion Baseball and the continuing role we have played in supporting baseball in this country. And there will be an exhibit on the American flag, because our work with the American flag does not start with flag desecration in the late '80s; it starts in the '20s and '30s with the flag code.

So there's an ongoing story there that will be told by one of these exhibits. But they're only good if they're on display. They're not good if they're sitting in a closet here in national headquarters. We depend on you and your departments and your posts to recognize their value and get them out there in this country.
Things you can still look forward to: There's an event being planned at the baseball hall of fame in Cooperstown. We have our next national convention coming on the American Legion Mall. We're discussing a ride along The American Legion Memorial Highway down through the center of the country, and any other American Legion memorial highways there might be. We ask you, if you have a stretch of highway in your department or that you know of, besides Highway 281, that's designated an American Legion memorial highway, we need to know where it is, how long it runs; get that information to our staff.

There's a new set of documentary videos coming out that are entitled, "To Strengthen a Nation, The American Legion Story." Two young Legionnaires traveling the country, learning the why of The American Legion, starting in Plattsburgh, New York, and continuing to today. You see that, don't think that that's two professional actors that put on Legion caps to play those parts. That is two professional actors, but they own those Legion caps and they owned those Legion caps before this project began. They're active Legionnaires, they're not just professional actors playing roles.

There's a new website coming out. Our Legacy & Vision Centennial website is being rolled out now as a public website for the people of America to see what we do.

We're on the radio in Montana. We're on television in Minnesota. There's a documentary that was put together in Arizona. We're on the pages of some local newspapers. Our local newspaper in Ames, Iowa, has agreed to do a monthly column on the history of our post. I think that's going to pay dividends for us as people understand more about what we are and why we're more than just that place on Main Street.

So we've worked hard to try to deliver a product. We've got a few months left to continue to work those products and get them out there. We depend on you to help us distribute them. But there's one I want to call to your attention every time you're in this room. As you leave this room, there's a print back there of a doughboy and today's warrior. I'd like you to look at that, I'd like you to consider for just a minute what they see as they look at each other, and that they see, yet, through the continuing lens of that American Legion emblem that's between them.

Those prints are available. Those prints carry a lot of power. Make sure that they're out there around the country. But make sure that every time we leave this room, we look at that one, just as we look at this one as we come in. They mean a lot, folks.

I appreciate the ongoing support that our committee has received, I appreciate the beginning that was made in this effort by PNC Spanogle. Mr. Chairman, that concludes my report. I appreciate the time. (Applause)

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN NEWMAN: Mr. Commander, I submit my report and the resolutions for the actions of the National Executive Committee, with my deepest respect and appreciation for the support and encouragement we have enjoyed from this body. Thank you.

Report: Internal Affairs Commission
Robert E. Newman, Indiana, Chairman
October 15-16, 2018

Chairman Robert E. Newman (IN) called the Internal Affairs Commission to order at 9:00 a.m., October 15, and at 8:30 a.m., October 16, in 314A, National Headquarters, Indianapolis, Indiana. We had fourteen members present and several guests.

The report consists of the following sections: Standing Committee Reports; Program and Internal Action Reports; and Actions on Assigned Resolutions.
I. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership and Post Activities Committee
Randy Goodman, Georgia, Chairman

As of October 11, 2018, the 2019 membership total is 1,016,652 which is 53,300 members behind this same time for 2018. These membership results do not include newly acquired 2019 DMS members. The total DMS members acquired to date for 2019 is 34,004 which is 2,154 behind 2018 totals.

During the recent 50% Target Date, 40 departments exceeded the target date – this is eight departments less than the 2018 membership campaign. The 55% Target - 46 departments met this goal.

We are entering the sixth year of The American Legion Strategic Plan. The plan is solid but in order for it to meet strategic goals it requires our leaders and members, at all levels, to begin executing the tasks. The strategic plan and where we go with it will be the main topic of discussion at the upcoming January 2019 Membership & Post Activities Committee planning session.

One area that has not received a lot of attention in recent years is the number of current active posts. There are currently, 12,765 active posts. National Commander Reistad has placed emphasis on starting 100 new posts this year to increase this number. During this meeting 36 posts have been submitted for cancellation. Over the last five years we have cancelled 956 posts and only chartered 181. There has always been a correlation between membership growth and the number of active posts – we are now seeing the effect it has on membership. The potential to build new posts is there and it needs to become a part of our long-term plan to grow.

The online renewal program continues to perform well. The 2018 campaign resulted in 261,627 members renewing online which was an increase of 15,803 over 2017. To date, 110,887 members have renewed online for 2019. We expect these totals to continue to increase.

National staff, working in conjunction with local volunteers, were directly involved in more than 2,500 posts being started or revitalized through the efforts of district revitalization teams in 2016 (staff efforts run from Jan 1 – Dec 31). We expect that number to be equal to if not greater than for 2018. It is the one program that is part of the strategic plan that seems to be working well and has been accepted by many of the departments and districts. The retention rate for members who transferred from these efforts remains higher as compared to those members who remain as DMS99 members. There are 20 district revitalizations planned between October through December 2018. Several of the departments continue to execute the program on their own without the support of National staff and are doing quite well. The program does more than just transfer members, it also signs new members up and provides great membership training.

Constitution and By-Laws Committee
Hon. Vincent M. Gaughan, Illinois, Chairman

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee met in Indianapolis, Indiana at 8:30 A.M. on October 15, 2018. Present were Hon. Vincent M. Gaughan (IL) and Kevin J. Bartlett (MI), National Judge Advocate. The Chairman noted there were no resolutions before the Committee. Chairman Gaughan discussed with the commission Resolution #1 and #2.

American Legion Riders Advisory Committee
Robert B. Sussan, Virginia, Chairman

Nationwide, there are approximately 2,200 American Legion Riders Chapters comprised of somewhere around 120,000 or so American Legion family members.
Aside from the numerous local patriotic and community focused activities throughout the year many riders chapters have adopted:

- Supporting honor flights
- Sending off and welcoming home our military
- Organizing local events in support of American Legion Charities
- Organizing and executing in-state Legacy Runs.

The culmination of the year’s riding activities and something many riders look forward to annually is the Annual American Legion Legacy Scholarship Run from a pre-determined starting point to the site of the National Convention.

This past year was the 13th Annual Legacy run. This is a 100% volunteer planned and executed ride focusing on:

- Raising brand awareness for The American Legion
- Delivering our organizations message to various locations throughout the United States
- Heavy engagement in the local and county/state wide media (print, radio & TV) with a continued emphasis on various social media platforms.
- Raising funds for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund.

Highlights of the 2017-2018 Ride which started at Post 68 In Hutchinson, Kansas and traveled through five departments prior to ending at American Legion Post 101 in Anoka, Minnesota.

- All lunch and dinner stops were at 100 year posts
- Numerous wreath layings to include:
  - Three at Post Founders gravesites
  - One at the grave of a recent military officer KIA with the Gold Star family in attendance
  - One at the tomb of the Hormel family in Austin, MN with the family in attendance.
- Three Operation Comfort Warrior grants – were presented during the ride.

Of particular note this year,

- As reported by the Media and Communications folks, this was the most widely covered Legacy Run to date.
- As soon as the final donations numbers are tallied for this year, it is anticipated that the donation total will exceed $1,300,000.
- Costs to put on the Legacy Run for the coming year will be totally covered by the rider registration fees. This past year’s ride was within $ 3,000 to $4,000 of self-funding.

American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee
PNC David K. Rehbein, Iowa, Chairman

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee met Sunday, October 14, at the Sheraton Hotel in Indianapolis to assess status against its five-year strategic plan, hear updates on projects completed, those under way and others on the horizon as the centennial commemoration inches nearer to its conclusion on Veterans Day 2019. Some highlights:

1. Interesting achievements:
The committee’s Legacy & Vision mantra has been adopted throughout the country, which was a key objective from the beginning, aided by multiple outreach efforts and media tools. Thousands of local posts and most departments have established committees, made plans and even have 100th anniversary commemoration activities. Examples numerous, and some worth noting are:
- The Department of Arizona’s centennial “Heroes” documentary film series tells the stories of wartime service under The American Legion 100th anniversary
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- Two American Legion centennial monuments – one in San Antonio and another in Missouri City – have been built, erected and dedicated in the Department of Texas.
- A New York Navy veteran with cancer is climbing the 46 highest summits in the Adirondacks to raise awareness of the Legion centennial, with American Legion Birthday in March 2019 as his goal for completion.
- The American Legion centennial is starting to get recognized at NASCAR races, Major League Baseball games, veterans expos, local parades and other events across the country.
- Personally, I am acting on the opportunity as well, writing a monthly column in my local daily newspaper about the legacy and identity of Ames Post 37. And, like so many Legionnaires across the country and around the world, the more I research and learn, the more I understand the reasons The American Legion has withstood the test of time.

2. Projects completed:
- A new “Legacy & Vision” web platform puts American Legion history into easily digested and downloadable formats. Consider this site a work in progress, with many layers of information and promotion – from the Memorials Database to the Legion’s digital archives to centennial apparel offers.
- “Indivisible: The Story of Our Flag” is now in its second edition and has sold approximately 30,000 copies.
- The 100th National Convention in Minneapolis was very well received, especially the opening ceremony, which has been made available on video to be shown at local post events. You can access this video by clicking on the following link https://vimeo.com/290916463. Other successful centennial convention presentations were a film festival, vintage quilt show, which attracted hundreds of visitors, and the 100-year chronology exhibit.
- American Legion centennial merchandise continues to sell well, and the Legacy & Vision lithograph by artist Matt Hall is now in market and will be promoted heavily in the coming months.

3. Projects under way:
- The Team 100 membership and awareness campaign is under way and gaining steam. This includes Team 100 membership recruitment incentive materials in print and video, profiles of second-century posts and a call for such member-driven content as “100 Good Reasons to Join and Renew in The American Legion.”
- Fathead wall hangings are now in production and will be in market soon. These include a single-panel chronology, a multi-part display of the Four Pillars, the Preamble to The American Legion, and other items.
- “To Strengthen a Nation: The American Legion Story” is a 13-episode video tracing the legacy, vision and continuing identity of the organization’s mission. All of the shooting is completed, and the project is in post-production/editing now.
- American Legion traveling exhibits are getting booked nationwide after the successful tour so far of “The Greatest Legislation: An American Legion Centennial Salute to the GI Bill.” That display, because it is heavy and involves two video kiosks and artifact display cases, has been replicated into a more mobile, pop-up version that can be shipped quickly and inexpensively for department events. The 100-Year Chronology display is also of the pop-up variety, making it easy and quick to ship. Next up for the centennial creative team is to develop traveling pop-up exhibits on The American Legion’s work to recognize toxic exposure among veterans –
from atomic testing to burn pits – one display on the U.S. flag and another on American Legion Baseball.

- The U.S. Mint American Legion centennial coins will be in market in the first quarter of 2019. These coins stand to raise substantial funds for the Legion and increase awareness of the organization at the same time.

- Following the Spring 2019 National Executive Committee meeting, plans are in the works to invite Legionnaires to convoy to St. Louis for an event commemorating the 100th anniversary of the first stateside caucus of the organization there.

- Plans are also coming into focus for a special Centennial Ride and Legacy Run prior to the 101st National Convention in Indianapolis.

- And The American Legion is approved for a state historical marker, which will be unveiled in a ceremony during the 101st National Convention, 777 North Meridian, first permanent location of National Headquarters.

- The 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee, which met Saturday for the third time since its establishment, is also actively strategizing behind the “legacy and vision” concept to chart a course for the future.

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee is nearing its sunset. Taking its place over the next year and beyond will be American Legion “Second Century” planning and execution. It is the sincere hope and expectation of the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee that understanding and appreciation of the organization’s roots, original purposes and century of achievement will drive forward innovations to allow The American Legion to continue serving communities, states and the nation long and successfully into the next century.

21st Century Ad-Hoc Committee
Reverend Daniel J. Seehafer Wisconsin, Chairman

The 21st Century Ad-Hoc Committee met on Saturday, October 13th to continue discussing how we can move this organization going forward. The committee is broken down into three areas – Membership, Training, and Legacy and Vision. From these three areas, the committee is pairing down the ideas they have talked about the last couple of meetings and prioritizing the major themes. The plan is to have the final report and any implementing documents finalized by the Spring 2019 meetings.

II. INTERNAL AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Sons of The American Legion Sub-Committee
George V. West (NH), Chairman

The Sons of The American Legion Sub-Committee of the Internal Affairs Commission met on October 15, 2018.

Members present:
George V. West (NH) Chairman
Larry D. Sheets (FL) Member
James F. Army (MA) Member
Herbert W. O’Dell (TX) Member
Don Hayden (MN) Member
Robert Morrill (NY) Member
Michael K Seaton (CA) Consultant to IA for SAL Matters
Ken George (CA) National SAL Liaison

SAL National Commander Greg “Doc” Gibbs and leading SAL National Commander Candidate Clint Bolt (VA) were introduced at the Internal Affairs meeting and later again the Internal Affairs Sub-Committee meeting. The Commander gave brief comments regarding the effects of the changes in leadership experienced recently in the program and
his expectations for the year. The Commander's focus and challenge this year are to find ways to engage younger members (20-30 years old) to get involved in the post to be active members and leaders. The Commander also stated he is continuing the fireside chats videos with Past National Commander Danny Smith (2017-18). Those videos are posted to the SAL Facebook page and archived at sondny.org. The Facebook page receives about 3500 likes when a new video is posted.

The SAL NEC appointed Gene Theroux (MA) as the new SAL webmaster. Mr. Theroux is a dual member and comes highly recommended. He will be tasked with updating the SAL website and phone application.

Overall there were eleven resolutions reviewed by the SAL and by the IA Sub-Committee, four Pre-Convention, one Convention and six Fall NEC. See Addendum B of this Internal Affairs report.

Pre – Convention and Convention SAL Resolutions were reviewed by the sub-committee, the actions were determined to be an appropriate course of action and further approved by the sub-committee by motion and unanimous vote.

Fall NEC SAL Resolutions were reviewed by the sub-committee, the actions taken by the SAL NEC were determined to be the appropriate course of action and further approved by the sub-committee by motion, second and unanimous vote.

Staff Liaison, Ken George, provided his report to the sub-committee. His focus is to continue to work the Sons of The American Legion Strategic Plan which has recently been updated and presented to all SAL Leadership, Committee and Commission Chairman, Internal Affairs Chairman and the IA SAL Sub-Committee. The plan being in place will allow the processes and practices to take effect and culminate change. The plan will be reviewed regularly. Any changes or adjustments to the plan must be approved by the Internal Affairs Commission.

The Sons of The American Legion per capita was also discussed at length. The current per capita is $2 per member and has not been raised since 1982. Mr. George is working with the Finance Committee with a plan to make a significant per capita increase that will take effect in 2020. There must also be a follow-up plan with regularly scheduled increases to the per capita and match or come close to the legion member per capita. The increase in per capita will close the gap between expenses paid by the Legion versus the Sons. Right now the per capita mostly pays for meeting call-ins, Commander and National Vice Commander travel.

The last item discussed was an improved process with establishing and identifying future National leadership. Younger members need to be cultivated and mentored to fill these roles in the future if the organization is going to survive. The Commander's Advisory Committee will identify and develop those members with the assistance of the Past National Commanders Panel.

For the Good of the Order: Robert Morrill (NY) questioned why the Sons of The American Legion conducts multiple elections and endorsements for Commander and National Vice Commanders at their conventions. He would like to see the them more align their voting process with The American Legion at Conventions. Mr. Seaton stated there is nothing in the by-laws that would prohibit the change. The Internal Affairs Staff Liaison will look into the matter and suggest changes for the next convention.

The recommendation of the Sub-committee to include actions on resolutions (Addendum B) was approved by the Internal Affairs Commission.

American Legion Training Sub-Committee
Alton R. Ford (MI), Chairman

The Training Sub-Committee of the Internal Affairs Commission met on October 15, 2018 at the National Headquarters in Indianapolis, IN.

Members present:
Al Ford (MI) Chairman
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James R. Bojanowski (NY)  Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hawk (SC)   Member
Dennis Soppe (IA)   Member
Carl Swisher (OH)   Member
James L. Van Horn (AK)  Consultant

Staff present:
Paul Brown, Member Engagement Coordinator, Internal Affairs & Membership Division and Michele Emery, Alumni Coordinator, Internal Affairs & Membership Division.

Guests present:
Josh Clement (MT), Patricia Harris (NC)

Staff presented an update on the national training initiatives stressing the importance of departments implementing the Department American Legion College, department training cadre, and the District Training-In-A-Box components of the plan. It was announced that many departments have updated their Department American Legion Colleges to include the four recommended training modules (Resolution Writing; Leadership; Effective Meetings; and Train the Trainer).

Staff presented an update on National American Legion College which included the following points:

**Pre-Course Assignments**
- DISC Personal Profile Assessment
- Fully Developed Written Resolution
- 2-5 minute “How-To” Video

**Course Practical Exercises**
- DISC Group Exercise
- 30 second “Elevator” Speech
- Resolution Process (Formatting Panel; Process Panel)
- District Scenarios (Generic; Specialized)

**Training Topics Presented**
- Working with other Personality Types
- Running Effective Meetings
- Organizational Life Cycles
- Legion History
- National Training Initiatives
- Leadership in a Non-Profit Organization
- Member Engagement
- 21st Century Committee Update
- Succeeding with Resolutions
- Train the Trainer
- Geiger Center Operations
- How to make “How-To” videos
- Developing your “Why” to being involved with The American Legion
- Creating an Effective Strategic Plan
- Creating/Improving your Department Legion college
- How to Succeed as a NALC graduate

Staff presented a review of the minutes from the National American Legion College Alumni Association (NALCAA) annual meeting held at the National Convention in Minneapolis in August. The approved motions of the alumni meeting included a new Constitution and By-Laws, life membership in the association for a one-time fee of $20,
donations of $1000 to National Emergency Fund, Legacy Scholarship, Child Welfare Foundation, and the National Commander’s Fund - $500 to each.

Dennis Soppe moved to approve the minutes of the NALCAA meeting, with the exception of the proposed Constitution and By-Laws to be reviewed and amended by the National Judge Advocate and returned for review by the Internal Affairs Sub-Committee on Training next Spring Meeting. Seconded by Carl Swisher. Motion passed.

Carl Swisher moved to approve the persons elected at the meeting to serve as an executive body, with final titles to be subject to review of new Constitution and By-Laws by National Judge Advocate. Dennis Soppe seconded. Motion passed.

The recommendation of the Sub-committee was approved by the Internal Affairs Commission.

III. PROGRAM REPORTS

Sons of The American Legion (SAL)

INTRODUCTION

The past year the Sons of The American Legion strengthened our commitment to the Legion Family and achieved positive gains in all areas.

As of October 8, 2018 we have a total reported membership of 369,001 members for 2018. We are currently at 78,533 members for 2019, which is 21.28% of our goal of 369,001 for 2019. The desired membership to use for our goal is 400,000.

The Sons of The American Legion was the single largest contributor to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation in 2018 raising $402,081. At the National Executive Committee Fall meeting this past weekend over $39,406.00 was donated to the Foundation. In addition to the CWF donations, the Sons of The American Legion also presented $3620.00 for NEF, $450.00 for the Legion’s Endowment Fund, $750.00 to Legacy and $250 to Fisher House.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

47th ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

At the forty-seventh Annual National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota there were 920 registered delegates, 48 alternates and 97 guests representing 49 Detachments.

We received donations in Minneapolis totaling over $52,951 from various Squadrons and Detachments. The breakout is as follows:
- $22,192 for Child Welfare Foundation
- $8,296 for Legacy Fund
- $19,263 for NEF
- $750 for OCW
- $2,250 for the Endowment Fund
- $200 for Fisher House

Our membership goal for 2019 is 400,000 members with a 90% renewal rate. To attain this goal our membership committee will echo the Commander’s theme for the year “Honoring the Past…..Continuing the Legacy” Members who excel in recruiting will receive special recognition.

There were five resolutions presented to the National Convention Committees for consideration. One are recommended for approval, two were received and filed and one was received and referred to the Standing Finance Commission. One was rejected. See Addendum B

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FALL NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
One hundred seventy-nine National Executive Committeemen, Alternates, Commission and Committee members attended the 2017 Fall National Executive Committee meeting representing forty-six Detachments. We also had nineteen guests, for a total of 198 attendees. The attendance was outstanding showing that our members are truly dedicated to the programs.

The Member Training and Development Committee presented the twenty-third Annual Detachment Commanders’ National Instructional Institute. Twenty-seven detachment commanders attended the Detachment Commanders Conference on Saturday, October 13th.

Six resolutions were presented to the National Executive Committee for consideration. Two were received and filed, one was rejected, one was withdrawn and two were recommended for approval. All resolutions are attached. See Addendum B

CONCLUSION

The Sons of The American Legion is continuing to strive to assist The American Legion in all aspects. Our dedication to the veterans and their families can only strengthen our bond within the Legion Family. We will continue to insure more productive, in-depth programs so that the Sons of The American Legion will become a stronger asset to The American Legion.

The Sons of The American Legion will continue to work for the benefit of our veterans who helped make this country great and for the children who will help make this country even greater.

We continue to see increased participation within the commissions and committees of our National Executive Committee from which our further growth is insured. The war on terrorism, which has put our troops in harm’s way, has only strengthened our resolve to ensure the success of the programs of The American Legion Family.

National American Legion College

Attending this year, we have 55 students from 40 departments. Chancellor PNC David Rehbein (IA) will be continuing the opportunity for each attendee to be challenged by real American Legion issues encountered by our leaders presented in scenarios.

The focus for this year includes:
- New Leadership Scenarios
- New Leadership Module
- How to run successful meetings
- How to effectively write resolutions
- Development of training YouTube videos
- How to implement a department level American Legion College
- Leadership style assessment (DISC) and development
- American Legion Q&A with National Commander

National Emergency Fund

Since its creation in 1989, the National Emergency Fund (NEF) has awarded over $6.2 millions of dollars to American Legion family members and American Legion posts that suffered losses during national disasters and had to be displaced.

As of September 20, 2018, we have distributed over $190,000 + with 74 grants to members and posts in the departments of California, Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Connecticut, Illinois, Colorado, Hawaii, and Wisconsin. These grants were provided for emergency expenses for members displaced by damage from homes as a result of natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, wildfires, floods, and even volcanic lava flows that destroyed homes in Hawaii. Posts that have had to curtail ongoing American Legion program were also eligible for grants.
Maximum grant amounts for individuals is $3,000, and the maximum allowable for posts is $10,000. The average individual grant awarded to date in 2018 is $1,698 and the average post grant is $5,354.

Hurricane Florence and Michael:
Our members and posts normally have 90 days after a declared disaster to submit NEF requests. This requirement may be temporarily extended on a case by case basis because of the potential magnitude of current and ongoing disaster recovery operations as a result of hurricanes, particularly in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida. We anticipate that we will continue to receive a high number of grant applications as a result of these disasters for the remainder of 2018.

The NEF fund is currently fully funded and will be able to meet the needs of our members for the remainder of 2018.

Consolidated Post Reports (CPR)

Each year, American Legion posts around the world donate millions of volunteer hours, raise millions of dollars for the benefit of their community and Legion programs, and positively influence millions of lives.

67.5 percent of the posts reported on Consolidated Post Reports this year. Year after year the reporting numbers have continued to remain between 65-70 percent.

The winners of 100% reporting were: Alabama, Delaware, Montana, Nebraska and Oklahoma. Those department commanders were recognized on stage in Minneapolis with a plaque presented by Past National Commander Denise Rohan.

Departments who received a certificate recognizing them for 75% or higher reporting were: Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming.

Our National Commander testifies before a joint session of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans Affairs and the information provided in this report is used to prepare the testimony.

The 2019 reporting period runs from June 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019. We have accelerated our CPR launch date for 2019 to be available online and on Mylegion.org no later than November 1, 2018, earlier than in previous years.

Paid Up for Life

The campaign for new PUFL members this year consisted of a series of four targeted email drops in April, May, and June with a conversion goal for 2018 of 8,000 new PUFLs. As of September 20, 2018, we have acquired 5,963 transitions to PUFL.

IV. RESOLUTIONS

INTERNAL AFFAIRS ACTION ON ASSIGNED RESOLUTIONS

Approved and Forwarded to the Resolutions Subcommittee

Resolution No. 10 (Internal Affairs): Support of the Veterans Creed
Resolution No. 11 (Register Resolution No. 2759 (DC) Department Executive Committee): Recognition and Approval of SAL Detachment, District of Columbia
Resolution No. 1 (Internal Affairs): Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Recognition
Resolution No. 2 (Internal Affairs): Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Membership Date Change
**Other Resolutions:**
Disposition of all other resolutions is addressed in Addendum A.

**Comments on rejected resolutions:**
Over the last 18 years, Internal Affairs has had 11 resolutions on male spouses of female veterans (four to join the SAL, six to establish a separate male auxiliary and one to join Auxiliary) were considered by the National Executive Committee or Convention Committees and all were rejected.

Although this is a sensitive and, in some cases, an emotional issue, posts and departments have yet to demonstrate the synergy necessary to effectively establish a separate organization. To assign to the Sons of the American Legion would drastically change the eligibility intent established of this program and the American Legion Auxiliary, a separate organization, is not inclined, at this time, to include males.

In 2012 and 2013, the Male Spouse Eligibility Ad-Hoc Committee, recommended no change in eligibility requirements for the Sons of The American Legion program or establishing a separate organization or program to officially recognize male spouses. They noted The American Legion as being a “wartime service organization not a social organization” as the rationale behind the decision.

According to the Veterans Affairs data base, there are currently 1,400,000 female veterans. The Department of Defense Manpower Center notes for the last 10-20 years, approximately 45% of female military personnel marry before leaving active duty.

Using studies from the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in Services (DACOWITS), the Department of Defense Manpower Center and data from the Veterans Affairs demographics for women in the military. We calculate between 8,300 to 23,500 male spouses of female veterans who would be in the male spouse group under review. We can safely use 23,000 as the number of male spouse not eligible for The American Legion on their own merit. However, a portion of these male spouses may be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion, through the military service of their father, grandfather or stepfather.

If you spread these 23,000 spouses over 55 departments, we are looking at an average of slightly over 400 male spouses per department. However, it is important to note the higher densities of female veterans, according to Veteran Affairs, are predominantly located in, California, Texas, Florida, Virginia, and Georgia.

There are male spouses and predecessors of veterans involved with The American Legion activities in some posts already in an unofficially recognized capacity.

In order for the departments or posts to best accommodate the interests of the married members with spouses who are not eligible currently through one of the officially recognized branches of our American Legion Family of our organization, it needs to start at the local level. Posts and departments have the capability, currently, to manage the male spouses within the constraints for membership as established by the US Tax Code 501 (c) (19) and applicable local and state laws.

When a department and/or their posts demonstrates it can be a successfully sustain a male spouse program similar to has been demonstrated by successful “grass-roots” programs such as Legion baseball, Boys State, Legion Riders or Oratorical, a national resolution recommending such action would be appropriate.

We had two resolutions to review at this meeting (Resolution 21 and 25 from Texas). After consideration of the above factors, both resolutions were recommended for rejection.

**CONCLUSION**

Thank you for your assistance and for giving us the opportunity to appear before you. Our commission is “Still Serving America.”
Addendum A

Held for Further Study
Resolution No. 10 (MI) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Minimum National DMS Rate
Resolution No. 28 (TX) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Add Video Categories to the National History Contest

Rejected
Resolution No. 21 (TX) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Spouses of The American Legion
Resolution No. 28 (TX) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Male Spouses and Widower Eligibility in the Sons of The American Legion

Dispensed of Administratively
Resolution No. 88 (IA) (Natl. Conv.): Summary Reporting of the Consolidated Post Reports

ADDENDUM B

Disposition of Action of Sons of The American Legion

In compliance with Resolution 21 “entitled”, “Establish Procedure for Handling Matters Originating from SAL National Conventions and SAL National Executive Committees”, adopted by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion at its meeting April 30-May 1, 1973, this is to report disposition made by the Internal Affairs Commission of SAL actions taken at the National Executive Committee October 17-18, 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLUTION NUMBER</th>
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<td>SAL Res 1 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018</td>
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<td>National Convention Travel Reimbursement for National Executive Committeemen of the SAL</td>
<td>Referred to NEC Finance Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAL Res 2 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Candidate Endorsement for Ned Fox (CA) for National V/C</td>
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<td>SAL Res 3 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018</td>
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<td>SAL Res 4 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018</td>
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<td>Recommend Approval</td>
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<td>SAL Res 1 – Convention NEC 2018</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Update membership Qualification Article IV-Eligibility-Section 1</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAL Res 1 – Fall NEC 2018</td>
<td>Ron Roberts NEC (MS)</td>
<td>Provide a Detailed Line Item Budget to the NEC</td>
<td>Withdrawn by Sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAL Res 2 – Fall NEC 2018</td>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>Recognition and approval of the Detachment of the District of Columbia</td>
<td>Recommend Approval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No. S.A.L. Resolution 1 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018
Title: National Convention Travel Reimbursement for National Executive Committeemen of the Sons of The American Legion
Origin: Detachment of Mississippi

WHEREAS, the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion is the governing body of the organization between conventions; and

WHEREAS, the National Executive Committee has the obligation by their office of attending both the Pre-Convention and the Post-Convention meeting of the National Executive Committee as well as Convention meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Past National Commanders, National Officers (elected and appointed), National Commission and Committee Chairmen are allowed a travel expense reimbursement; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 24-26, 2018, that the Sons of The American Legion adopt the following Travel Expense Reimbursement allowance for the current office holding National Executive Committeeman (or the Alternate National Executive Committeeman) in the absence of the National Executive Committeeman as of the opening of the National Convention, all in compliance with The American Legion guidelines, as follows:

1) The cost of an airline ticket (coach class), purchased twenty-one (21) days in advance of the Convention.
   a. In case of a cancellation, the individual must notify the National Headquarters prior to the day of departure so that the airline ticket can be used within one year of the date specified. Any cost of a subsequent change fee will be paid provided proper notification of cancellation was made as indicated above.
   b. If a National Executive Committeeman cancels his trip subsequent to the airline ticket being purchased, the Alternate National Executive Committeeman will receive per diem and baggage fees only. No travel or mileage will be allowed.

2) Baggage fees if applicable. Receipt required.

3) Mileage, at the current American Legion rate, to and from home to the airport.

4) Parking fees at the airport are not applicable.

5) Transportation from the Convention airport will be reimbursed up to the allowance as determined by The American Legion. Receipt required.

6) Individuals that drive to the Convention will receive a mileage allowance based on the rate as used by The American Legion. The maximum allowable reimbursement shall be the same as the rate set forth by The American Legion.

7) If any person entitled to air transportation needs to cancel their flight, the S.A.L. Liaison must be notified in advance of the flight. The ticket will need to be re-issued prior to the one-year expiration period. If the ticket is not used and the National Organization is billed for the flight, the host Detachment will be responsible for the cost of the ticket to the National Organization of The American Legion; and be it further
RESOLVED, that this resolution become effective as funds become available.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 2 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018
Title: Endorsement of Ned Fox (CA) for National Vice Commander
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, the Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of descendants of Veterans; and

WHEREAS, the National Executive Committee meetings of the Sons of The American Legion requires that candidates for national elective office in the Sons of The American Legion be presented to the National body by resolution; and

WHEREAS, Ned Fox has distinguished himself as capable and willing to represent the Detachment of California as an elected national officer by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of The American Legion Family; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 24-26, 2018, that the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of California hereby endorses Ned Fox for the high office of National Vice Commander at such future time and year as may become available; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the above resolution was endorsed by the Detachment of California and the Department of California with indicated National action submitted for the local resolving clause. The signatures of the Detachment Adjutant, Jeffrey Flynt, and Department Adjutant, John Bart, are on the submitted resolution.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 3 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018
Title: Endorsement of Gary P. Nelson (NJ) for National Vice Commander
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, the Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of descendants of Veterans; and

WHEREAS, the National Executive Committee meetings of the Sons of The American Legion requires that candidates for national elective office in the Sons of The American Legion be presented to the National body by resolution; and

WHEREAS, Gary P. Nelson has distinguished himself as capable and willing to represent the Detachment of New Jersey as an elected national officer by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of The American Legion Family; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 24-26, 2018, that the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of New Jersey hereby endorses Gary P. Nelson for the high office of National Vice Commander at such future time and year as may become available; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the above resolution was endorsed by the Detachment of New Jersey and the Department of New Jersey with indicated National action submitted for the local resolving clause. The signatures of the Detachment Adjutant, Jeffrey Flynt, and Department Adjutant, John Bart, are on the submitted resolution.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 4 – Pre-Convention NEC 2018
Title: Blue Brigade Date Alignment
Origin: Detachment of Oklahoma

WHEREAS, the Sons of The American Legion is a growing organization as part of The American Legion Family; and

WHEREAS, recognition of accomplishments is a vital part of the Sons of The American Legion that gives members the incentive to keep our membership growing; and

WHEREAS, membership goals are set to achieve our final year end goal; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 24-26, 2018, that
the Sons of The American Legion change the date of compliance for qualification for the Blue Brigade award to be in line with our final membership goal of thirty days prior to the National Convention.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 1 – National Convention 2018
Title: Update Membership Qualification ARTICLE IV – ELIGIBILITY
Origin: Detachment of California

WHEREAS, the Sons of The American Legion are proud members of The American Legion Family; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Sons of The American Legion are proud possessors of the heritage of their family’s military service to the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Sons of The American Legion are committed to the principles of service and mutual helpfulness to the veterans of military service as members of The American Legion Family; and

WHEREAS, the family structure in the United States of America has changed over time and is often no longer a nuclear family structure; and

WHEREAS, organizational changes have led the Sons of The American Legion to a position of a more independent body filled with dedicated and competent individuals with significant talents who are dedicated to the goals and ambitions of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, members are presently forced to quit the organization if their living relative in The American Legion decides to forfeit his/her membership or allow the dues to go unpaid; and

WHEREAS, a prospective member of the Sons of The American Legion should not have to wait to have the qualified veteran die in order to honor their heritage; and

WHEREAS, we can streamline and tie the eligibility statement to the National Constitution for The American Legion and eliminate further amendments as it pertains to periods of service for the qualifying veteran to be used in membership in the Sons of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of the core principles of the Sons of The American Legion can and will be moved forward by the preservation of their membership and the expansion of their membership guidelines; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the Sons of The American Legion in Annual Convention assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 24-26, 2018, to strike the verbiage, “of members of The American Legion, …” from the first sentence in ARTICLE IV – ELIGIBILITY, Section 1; and be it further

RESOLVED, to replace the aforementioned stricken verbiage with, “of veterans who qualify for membership in The American Legion…”; and be it further

RESOLVED, to strike the verbiage, “…, and such male descendants of veterans who died in service during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf War, during the delimiting periods set forth in Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honourable discharge from such service”; and be it finally

RESOLVED, to amend/change/update ARTICLE IV – ELIGIBILITY, Section 1 of the Sons of The American Legion Constitution to read, “Section 1 – All male descendants, adopted sons and stepsons of veterans who qualify for membership in The American Legion, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion.”.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 1 - Fall, 2018
Title: Provide a Detailed Line-Item Budget to the NEC
Origin: National Executive Committeeman Rob Robert (MS)

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion as provided by the National Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion, shall be a self governing committee and transact business in accordance with the rules
hereinafter set forth, subject only to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Sons of The American Legion and mandates of the National Convention; and

**WHEREAS**, The National Executive Committee is specifically empowered to exercise the following powers as published in the Rules of the National Executive Committee as adopted Oct 18-19, 1972 & Oct 13-14, 2007.

Rule 3

b. To determine the number of members of all National Commissions, National Committees, Board or Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee created by the National Commander not in conflict with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Sons of The American Legion or the National Executive Committee and to ratify the appointments made by the National Commander. Such National Commissions, National Committees, Boards or Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee shall receive full instructions from the National Executive Committee by resolution specifying their purpose, scope, function and authority.

Therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** The Finance Committee of the Sons of The American Legion is instructed to provide to the National Executive Committee; for review prior to adoption by the National Executive Committee a detailed-line item budget. For confidentiality purposes this can be presented at an Executive Session of the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 2 - Fall, 2018

**Title:** Recognition and approval of the Detachment of District of Columbia

**Origin:** Internal Affairs Commission (received through The American Legion Internal Affairs Division)

**WHEREAS,** The Sons of The American Legion was established September 12-15, 1932 as a support program of The American Legion; and

**WHEREAS,** Each Department of The American Legion has established a Sons of The American Legion Detachment and maintains oversight of their program; and

**WHEREAS,** The District of Columbia has three Sons of The American Legion Squadrons, those being at George Washington Post 1, Kenneth H. Nash Post 8, and National Defence Post 46; and

**WHEREAS,** The Department of the District of Columbia Executive Committee met on May 24, 2018 and unanimously approved a resolution to form a District of Columbia, Sons of The American Legion Detachment; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 13-14, 2018, that the Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee recognizes and approves the establishment of the Detachment of the District of Columbia.**

No. S.A.L. Resolution 3 - Fall, 2018

**Title:** Endorsement of Richard Pfeiffer (IN) for National Vice Commander

**Origin:** Detachment of Indiana

**WHEREAS,** the Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of descendants of Veterans; and

**WHEREAS,** the National Executive Committee meetings of the Sons of The American Legion requires that candidates for national elective office in the Sons of The American Legion be presented to the National body by resolution; and

**WHEREAS,** Richard Pfeiffer has distinguished himself as capable and willing to represent the Detachment of Indiana as an elected national officer by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of The American Legion Family; now therefore be it
RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 13-14, 2018, that the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Indiana hereby endorses Richard Pfeiffer for the high office of National Vice Commander at such future time and year as may become available; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the above resolution was endorsed by the Detachment of Indiana and the Department of Indiana with indicated National action submitted for the local resolving clause. The signatures of the Detachment Commander, DeWayne Long, and Department Commander, Rodney Strong, are on the submitted resolution.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 4 - Fall, 2018
Title: Endorsement of Blair Miles (AL) for National Vice Commander
Origin: Detachment of Alabama (received through The American Legion Internal Affairs Division from the Department of Alabama National Convention Resolution 95)

WHEREAS, the Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of descendants of Veterans; and

WHEREAS, the National Executive Committee meetings of the Sons of The American Legion requires that candidates for national elective office in the Sons of The American Legion be presented to the National body by resolution; and

WHEREAS, Blair Miles has distinguished himself as capable and willing to represent the Detachment of Alabama as an elected national officer by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of The American Legion Family; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 13-14, 2018, that the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Alabama hereby endorses Blair Miles for the high office of National Vice Commander at such future time and year as may become available; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the above resolution was endorsed by the Detachment of Alabama and the Department of Alabama with indicated National action submitted for the local resolving clause. The signatures of the Detachment Commander, Blair Miles, and Department Adjutant, William G. Akers, are on the submitted resolution.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 5 - Fall, 2018
Title: Male Spouse and Widower Eligibility
Origin: Detachment of Texas (received through The American Legion Internal Affairs Division from Department of Texas National Convention Resolution 95)

WHEREAS, Sons of The American Legion was created in 1932 as an organization within The American Legion; and,

WHEREAS, Sons of The American Legion is made up of boys and men of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the United States military and became eligible for membership in The American Legion; and,

WHEREAS, All male descendants, adopted sons and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in service during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf War and the War on Terrorism, during the delimiting periods set forth in Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who have died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion; and,

WHEREAS, The mission of the Sons of The American Legion is to serve veterans, the military and their families; and,

WHEREAS, Sons of The American Legion exists to honor the service and sacrifice of Legionnaires; and,
WHEREAS, Sons of The American is not a separate entity; it is a program of The American Legion; and,

WHEREAS, Members of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American comprise the Legion Family, which has a combined membership of nearly 4.2 million; and,

WHEREAS, Male spouses and widowers of female veterans who are not eligible for membership in The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary cannot become members of The American Legion Family; and,

WHEREAS, Eligible female veterans would be more likely to join The American Legion if their male spouses were afforded the same opportunity as female spouses of eligible male veterans; and,

WHEREAS, The eligibility requirements for Sons of The American Legion are not contained in The American Legion Congressional Charter, as amended, or contained in the National Constitution and By-Laws and can be determined by the delegates of the 2018 National Convention of The American Legion in Minneapolis; now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 13-14, 2018, That the eligibility requirements for membership in Sons of The American Legion be amended by adding: …and the male spouses or widower of female veterans eligible for membership in The American Legion.

No. S.A.L. Resolution 6 - Fall, 2018
Title: National Convention Committee Expansion
Origin: Convention Committee

WHEREAS, the Sons of The American Legion, National Executive Committee, has a National Convention Committee which consists of only a chairman, and

WHEREAS, the work, purposes and functions of the National Convention has continued to expand and evolve as our organization has grown, and

WHEREAS, to accomplish the changing priorities and objectives set forth by the Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee, and the membership of the organization as a whole, broader participation is required, and

WHEREAS, adding members to the National Convention Committee will provide improvements and continuity to this important event; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana October 13-14, 2018, that the National Convention Committee of the Sons of The American Legion be structured to include 5 members of the Sons of The American Legion. The 5 members shall consist of the two previous National Convention Committee Chairmen, the current Convention Chairman (duly appointed by the National Commander), and 2 additional members (duly appointed by the National Commander) who will be from the host Detachments of the next 2 National Conventions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the change take effect in the 2019-2020 administrative year.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the report of the Internal Affairs Commission be received and filed, with the exception of four resolutions, Addendum A and Addendum B. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor to receive and file the report of the Internal Affairs Commission. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.
Resolution No. 1: Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Recognition
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, Membership eligibility in The American Legion is determined by the Congress of the United States of America through the establishment of specific dates of declared hostilities in which U.S. military personnel are activated for service; and
WHEREAS, On December 7, 1941, the United States was attacked by Japan in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, causing the United States to enter World War II; and
WHEREAS, From that date until December 31, 1946 the United States activated 16,112,566 U.S. military personnel, 405,399 of whom sacrificed their lives in service to the nation and another 670,846 were wounded; and
WHEREAS, The U.S. government set December 31, 1946 as the official end of the World War II era; and
WHEREAS, The next official military war conflict involving activated personnel was the Korean War; and
WHEREAS, The official U.S. government dates for the Korean War’s duration span from June 25, 1950 through January 31, 1955; and
WHEREAS, During the Korean War timeframe, no fewer than 5,720,000 were activated for service, of whom 36,574 sacrificed their lives in service to the nation and another 103,284 were wounded; and
WHEREAS, The United States and South Korea never signed a peace treaty acknowledging the end of their conflict with North Korea; and
WHEREAS, The first American serviceman who died in Vietnam was recorded as June 1956 whose name has since been added to the Vietnam Wall as well two Army members killed in 1959 while assigned to the Military Assistance Advisory Group; and
WHEREAS, The next official war requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Vietnam War; and
WHEREAS, The official U.S. government dates for the Vietnam War’s duration span from February 28, 1961 through May 7, 1975; and
WHEREAS, During the Vietnam War timeframe, no fewer than 8,744,000 U.S. military personnel were activated for service, of whom 58,220 sacrificed their lives in service to the nation and another 153,303 were wounded requiring hospital care and 150,341 more were wounded and did not receive hospital care; and
WHEREAS, The next official war requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Beirut, Lebanon, conflict from August 24, 1982 through July 31, 1984; and
WHEREAS, During the Beirut, Lebanon, timeframe 266 U.S. military personnel sacrificed their lives in service to the nation, and another 169 were wounded in the theater of battle; and
WHEREAS, The next official armed conflict requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Grenada Crisis from October 25, 1983 through November 1, 1983; and
WHEREAS, During the Grenada Crisis timeframe, 19 U.S. military personnel sacrificed their lives in service to the nation, and 116 were wounded in the theater of battle; and
WHEREAS, The next official armed conflict requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Panama Crisis from December 20, 1989 through January 31, 1990; and
WHEREAS, During the Panama Crisis timeframe, 23 U.S. military personnel sacrificed their lives in service to the nation, and 325 were wounded in the theater of battle; and
WHEREAS, The next official wartime conflict requiring activated U.S. military personnel was, and is, the Gulf War/War on Terrorism that started on August 2, 1990 and continues today; and
WHEREAS, The aforementioned events are the only official periods of war, or armed hostilities, acknowledged by the U.S. government since World War II; and
WHEREAS, In between the aforementioned events during so-called “peacetime eras,” the U.S. military has been involved in at least 12 known armed hostilities resulting in numerous U.S. personnel combat deaths and wounds; and

WHEREAS, These 12 combat operations unrecognized by the U.S. government occurred at the direction of the then current president of the United States, with full knowledge and consent of the then current U.S. Congress; and

WHEREAS, The first of these armed hostilities requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Greek Civil War, fought in Greece from 1946 to 1949 between the Greek government army and supported by activated military personal of the United States and the United Kingdom against the Democratic Army of Greece, the military branch of the Greek Communist Party; and

WHEREAS, During the Greek Civil War, one member of the U.S. Armed Forces sacrificed their life in service to the nation, and another five were non-combat deaths; and

WHEREAS, The second unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations where U.S. military personnel were activated for service was the Chinese Civil War in the aftermath of World War II; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. military equipped, trained, transported, liberated and supplied the Kuomintang-led government with approximately $4.43 billion in its resistance to the Communist Party of China; and

WHEREAS, During the Chinese Civil War 14 members of the U.S. Armed Forces sacrificed their lives in service to the nation, 150 U.S. non-combatants lost their lives in the war and 51 were wounded, totaling 215 U.S. military casualties; and

WHEREAS, The third unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations and involving activated U.S. military personnel is known as the Cold War; and

WHEREAS, The Cold War was a period spanning from approximately 1947 until 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed; and

WHEREAS, Although no direct large-scale military fighting occurred between the United States and Soviet militaries, activated U.S. military personnel served in multiple regional Cold War conflicts resulting in at least 32 members of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their lives in service to the nation, and no fewer than 12 additional casualties; and

WHEREAS, The fourth such unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. military personnel is known as the China Cold War; and

WHEREAS, The China Cold War started when the Kuomintang-led government of the Republic of China retreated to the island of Taiwan until 1972 after President Richard Nixon conducted a landmark state visit to China; and

WHEREAS, During China Cold War military operations no less than 16 members of the U.S. Armed Forces sacrificed their lives in service to the nation; and

WHEREAS, The fifth unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the 1958 Lebanon Crisis which involved more than 14,000 U.S. personal and resulted in one member of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their life in service to the nation and five U.S. non-combat deaths; and

WHEREAS, The sixth unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. personnel was the April 1961 “Bay of Pigs” invasion; and

WHEREAS, This mission was the failed military invasion of Cuba undertaken by a Central Intelligence Agency-sponsored U.S. military group that included at least one member of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their life in service to the nation and 19 non-combat deaths; and

WHEREAS, The seventh unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Cuban Missile Crisis, October 16-28, 1962; and

WHEREAS, The Cuban Missile Crisis directly related to homeland protection against a Soviet ballistic missile deployment in Cuba; and
WHEREAS, One member of the U.S. Armed Forces sacrificed their life in service to the nation and 19 others died as non-combatants during the Cuban Missile Crisis; and
WHEREAS, The eighth unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Dominican Civil War in 1965; and
WHEREAS, This operation resulted in 27 members of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their lives in service to the nation, 20 non-combat related deaths and 283 wounded; and
WHEREAS, The ninth unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Iran Hostage Crisis from November 4, 1979 through January 20, 1981; and
WHEREAS, The Iran Hostage Crisis involved U.S. military intervention that resulted in 8 members of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their lives in service to the nation; and
WHEREAS, The tenth unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. military personnel was the Salvadoran Civil War; and
WHEREAS, The Salvadoran Civil War lasted more than 12 years, across the terms of two U.S. administrations, that resulted in 22 members of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their lives in service to the nation, 15 non-combat deaths and 35 other casualties; and
WHEREAS, The eleventh unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. military personnel started on April 5, 1986, when the La Belle discotheque in West Berlin, Germany, was bombed, killing two U.S. soldiers and wounding 79 other members of the U.S. Armed Forces, which triggered what became known as the Libyan Conflict; and
WHEREAS, Libyan Conflict operations included numerous air strikes by the U.S. military forces and resulted in two members of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their lives in service to the nation; and
WHEREAS, This led to the twelfth unrecognized war era with armed hostile military operations requiring activated U.S. personnel, known collectively as the Persian Gulf Conflicts spanning between July 24, 1987 through September 26, 1988; and
WHEREAS, These U.S. military protection missions of Kuwaiti-owned oil tankers represented the largest U.S. naval convoy operation since World War II; and
WHEREAS, These Persian Gulf events resulted in numerous military operations and at least 39 members of the U.S. Armed Forces who sacrificed their lives in service to the nation and 31 wounded; and
WHEREAS, Since what has been misinterpreted as the “end” of the Korean War on January 31, 1955 the U.S. has had nearly 100 activated U.S. military personnel sacrificed their lives in service to the nation in South Korea, to go along with more than 132 in-country U.S. wounded; and
WHEREAS, On April 27, 2018 during a day-long summit South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un pledged to formally end the Korean War; and
WHEREAS, Since January 1, 1947 through all of these unrecognized war eras requiring activated U.S. military personnel, described herein, no fewer than 778 U.S. combat and non-combat members of the U.S. Armed Forces have sacrificed their lives in service to the nation and no fewer than 797 have been wounded; and
WHEREAS, Since January 1, 1947 all of the aforementioned unrecognized war era events requiring activated U.S. military personnel who were wounded and killed serving their nation were under orders from the commander-in-chief and with consent of the United States Congress proving that the United States has been conducting deadly wartime service to protect the nation consistently since December 7, 1941; and
WHEREAS, The American Legion has gone on record as supportive of these hostile military operations by the United States and its allies since the beginning of World War II; and
WHEREAS, The American Legion has aided, assisted and comforted the families of those men and women who were called to serve or volunteered to serve during all of these mentioned unrecognized armed hostile events, and continues to provide such support to veterans of those events; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion commends the heroic actions of all military personnel who risked their lives in defense of freedom during each of these unrecognized armed hostile events requiring activated U.S. military personnel; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with the history, tradition and purposes of The American Legion, it is fair, proper and reasonable that the privilege of membership in The American Legion should be extended to all military personnel who served on active military duty during all of these mentioned armed hostile events requiring activation of U.S. military personnel: now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That all of these aforementioned previously unrecognized armed hostile events requiring activation of United States military personnel are acknowledged; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion recognizes the nearly 1,600 casualties of the U.S. Armed Forces in service to the nation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion calls on the Congress of the United States to declare that the United States of America has been continuously engaged in a state of war from December 7, 1941 to such date in the future as the United States government may determine that there has been an end to armed hostilities; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the United States Congress direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to qualify as “war-time veteran” all military service personnel who served honorably under federal government Title 10 orders for at least one day during said period.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: Resolution No. 1 has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, the Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its approval. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second for the approval of Resolution No. 1. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 2: Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Membership Date Change
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, Membership eligibility in The American Legion is determined by the Congress of the United States of America through the establishment of specific dates of declared hostilities in which U.S. military personnel are activated for service; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 17-18, 2018 adopted Resolution No. 1 titled “Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Recognition”; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with the history, tradition and purposes of The American Legion, it is fair, proper and reasonable that the privilege of membership in The American Legion should be extended to all military personnel who served on active military duty during all of these mentioned armed hostile events requiring activation of U.S. military personnel; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That subsequent to the Congress of the United States declaring “December 7, 1941 through the cessation of armed hostilities at an as-of-yet undetermined future date” as the official date for the current war-time period; the Legislative Commission be and is hereby authorized and directed to petition the Congress of the United States to

“Section 21703. Membership. Any person shall be eligible for membership in The American Legion who was a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Air Force of the United States and assigned to active duty at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918 and December 7, 1941 to the date of cessation of armed hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; all dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the Governments associated with the United States during any of said periods; provided, however, that such service shall have been terminated by honorable discharge or honorable separation, or continued honorably during or after any of said periods; provided, further, that no person shall be entitled to membership who, being in such service during any of said periods, refused on conscientious, political or other grounds to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified services.”; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That when, and if, the Congress of the United States enacts the above amendment, and the president of the United States approves the same and it becomes law, then the National Constitution of The American Legion shall be deemed amended in conformance therewith, but subject to all consistent limitations and restrictions in the Constitution contained, all as provided for under Article XVII thereof, so that Article IV, Section 1 and Article XIII, Section 2 of the aforesaid National Constitution of The American Legion, shall read as follows:

“Article IV Eligibility”

“Section 1. Any person shall be eligible for membership in The American Legion who was a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Air Force of the United States and assigned to active duty at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918 and December 7, 1941 to the date of cessation of armed hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; all dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the Governments associated with the United States during any of said periods; provided, however, that such service shall have been terminated by honorable discharge or honorable separation, or continued honorably during or after any of said periods; provided, further, that no person shall be entitled to membership who, being in such service during any of said periods, refused on conscientious, political or other grounds to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified services.”

“Article XIII Auxiliaries”

“Section 2. Membership in The American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters of members of The American Legion, and to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918 and December 7, 1941 to the date of cessation of armed hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; all dates inclusive,
or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the Governments associated with the United States during any of said periods, and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.”

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: This has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, approval of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 2. Is there any discussion? The chair calls on Paul Spedalieri, national vice commander.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER SPEDALIERE: Looking at all the armed services, we should include the Merchant Marine. The Merchant Marines were left out. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force. Chairman? In here, because we recognized the Merchant Marines as serving to be members of The American Legion, that the Merchant Marines also be included.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN NEWMAN: I'm going to refer that to the national judge advocate.

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: We may add that.

CHAIRMAN NEWMAN: We can administratively add those folks to it.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Is there any further discussion?

NATIONAL MEMBER MARY ERDMAN (AR): I have a question, a clarification.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Yes.

NATIONAL MEMBER ERDMAN: Mary Erdman, NEC, from Arkansas. I just have a question or clarification, maybe somehow I missed this. But on page 1 of 3, the fourth sentence where it says, "As the official date for the current wartime period."

So there would not be, then, the designation like the Korean and Vietnam and that? The reason I'm asking that, in our state we have veterans license plates and on those plates they have the different wars based on the dates. It says like Korea and Vietnam, Gulf. So this would not change anything?

CHAIRMAN NEWMAN: No.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Any further discussion? Yes?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commander, it says "his." Do you want to say "his or her"?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: We have a resolution that addresses that everything is plural.

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: There's an active resolution which refers to the question that you have, where everything that is "his" is "hers," it's a plural resolution.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.

Resolution No. 10: Support of the Veteran's Creed
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion has since its founding in 1919 dedicated itself to the service of veterans, their families, active servicemembers and the local communities where we live; and

WHEREAS, One of the reasons The American Legion exists is “…To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy …”; and
WHEREAS, The Veteran’s Creed is very similar to the U.S. Army’s Soldiers Creed which has the intent to underline the “altruistic ethos of veterans themselves”; and
WHEREAS, Many veterans across America, seek to continue to make a difference in their communities and across our country; and
WHEREAS, Many veterans continue to take their oath of allegiance to their country and brothers and sisters in arms seriously; and
WHEREAS, In the fall of 2017, veterans groups worked with Georgetown University, located in Washington, D.C., to establish a Veteran’s Creed whose intent was to inspire veterans to continue to serve and lead in service to their communities and country; and
WHEREAS, The American Legion can use the Veteran’s Creed as a rallying point for our brothers and sisters in arms to understand that our mission is far from over; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion support, by appropriate means, the Veteran’s Creed and its eight points; and, be it finally
RESOLVED, That The American Legion publish the Veteran’s Creed as follows in the Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremonies:
1.) I am an American Veteran
2.) I proudly served my country
3.) I live the values I learned in the military
4.) I continue to serve my community, my country and my fellow veterans
5.) I maintain my physical and mental discipline
6.) I continue to lead and improve
7.) I make a difference
8.) I honor and remember my fallen comrades

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: Resolution No. 10 has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its approval. ...Second.
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 10. Is there any discussion? Mike Mitrione, Department of Virginia.
NATIONAL COMMANDER MITRIONE (VA): Mr. Commander, No. 2, "I proudly served my country," gives the impression that you have left the military. It might be better to say "I proudly serve my country."
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Is there some agreement on that? The chair recognizes Lou Celli, executive director of the Washington office.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CELLI: This veteran's creed has already been adopted by several other Veterans Service Organizations. It was created by Georgetown University, and it was something that we had originally decided not to participate in because it had a different meaning when they first created it. They've since, based on trying to understand The American Legion values, have changed it so that it is now a creed as opposed to a pledge not to commit suicide, which is why we didn't participate in the first place.
So if you make the decision to change the language today, ours will be the only version of that is different than the versions that have been adopted by the other veterans service organizations. I leave you with that.
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Is there any other discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Resolution No. 11: Recognition and Approval of SAL Detachment, District of Columbia
Origin: Register Resolution No. 2759 (DC) Department Executive Committee
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission
WHEREAS, The Sons of the American Legion was established September 12-15, 1932 as a support program of The American Legion; and
WHEREAS, Each department has established a Sons of The American Legion detachment and maintains oversight of their program; and

WHEREAS, The District of Columbia has three Sons of The American Legion squadrons, those being at George Washington Post 1, Kenneth H. Nash Post 8, and National Defense Squadron 46; and

WHEREAS, The Department of the District of Columbia Executive Committee met on May 24, 2018, and unanimously approved a resolution to form a District of Columbia, Sons of the American Legion detachment; and

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee is in concurrence to recognize and approve the Detachment of the District of Columbia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That the Department of the District of Columbia be approved to form a Sons of The American Legion detachment.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: This has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 11. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: Attached to this report are Addendum A and B. I move the actions of the Internal Affairs Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second that the actions of the Internal Affairs Commission be the actions of the National Executive Committee. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.

Reappointments

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: At this time I have some reappointments that I wish to convey. The Foreign Departments and Outlying Posts Study Committee, that Robert E. Newman of Indiana, chairman; George V. West, New Hampshire, vice chairman; members Jimmie L. Foster of Alaska; Douglas C. Haggan of France; William M. Detweiler of Louisiana; G. Michael Schlee of Maryland, be reappointed. I ask for a motion to that effect.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move those appointments be approved. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Motion and a second to approve these appointments. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.

The reappointment to the 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee. That will include Reverend Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin, chairman; Joshua T. Clement, Montana, vice chairman; Vickie D. Smith-Dikes, Georgia, consultant; Mark D. Kearsing, New York, consultant; and members Desiree Guerra, Colorado; Robbie Walker, Illinois; John W. Crosby, Indiana; Matthew D. Jabaut, Maine; Michael P. Davis, Massachusetts; Sandra E. Kee, Massachusetts; Lowry Finley-Jackson, Missouri; Derric A. Grimes, North Carolina; and Guillermo Guillén, Virginia. Do I have a motion to accept this?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that those appointments be approved. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I have a motion and a second on the floor to approve the reappointments to the 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.
At this time, are there any contributions to be made to the National Emergency Fund? Please raise your hand if there is. Come on forward, please, if you would.

...National Vice Commander Pisa assumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: We have a $250 contribution, personal contribution from the NEC woman from Vermont. (Applause)

...National Commander Reistad resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: At this time, the chair recognizes Past National Commander John P. "Jake" Comer for the purpose of a special presentation.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Thank you, commander. Commander, can I have yourself and National Adjutant Dan Wheeler come forward?

...National Vice Commander Pisa assumed the chair.

Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: The rest of you never realized we had so much staff, but that's what's coming in here, is the employees of our organization under Dan's direction.

I'd like to read a citation that we'd like to present to our national adjutant here today. "The American Legion Certificate of Appreciation. In honor of Daniel S. Wheeler, in recognition of ten years of exceptional service as national adjutant of The American Legion. Your leadership and insight has led the organization through the conclusion of its first 100 years. We look forward to your continued service into the organization's second century." Signed by your commander, Brett P. Reistad, National Commander. (Standing applause)

With that, we are also going to be presenting to him, it's on order, a special bronze eagle that's going to be presented to Dan on behalf of all of the employees and officers of The American Legion. We also want to recognize and thank Dan. We've all witnessed the last convention, and I know we've had many, many enjoyable conventions, but he was very well responsible to working with the staff and putting on for what I say, and I know you do, the most outstanding opening of any convention that we've ever witnessed. And we can thank Dan for his expertise and knowledge in that regard. With that said, I would now ask Rodney Rolland to come forward. He'd like something to say on behalf of all the staff.

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR ROLLAND: Good afternoon. First I want to say, on behalf of the Legion staff at national headquarters, I want to thank the national adjutant for his leadership, his guidance, his example, his great example at showing us how we should represent The American Legion, show our enthusiasm for supporting veterans and The American Legion and the volunteers.

I'm the HR director here for The American Legion National Headquarters, and I probably spend probably more time than any staff member with the national adjutant, outside of Mary. Mary, of course, spends most of the time. I think it only fair for me to share with you how much compassion that the national adjutant has for the Legion staff.

There's not a day that goes by that he doesn't ask me about the morale, about the livelihood, making sure that the employees are okay. As you all know, recently we went through a lot of changes, and it's been quite difficult. It's been challenging here at the national headquarters staff. But there's not a day that the national adjutant don't ask me about "How is the staff doing?" It doesn't matter what your grade is, whether you're an executive director or whether you're the lowest guy on the totem pole. He's always looking out, asking questions, and looking for opportunity to help Legion staff. For that, on behalf of the Legion staff, I thank you for that, Mr. Wheeler. It's been an honor to support you. (Standing applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Many of the National Executive Committeemen and commanders and adjutants and what have you, all think that we, as members of the team, do most of the direction of what goes on. But this man is on the phone to me daily. There is not a day goes by, since I've been taking over as the leader of the team, that I haven't had a phone call from Dan to go over many, many problems and
take care of and handle things expeditiously. So for that, Dan, I also want to thank you on behalf of all of us and all of our NEC and our past national commanders for your guidance. Please join and say something. (Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: All right. I'll admit it. When I saw all of you coming in and turned to Baca and said, "What in the hell is going on?" (Laughter)

I want to thank each one of you for being such a loyal supporter of America's veterans and their families. And I would be remiss if I didn't thank a number of Legionnaires that I've known for nearly 40 years who have helped me along this journey. Starting with Bob Spanogle, teaching me what it was to be a national adjutant and what it was to be a leader. And Paul Morin, who has been with me ever since I was his go-to guy. Of course, Jake Comer, Dan Dellinger, Dan Ludwig -- not so much Ludwig as the others. (Laughter)

And many who are no longer with us. So I appreciate this recognition, but the recognition really belongs to the 254 people on the staff that take care of all the needs of veterans, and they're always looking for a reason to say "yes" when the phone rings, rather than avoiding the responsibility of helping America's veterans and their families and our young people. It's the greatest honor of my life to have had the opportunity to serve on the staff of The American Legion, and especially serve with many of all you fine, fine people that dedicate your lives to service in America. So I just thank you very much for this. I've moved beyond what I can express. Thank you. Thank you all. (Standing applause)

...National Commander Reistad resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: The chair now recognizes Randy Goodman of Georgia, chairman of the Membership & Post Activities Committee, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Membership & Post Activities Committee
Randy Goodman, Georgia, Chairman

Good morning. National Commander Reistad, members of the National Executive Committee, national officers, and guests, you have a copy of my report in front of you, and it is almost lunchtime. So what I want to do is to give you this:

Membership, rolling from 2017 into 2018, we made a difference. Last year we shaved nearly 40,000 members off the deficit. Right now we're at minus 59,000. If we continue to shave the deficit, we can get it to zero and begin growing positive numbers. That is going to be our challenge this year.

Obviously, I've already looked at reports. There is cause for concern, and you all need to know that we're definitely behind where we were this time last year. Membership is not rolling in as fast as it used to be, so we need to find out why, and begin to make the corrections before it's too late.

That is my report, and thank you for allowing me to serve as your Membership & Post Activities chairman.

Report: Membership & Post Activities Committee
Randy Goodman, Georgia, Chairman

As of October 11, 2018, the 2019 membership total is 1,016,652 – 53,300 members behind this same time for 2018. These membership results do not include newly acquired 2019 DMS members. The total DMS members acquired to date for 2019 is 34,004 which is 2,154 behind 2018 totals.

During the recent 50% Target Date, 40 departments exceeded the target date – this is 8 departments less than the 2018 membership campaign. The 55% target - 46 departments met this goal.

We are entering the sixth year of The American Legion Strategic Plan. The plan is a good one but in order for it to perform at full potential it will require our leaders and members, at all levels, to begin executing the tasks. The strategic plan and where we go with it will be the main topic of discussion at the upcoming January 2019 planning session.
One area that has not received a lot of attention in recent years is the number of current active posts. There are currently, 12,765 active posts. National Commander Reistad has placed an emphasis on starting 100 new posts this year to increase this number. During this meeting 36 posts have been submitted for cancellation. Over the last five years we have cancelled 956 posts and only chartered 181. There has always been a correlation between membership growth and the number of active posts – we are now seeing the effect it has on membership. The potential to build new posts is there and it needs to become a part of our long-term plan to grow.

The online renewal program continues to perform well. The 2018 campaign resulted in 261,627 members renewing online which was an increase of 15,803 over 2017. To date, 110,887 members have renewed online for 2019. We expect these totals to continue to increase.

National staff, working in conjunction with local volunteers, were directly involved in more than 2,500 posts being started or revitalized through the efforts of district revitalization teams in 2016 (staff efforts run from Jan 1 – Dec 31). We expect that number to be equal to if not greater than for 2018. It is the one program that is part of the strategic plan that seems to be working well and has been accepted by many of the departments and districts. The retention rate for members who transferred from these efforts remains higher as compared to those members who remain as DMS99 members. There are 20 district revitalizations planned between October through December 2018. Several of the departments continue to execute the program on their own without the support of National staff and are doing quite well. The program does more than just transfer members, it also signs new members up and provides great membership training.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of Membership & Post Activities committee. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the Membership & Post Activities Committee. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I'd like to take a moment of personal privilege at this time. We have a young lady in our midst that's had some serious health conditions, and I'm just tickled pink to see her back amongst us. She's from the Department of France; she's past National Executive Committee person; she's been past commander of the Department of France, as a matter of fact, we served together as department commanders in 2000. I just wanted you to honor and recognize her and thank God for her recovery. Nola Maloney. (Standing applause)

LEGIONNAIRE MALONEY (FR): I don't think I need the microphone to say this. I want to say thank you for your prayers, your emails, your cards. You have no idea how those made me feel really loved and cared for. I couldn't even walk a few months ago. But because of all of the camaraderie of my Legion family, I determined that I would do it, and I did it. I can do it today and I'd do it again if I had to. Thank you all, thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's wonderful having you back among us. The chair now recognizes Adjutant Dan Wheeler for the purposes of announcements.

Announcements

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: It's been distributed to you, your conflict of interest form. Please fill it out and either put it up here on this table or take it to the national judge advocate's office on the third floor. If you do not, he will hunt you down. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: At this time we will recess for lunch and reconvene at 1:30. Chair recognizes John Brieden, past national commander.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDE: Mr. Commander, this morning the national president alluded to a strained relationship, and since I've been here I've heard
some rumors. I would like, this afternoon, to have some kind of briefing so that we can react to facts instead of rumors, if you please, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: We'll do so. Thank you. We're now recessed for lunch.

...At 11:53 a.m., the National Executive Committee of The American Legion stood in recess.
Wednesday, October 17, 2018, Afternoon Session

At 1:30 p.m. the National Executive Committee was called to order by Commander Reistad.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: This meeting of the National Executive Committee is reconvened. The chair recognizes National Adjutant Dan Wheeler for the purpose of an announcement.

Announcements

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: For this evening, the cocktail hour will start at 5:00 in the lower level, the Meridian. Dinner will start at 6:15. Please be prompt and in your seats. Also, all new NEC members and any NEC members who wish to have their picture taken again, who did not get your picture taken during the recess, please see the photographer outside the room to your left as you're leaving, so that we can have a good photo of you. I think it's published in The American Legion Magazine and for our files. So please do that today before you leave the floor. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Members of the National Executive Committee, Past National Commander John Brieden asked for an explanation of the current relationship between the national American Legion Auxiliary and the national American Legion staff and leadership. It will come as no surprise to many of you that the relationship between the Auxiliary and the Legion has been strained on several fronts during the past several years. This has not occurred because of any differences in missions, but due to some miscommunications that have taken place.

I've asked our national adjutant to personally meet with a few of the senior leaders of the American Legion Auxiliary in order to convey to them that I wish to meet with their leadership no later than during the Washington Conference in order to ensure alignment of our common goals and to personally make certain that we move into our second century arm in arm and united in every way.

Every family has an off day from time to time, and we've had ours. But both sides are committed to repairing any damage immediately, and moving on together to work for America's veterans, their families, and our great nation, just as we have done for nearly a century. I hope that satisfies your query and that you're as confident as I am that any rifts will be mended quickly and to the satisfaction of all.

At this time, the chair recognizes G. Michael Schlee of Maryland, chairman of the National Security Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: National Security Commission
G. Michael Schlee, Maryland, Chairman

Thank you, national commander. It's a pleasure to be with you this afternoon and report on the activities of the National Security Commission. It's great to know that there is life after the Elbow Room. (Laughter)

You have before you a fairly extensive report on the activities and updates by the National Security Commission. Since I met with you at the 100th National Convention, we had a 90-minute phone call with the ex-officio members of the commission to deal with 11 resolutions that were properly before us referred either by the National Convention or by a department executive committee. Our recommendation is for the adoption of five resolutions. Disposition of the other six resolutions is contained in the addendum to my report, which we'll deal with later. I would like to beg the indulgence of the chair to just update you on three of the areas that we provided you with in a fairly extensive report.

The first area, the big daddy of what we do, is the defense budget. I'm happy to report, at the end of September, signed into law was a defense appropriations bill for $717 billion. This is the first time in a decade, a decade, that defense appropriations have not been part of a continuing resolution, which is pretty amazing. The bill, as some of you probably
know, is named after the now late John McCain, as a tribute to him. I think the amount and what will be achieved by this budget are a fitting tribute to the former POW and the senator.

However, the one bullet point I have on the defense budget: Defense spending needs to be reasonable but sustained. A one-year fix is not going to fix the defense budget, so we have to be constantly vigilant to ensure our elected representatives will provide for the common defense. Within that budget is a 2.6 percent increase for our troops. I'd like to talk just two bullet points on the health of the troops.

My standard lecture on the health of the troops is, I'm a Vietnam guy, worked in Washington on the staff for 40 years, met a lot of career military people. But during the Vietnam guy-gal phase, I met very few that had two, three, and four combat tours in Vietnam. We're seeing two, three, and four combat tours in the wars we've had in the last 18 years, but not in our career active force; in our Guard and reserve. So bear that in mind.

Some potential clouds ahead. I'm not warning you of the hollow army returning. However, at the end of September, which was the end of the recruiting year for the United States Army, the Army fell short of 6,500 troops out of 70,000, roughly 10 percent of their active force. The Army National Guard was down 12,000. The U.S. Army Reserve was down 5,000. As is always the case in Washington, you know, the Army said they could throw some money at the problem and solve it. There is a booming economy with a low unemployment rate. So your commission needs to watch trends in the next months ahead as for recruiting and retention.

Closely related to the health of the troops is our longstanding commitment to provide the fullest possible accounting for our prisoners and missing in action. Two simple bullet points: Most of you are aware that 55 sets of remains were released by the North Koreans. Two of those have been identified, which shows progress on the issue. I think commander, actually, Kelly McKee gave you one of the flags from one of the sets of remains that was identified.

A second bullet: On the POW/MIsAs, many of you have followed the Vietnam POW/Missing in Action, the family organizations which we maintain a close liaison with. They were in our building for a couple of decades back in the late '60s through the '70s and Bus Mills was the executive director like '72 to '75. Ann Mills-Griffiths was the executive director for literally as long as I've been around, which is a hell of a long time, and she's now chairman of the board of the National League. Late this summer, Commander James B. Mills, a U.S. Navy Reserve who was listed as MIA on the 22nd of September in 1966, his remains were repatriated and identified. So that family, after more than a half-century of longing and lingering, finally has some closure, I hope.

In closing, I want to thank my staff, Joe Sharpe who is the acting director; he is the VE&E director but he's the acting director until our director returns sometime later. Lou Celli, who is our executive director. I wasn't going to introduce you, but you're the executive director and you're standing up, I figured you wanted some recognition. (Laughter)

I particularly want to thank Freddy Gessner. Freddy is an active airman in the Air Guard, has been with me for my eight-year tenure as chairman of your commission, and Freddy is my loyal airman, in my parlance, my loyal soldier. So particularly, thanks to you, Freddy. (Applause)

I'm going to beg just an indulgence. The first time I set foot in this room was in October of 1969. I had been on the Legion staff at that time for one year, but the spring NEC in 1969 was held in St. Louis. So it's a little nostalgic when I come back in the room, from being back in the peanut gallery there as being a young staffer, to being up front. It's been an honor and a privilege to serve as your chairman. I certainly want to thank you, national commander, Marland, and our NEC liaison, and all the members of the National Executive Committee, for your steadfast support, for your commission's goal to provide for the common defense. Thank you. (Applause)
Report: National Security Commission
G. Michael Schlee, Maryland, Chairman

You have received a copy of the report of the meeting of the National Commission during the 100th National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota which took place on August 28th-30th. The National Security Commission and its seven committees along with the council continue to review developments in the national security and foreign relations arenas. The 100th National Convention adopted 13 resolutions which, when added to the more than 80 existing resolutions, comprise the Commission’s policy and legislative agendas for the year ahead.

On Tuesday, October 2nd, an extensive conference call meeting took place of the ex-officio members of the National Security Commission and staff. On the call for the commission were G. Michael Schlee (MD), Commission Chairman; E. C. Toppin (NC), Commission Vice Chairman; Charles E. Kruger (MN), Chairman, Conventional Armed Forces Committee; George W. Wehrli (FL), Chairman, Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee; George H. Bolling (MD), Chairman, Military Benefits & Quality of Life Committee; William B. Goede (MN), Chairman, National Guard & Reserve Forces Committee; and Douglas C. Haggan, (IN), Unconventional Forces & Intelligence Committee. Staff on the call were Joseph Sharpe, Acting National Security Division Director, Freddy Gessner, Deputy Director, and Jeff Steele, Assistant Director.

Reviewed were six (6) resolutions which were referred to the standing Commission from the National Convention and 2 from Department Executive Committees. Two resolutions were recommended to be approved: 1) Survivor Benefit Plan; 2) Exclude TRICARE election from the federal employees health benefits program. The recommended actions for the six (6) resolutions that were not recommended for approval are noted on Addendum A. The Commission also reviewed three (3) new resolutions and recommended all for approval.

The Commission Chairmen were also provided an update with highlights of National Security Division’s activities since National Convention. Noteworthy items include coordinating for the National Commander several desk briefings with specialists at the Pentagon and Department of State in preparation for the upcoming Far East tour. The Division has hosted and visited the Japanese embassy on several occasions to coordinate meetings in Tokyo during the trip as well as plan a Congressional reception this Fall. The Division is now reaching out to all of Embassies of the countries the National Commander will be visiting in order to coordinate additional preparatory briefings.

The following are brief updates on several critical areas for your review:

**CURRENT THREAT ENVIRONMENT**

**North Korea**

In early October, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said he had “productive talks” with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang, with the pair reportedly agreeing to hold a summit between Kim and President Trump “as soon as possible” to discuss North Korea’s nuclear program. The Department of Defense and Department of State have been working together with US Navy and allied Navy ships to enforce sanctions that pressure North Korea to come to the negotiating table.

The UN Security Council has layered on ten rounds of increasingly stringent sanctions on North Korea in response to prohibited nuclear weapon and missile tests, and now cumulatively targets nearly 100 percent of North Korean exports and significantly restricts imports of oil, luxury goods, and all industrial machinery. North Korean ships are subject to inspection wherever they go in the world, and tens of thousands of North Korean laborers abroad are required to return home, denying the Kim regime of an alternate source of foreign currency. North Korean access to the international financial system is strictly limited.
U.S. and South Korean diplomats have already had to seek certain exemptions to UN-authorized sanctions in 2018 just to hold various leadership summits and preparatory meetings, and U.S. President Donald Trump suggested after his meeting with North Korean Vice Chairman Kim Yong-chol that economic aid could flow to North Korea relatively soon in return for progress in denuclearization, raising questions about how and under what authority this could be done. The interactive can help inform a wider public discussion regarding various options and the pros and cons of pursuing them.

**China**

China’s rising military capabilities and increased assertiveness in the East China Sea pose a challenge to the Japanese Ryukyu Islands and by extension the United States, which maintains a strategic military presence on the largest island of Okinawa. Along with the islands of Taiwan and the Philippines, the Ryukyu Islands represents a geographic chokepoint for China’s naval and civilian activities. As a strategic impediment to China’s power projection, the island chain has been a major focal point of Beijing’s recent military modernization and expansion.

The PRC’s rising military capabilities coincide with increasing Chinese aggression beyond the country’s borders. China has unilaterally attempted-successfully to this point-to change the status quo in the South China Sea. It has constructed artificial islands on reef to assert territorial and military claims and argued, contrary to international law and custom, that the entire sea falls under its exclusive economic zone. The United States has conducted freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea, and the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague has ruled against China’s territorial claims. Nevertheless, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has nearly completed construction of military facilities on the artificial islands and stationed PLA forces to include nuclear-capable bombers. It has even quietly installed defensive anti-ship cruise missiles, surface-to-air missiles, and electromagnetic communications-jamming systems on the reefs.

**Russia**

Russia has recently furthered its aggression against Ukraine by attempted to seize control of the Sea of Azov which is a clear violation of international law. The U.S. Coast Guard has transferred two decommissioned 110-foot armed cutters to Ukraine this month to assist against Russia’s aggression. In September the United Kingdom announced that it would deploy additional forces to the region to deter Russia from further aggression. Ukraine is calling for the United Nations to deem these actions as illegal under the Convention of the Law of the Sea and that it requires a strong response, including an enhanced sanctions policy and other targeted measures.

**Iran**

This month the State Department said it will withdraw from the 1955 Treaty of Amity with Iran, which affirmed friendly relations between the two nations, after a United Nations court ruled in Iran’s favor in a case that challenged newly imposed U.S. sanctions on Tehran. The court ordered Washington to ease some sanctions, saying they violated the treaty’s provisions. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo dismissed the ruling by the International Court of Justice, based in The Hague, as “meritless” and said the decision to scrub the little-known treaty was “39 years overdue,” a reference to the 1979 Islamic revolution that led to the seizure of U.S. hostages and put an anti-American theocracy in power.

The U.S. and its regional allies in the Middle East have long worried about Iran’s influence in Iraq; as well as its actions in Syria, where it supports President Bashar al-Assad; its backing of Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shia movement; its role in the Yemeni civil war, where Tehran is engaged in a proxy war with its main rival, Saudi Arabia; and its influence over Shia minorities throughout the majority-Sunni Arab world.
TRICARE UPDATE

Since 1 January 2018, there has been several changes to the TRICARE benefit.

- Beneficiaries can choose to enroll in or change their TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select coverage during an annual open enrollment period from 12 November – 10 December, 2018 for coverage beginning on January 1, 2019. Failure to enroll in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select results in the termination of coverage for civilian care. These beneficiaries who choose to not enroll may only receive care at a military clinic or hospital on a space available basis.

- Beginning January 1, 2019 dental and vision coverage will be replace with the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP).

- Section 701 of the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act will be implemented and synchronized with the Department’s transition to the TRICARE 2017 contracts, beginning January 1, 2018.

- Broadened access for beneficiaries by setting the requirement that at least 85 percent of U.S. beneficiaries have ready access to network providers in TRICARE Select and gives Select beneficiaries access to no-cost preventive services from network providers.

- It expands TRICARE coverage of preventive care services, treatment of obesity, high-value care, and telehealth.

- It establishes the annual open season enrollment period that beneficiaries will participate in each year to choose their health plan, and the rules for qualifying life events that will allow for changes outside that open season. It also establishes 2018 as a transition year, during which enrollment changes will be available throughout the year as beneficiaries adjust to this new process.

- For Prime beneficiaries, it establishes new requirements for timely appointments and more access to care without the need for referrals, reinforcing standards for access to care. Prime beneficiaries will also have expanded access to urgent care without the need for a referral from their primary care manager.

- For Select beneficiaries, DOD has converted the current cost-shares, where you pay a percentage of the total cost, to a fixed dollar amount.

- It preserves benefits for active duty dependents and TRICARE-for-Life beneficiaries.

- It restructures and continues authority to update TRICARE Prime retiree copayments, which have not changed since 1995.

- TRICARE Select will replace TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra on January 1, 2018. TRICARE Select brings together the features of TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra in a single plan. Select enrollees may obtain care from any TRICARE authorized provider without a referral or authorization. Enrollees who obtain services from TRICARE network providers will pay lower cost sharing amounts for network care.

- All current TRICARE beneficiaries were automatically enrolled in their respective plan on January 1, 2018. TRICARE Prime enrollees will remain in TRICARE Prime. TRICARE Standard and Extra beneficiaries will be enrolled in TRICARE Select. Appendix B outlines what actions will unfold automatically, effective January 1, 2018. Future beneficiaries, or beneficiaries wishing to change their TRICARE plan must proactively change their enrollment during enrollment eligibility periods.

- Beneficiary out-of-pocket costs have been updated.

- 2018 is a transition year with a grace period for enrollment. To allow beneficiaries to adjust to making their health care option choices during an annual open season enrollment period or to remember to elect their coverage when a QLE occurs, beneficiaries can elect to make their coverage changes
anytime during 2018 to ensure they have the right coverage in place starting in 2019.

Read more about these upcoming changes at TRICARE’s website: 
https://tricare.mil/About/Changes

**READINESS**

**Army Recruiting Shortfall** - For the first time since 2005, the U.S. Army missed its recruiting goal this year, falling short by about 6,500 soldiers, despite pouring an extra $200 million into bonuses and approving some additional waivers for bad conduct or health issues.

Army leaders said they signed up about 70,000 new active duty recruits in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30th - well below the 76,500 they needed. The Army National Guard and Army Reserves also fell far short of their goals, by more than 12,000 and 5,000 respectively. The Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, meanwhile, all met their recruiting goals for 2018.

The Army has stated that the shortfall was fueled by a strong American economy and increased competition from private sector employers who can pay more. The Army has since increased its number of recruiters. Army leadership has stated that they will not lower standards to meeting higher recruiting goals and are confident that they can meet future goals.

**Overall DoD Readiness** - In September National Security Division staff met with senior officials from the Department of Defense Readiness Office to discuss the top readiness issues the Department is facing. DoD is working on major changes from within the Department that will drive how well today’s military are ready for future operating environments.

Those priorities include:
- A review of how the Army recruits its soldiers and a plan to improve.
- Improving the leader-to-led ratio and resourcing in initial entry training.
- Successfully standing up Army’s Futures Command.
- Fielding a new Combat Fitness Test and changing the force’s fitness culture.
- Ramping up Multi-Domain Operations into doctrine and practice.

**DEFENSE BUDGETING**

**FY19 NDAA** - The 2019 Defense Budget has been approved by Congress and signed by President Trump in record speed with a 2.6 percent pay increase and a $716 billion national defense budget. This is the earliest the defense budget has been passed in the last 40 years. This is the first time in more than a decade that the DOD is able to begin a fiscal year with an enacted appropriation instead of operating under a continuing resolution. The funding level is consistent with the $716 billion 2018 Bipartisan Budget Act national defense spending cap for FY 2019.

The topline budget differences between the bills and the Presidential Budget Request (PBR) are as follows:

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<th>FY19 PBR</th>
<th>FY19 HASC NDA</th>
<th>FY19 SASC NDA</th>
<th>FY19 HAC-D Defense Appropriations</th>
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<td>Base budget</td>
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<td>$639.2 billion</td>
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OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS (OCO)

The defense appropriations bill has more than $606 billion in base defense spending and nearly $68 billion more in overseas contingency funds, in line with White House requests and spending targets outlined in the annual defense authorization bill approved earlier this summer. The measure funds a 2.6 percent pay raise for troops starting next January and a boost in military end strength of 16,400 spread across the active-duty and reserve forces. Operation and maintenance spending totals $243.2 billion of the defense total, and research and development efforts another $96.1 billion. Defense health and military family programs would receive $34.4 billion.

INDO-PACIFIC TOUR

While in Washington, D.C. the National Commander received several briefings from desks within the Far East offices of the Department of Defense and Department of State in preparation for the upcoming Far East tour this December. Additionally, the National Commander met with Defense Assistant Secretary of Defense Joe Felter to discuss the position of the Secretary of State on the return of the Bells of Balangiga. The American Legion passed a resolution at National Convention supporting the Secretary’s position.

The first location the party will visit will be Hawaii and will include a tour of the new Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency headquarters and forensic lab as well as an update on the progress of the 55 boxes of remains turned over by North Korea this summer. In preparation for the rest of the tour the National Commander will receive a command briefing from Pacific Command headquarters on readiness, troop quality of life, and current focuses of the Major Command.

The trip will also include visits to Department of Defense installations, American Legion Posts, and meetings with heads of state throughout Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan before returning to the United States just prior to the week of Christmas. National Security staff will provide updates to the itinerary in the weeks leading up the trip in the weekly reports.

CONGRESSIONAL RECEPTION

The National Security Division has held several meetings with officials from the Embassy of Japan in preparation for the National Commander’s trip to the Far East. As a result of building this relationship, the National Commander has been invited to act as an ambassador to Japan and visit Tokyo to meet with the Japanese Minister of Defense and other senior officials to include a potential meeting with Prime Minister Abe.

Additionally, the National Security Division is working with the Legislative Division and the Embassy of Japan to host a Congressional reception, in early 2019, in honor of the Guidelines of the U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation. These guidelines set the parameters for cooperation between U.S. military and Japanese Self-Defense Forces in case of military attack against Japan. Created in 1979, they were revised in 1997 and 2015 to allow greater flexibility for the defense planners in both countries.

National Security staff is also tracking legislation that would address China in the Asia-Pacific. The plan will develop a long-term strategic vision and a comprehensive, multifaceted, and principled United States policy for the Indo-Pacific region. The legislation’s likeliest course to passage is through a unanimous consent agreement. Companion legislation has been filed in the House and we believe it will get a boost if the Senate acts first.
POW/MIA UPDATE

On Wednesday, September 26th at the American Legion headquarters in Washington, D.C. the Director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, Mr. Kelly McKeague presented National Commander Brett Reistad with one of the two flags from first two U.S. servicemembers identified from the remains turned over by North Korea this summer.

The two soldiers were Master Sgt. Charles Hobart McDaniel and Private First Class William H. Jones who both went missing in November 1950. Two of the 55 boxes contained two partial skulls that had dental remains, along with two clavicles. DPAA researchers used dental records, chest x-rays and DNA samples to conclusively identify the remains of the two soldiers.

Full funding of DPAA is something we continue to be concerned about. The effects of continuing resolutions and threats of government shutdowns are crippling to DPAA efforts. Without guaranteed funding recovery teams are threatened with having to end their mission and return stateside short of mission dates. Mission planning is impacted as well. The difficult mountains of Vietnam can only be excavated during the warm months and without guaranteed funding opportunities may be missed.

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<th></th>
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<th>Vietnam War</th>
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<td>1,602</td>
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The National Security Commission thanks National Commander Brett Reistad, our NEC Liaison and the distinguished members of the National Executive Committee for their continuing support for Commission efforts to take care of troops and "provide for the common defense"

Addendum A

Rejected
Resolution No. 17 (KS) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Maximize Alien Prison Transfers
Resolution No. 30 (TX) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Issue DD-214 to Retiring Reservists
Resolution No. 2756 (TN) (2018 Department Executive Committee): Establish Separate Paramedic/Emergency Medical Technician Award

Disposed of Administratively
Resolution No. 57 (IL) (2018 Natl Conv.): Oppose Proposed November 2018 Military Parade
Resolution No. 80 (NY) (2018 Natl Conv.): Cold War Service Ribbon
Resolution No. 2755 (UT) (2018 Department Executive Committee): State Funeral for the Last World War II Medal of Honor Recipient

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of the National Security Commission with the exception of five resolutions, one addendum. ...Second
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor to receive and file the report of the National Security Commission with the exception of five resolutions and one addendum. Any discussion?
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HILL: I might have missed it in the report, but my understanding is the Delta Dental portion of TRICARE is going away. It's sunset is January 1, and there's an open period in November and December that you have to enroll in something if you want it to be effective on January 1st. Did I miss that or was it not addressed? I want to make sure everyone who has that, knows it.
COMMISSION CHAIRMAN SCHLEE: I think it's in the report.
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HILL: I didn't see it.
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: If that information is not in the report, we
will ensure that it's put in there. Is there any further discussion? The chair recognizes Past
National Commander Jake Comer.
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Commander, all assembled, I think it's
important that we recognize the abilities of Mike Schlee. He's up there and he's telling us
all of what he's done, and he's been around for 50 years. Very seldom does a staff person
of many, many years become a chairman of a commission. We placed Mike in there
because of his expertise. If you notice something, he arrived at the microphone different
than any other chairman, and he never had a note in front of him.
And so what many of you can probably imply, but he didn't say it, Mike is leaving us
as chairman. He asked to be taken off for many, many reasons. But after 50 years, he
deserves a rising vote of thanks. (Standing applause)
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Is there any further discussion? Hearing
none, all those in favor, signify by saying aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 12: Survivor Benefit Plan
Origin: Resolution No. 36 (MD) 2018 National Convention
Submitted By: National Security Commission

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense’s Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), enacted in
1972, provides cash benefits in the form of a lifetime annuity to a surviving spouse or other
eligible recipient(s) of a retiree or deceased member of the uniformed services; and
WHEREAS, All servicemembers with eligible beneficiaries at retirement are required
to enroll in the Survivor Benefit Plan, unless they take action to opt out by filling out a
form that they and their spouses have notarized; and
WHEREAS, Without filling out that form, the retiree is automatically enrolled at
maximum coverage; and
WHEREAS, Enrollment in the program is generally permanent, but there is a one-
year window between the second and third year after retirement in which retirees can opt
out; and
WHEREAS, If veterans leave the program, they will not be reimbursed for the
premiums they have already paid and are barred from joining the program in the future; and
WHEREAS, Veterans who were medically retired and qualify for Combat Related
Special Compensation deal with mental or physical injuries sustained through military
service in addition to the stress of separating from military service; and
WHEREAS, For years, some servicemembers were opted in to the Survivor Benefit
Plan without realizing it or were being told by Defense Department representatives that if
they didn’t want the benefit, they shouldn’t pay the bills, resulting in thousands of veterans
who were enrolled but not paying their premiums; and
WHEREAS, Section 634 of the Fiscal Year 2017 titled “National Defense
Authorization Act Authority to Deduct Survivor Benefit Plan Premiums from Combat-
Related Special Compensation When Retired Pay Not Sufficient” allows the Department
of Defense to automatically deduct Survivor Benefit Plan premiums from a veteran’s
Combat Related Special Compensation, effective April 1, 2018; and
WHEREAS, This action resulted in more than 19,000 retired disabled veterans
receiving notices stating they owe a substantial amount money to the government for the
Survivor Benefit Plan and that the department would start deducting the program premiums
from his or her monthly entitlement for combat-related disabilities; and
WHEREAS, Many retired disabled veterans are unable to work due to the severity of
their injuries and depend on this federal benefit to feed their family and survive, these
recoupment efforts pose a financial strain; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in
regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That
The American Legion urges Congress to enact legislation that would revise the Survivor Benefit Plan, removing the automatic enrollment into the Survivor Benefit Plan, allow for retirees to terminate their Survivor Benefit Plan coverage, create an affordable payment plan for money owed in back payment and interest charges for those who wish to retain these benefits, and waive the requirement to pay back into the Survivor Benefit Plan for those who were enrolled erroneously.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the National Security Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 12. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 13: Exclude TRICARE Election from the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program
Origin: Resolution No. 43 (MN) 2018 National Convention
Submitted By: National Security Commission
WHEREAS, The Affordable Care Act requires you to maintain basic health care coverage, called minimum essential coverage; and
WHEREAS, TRICARE health plans including TRICARE Reserve Select meet the minimum essential coverage; and
WHEREAS, TRICARE is a health program for National Guard/reserve members including Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve and their families; and
WHEREAS, Members of the Selected Reserve (and their families) who meet the following qualifications are eligible: not on active duty orders, not covered under the Transitional Assistance Management Program, not eligible for or enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program; and
WHEREAS, Under current law federal agencies will not allow currently serving National Guard or reservists to use their Department of Defense TRICARE health plan; and
WHEREAS, The American Legion strongly supports the hiring of veterans although employment with a federal agency like the Department of Veterans Affairs are less attractive for guard/reserve members because of losing their TRICARE benefit plan upon being hired; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That TRICARE be an accepted coverage plan within federal agencies allowing members of the National Guard and reserve to use their TRICARE health plan upon hiring and be excluded from having to elect from the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the National Security Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 13. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 14: Establish Gold Star Families Program
Origin: National Security Commission
Submitted By: National Security Commission
WHEREAS, Gold Star Families have suffered and share in their servicemembers ultimate sacrifice; and
WHEREAS, Gold Star survivors are entitled to services and benefits based on service related death of their family member; and
WHEREAS, Gold Star families are part of The American Legion family; and
WHEREAS, The nation owes the fullest support possible to our Gold Star Families; and
WHEREAS, These families are not always aware of the benefits and support available; and
WHEREAS, The nation owes our fallen servicemembers, honor, dignity, remembrance, and respect for giving their lives for their country; and
WHEREAS, We will pursue policies to ensure they are given the best our country has to offer them and remember their families left behind by caring for them and welcoming them into The American Legion Family as well; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion establishes a program that will provide a network of support for Gold Star Families by assisting with connecting them to other families and providing benefits awareness.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the National Security Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 14. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 15: Expedited Citizenship Through Military Service
Origin: National Security Commission
Submitted By: National Security Commission

WHEREAS, The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services offers naturalization after one year of military service, waiving the three and five year requirements; and
WHEREAS, Between 2009 and 2016, the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest Program (MAVNI) allowed approximately 10,400 non-citizens to join the military and lend critical language and medical skills to our country’s defense; and
WHEREAS, Various reports from the citizenship organizations, national and local news sources, and firsthand accounts from members of Congress have confirmed that hundreds, possibly thousands, of veterans have been deported for committing certain crimes, many non-violent and substance abuse related, after serving in the United States Armed Forces; and
WHEREAS, Many have been sent to countries they have not known since early childhood and many live in Mexico, along the U.S. border, to be close to loved ones and support networks; and
WHEREAS, The overwhelming majority of deported veterans who have been interviewed consider the U.S. their home; and
WHEREAS, Many deported veterans have said they believed their service automatically conferred citizenship upon them; and
WHEREAS, The list of immigrants who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their new country is long and distinguished; and
WHEREAS, The American Legion supports military service as a path to citizenship for immigrants; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion urges the United States Congress to implement measures within the Department of Defense to ensure the process of naturalization through honorable military service is completed prior to discharge.
RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the National Security Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 15. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 16: Recognition for Afghan and Iraqi Combat Translators
Origin: National Security Commission
Submitted By: National Security Commission
WHEREAS, Afghan and Iraqi wartime allies were bridges to the Afghan and Iraqi people during U.S. operations against terrorism in those countries; and
WHEREAS, Mission success was directly dependent on close working relations between local nationals and U.S. agents; and
WHEREAS, Our wartime allies often served consecutive tours with several different units to provide continuity; and
WHEREAS, Our wartime allies’ lives and the lives of their family members were threatened for working with the Americans; and
WHEREAS, Our wartime allies saved countless American lives and directly contributed to every level of tactical, operational, and strategic success during the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan; and
WHEREAS, Special Immigrant Visa recipients and Priority 2 Refugee Admissions Program recipients go through the strictest vetting and approval process of any category of person coming to the U.S.; and
WHEREAS, This initiative is supported by all post 9/11 former secretaries of defense as well as key national security leaders in the military, Department of State, and the intelligence community; and
WHEREAS, The former chairmen of the 9/11 Commission have stated, "As former chairman and vice chairman of the 9/11 Commission, we encourage the Congress to do everything in its power to keep the nation's promise to Afghan and Iraqi combat translators and to ensure these intrepid partners can achieve the American Dream. Special Immigrant Visas recipients from Afghanistan and Iraq loyally protected our men and women in uniform. Many directly saved American lives. Their future success will help to prevent the continued growth of Islamist terrorism - the third goal identified by the 9/11 Commission. A great nation keeps its promises"; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion urges the president of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize the contributions of Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa recipients and Priority 2 Refugee Admissions Program recipients who stood shoulder to shoulder with, assisted and protected U.S. military servicemembers, U.S. diplomats and government agents, non-governmental organizations and media organizations during U.S. involvement in those countries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the National Security Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 16. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, there is one addendum, Addendum A. I move that the actions of the National Security Commission become the actions of the NEC. ...Second.
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor that the actions of the National Security Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

The chair now recognizes Ralph P. Bozella of Colorado, chairman of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, for the purpose of a report.

**Oral Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission**

Ralph P. Bozella, Colorado, Chairman

Good afternoon, commander, national officers, and National Executive Committeemen, and guests. On October 9th of this year, the VA&R executive committee met via telephone and Zoom technology to talk about the System Worth Saving schedule for 2019, and to make recommendations of the resolutions that will be before you this afternoon. All these are filed in our written report. We have two resolutions that will come before you, and the remainder being on the addendum.

First thing I want to talk about today with you are the VA&R awards. Many of you were in this room in 2017, during the spring NEC, when you passed a resolution to create the VA awards. We have two awards with the VA. We have the VA Physician of the Year, and the VA Health-Care Provider of the Year Award. These awards this year, after our committee met and went over all the applications, one will be awarded, the Physician of the Year Award will be awarded to Dr. Murray Altose from VA Cleveland. And the VA Health-care Provider of the Year recommendation to you is Keith Harmon, who is from VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System in Denver, Colorado.

So that will be before you later by motion for you to either reject or accept those nominations, recommendations. With your approval, our national commander will present the awards with the VA secretary at our Washington Conference.

Another award is the Lenker Award. You see it every year at the national convention. We get about three, maybe four. I don't know why we're not getting 40. I would invite you to inundate us with your applications to tell us what you're doing with your VA&R program at your departments, which really relates back to the local post. We send out information in the spring, probably April, to say, "We have a July 15 deadline on the Lenker Award." And the deadline now for the VA Physician and the VA Health-care Provider of the Year Award is July 30.

To help you remember, you have this little card that was in your packets, and there's a bunch out there on the table if you need more. It will tell you about the awards and it will also give you a reminder of when those are due. This was an idea by Tom Florez, NEC from Colorado said, you know, "We don't know when those are. Why don't you put it on a note card." Well, here they are, so no excuses. Let us know what you're doing in your programs. You can use your consolidated post reports to gather that data.

In VA&R we also have a meritorious achievement citation. Actually, it's a citation for meritorious service. That's for you to tell yourselves and to tell us in your department, who is doing a good job for VA&R at your post level, at your district level, at your department level. And there's no deadline to this. All you have to do is request a meritorious citation certificate, and then you can present it at one of your events.

And another one is the VA&R Certificate of Appreciation. This is for you to recognize outstanding VA officials that are leaving their jobs, either by retirement or through resignation. And again, there's no deadline to it. You can do this anytime at all, at your own department functions, conventions, conferences, meetings of sorts, and you can recognize those VA employees that are doing a good job. So you have that information, and I hope that we can see more from you on that.

One of the things that we're trying to accomplish is having VA&R, at the national level working with departments and to the post level. What's going on in our posts in our VA&R? How are we serving veterans in our communities? During the national convention VA&R committee meeting we handed out some notecards and people told us what they're doing.
In our posts we're helping veterans with computers, in our posts we're helping the homeless, and assist with homeless prevention. We're providing grants for veterans, we're providing money for veterans, and on a short-term basis, those that are trying to stay in their homes. You saw a lot of that today in the video that we saw earlier today. It's that kind of thing that's going on. Visits to hospitals, transporting veterans to hospital, providing coffee and doughnuts to hospitals. And in one Colorado post, working with the Soldier's Wish Foundation, we were able to get an 85-year-old Korean War veteran new teeth. He told me, he said, "My grandkids think I look great and I chew my own food." (Laughter)

I want to tell you, that's life changing, it really is, and that's the kind of stuff that we're doing. I think the more we're able to report and show that, like that video we saw today, the more that people understand what we are, and we do serve veterans in our posts.

Suicide presentation, our TBI/PTSD coordinator has been working with the VA/VHA office on suicide prevention, and reporting that back to our PTSD and TBI committee. At the national convention, we handed out the book to you, our second publication, *The Road Home*. I want to show it to you again. You can get copies of this in this building, I believe at the media office. It's also available online, like all of our publications are.

How many of you have ever gone online to get American Legion publications? Yes, there's a lot of stuff out there. If you want something, post service officer, how to help veterans with finances, it's all on there. You can find this information. I also want to recognize Past National Commander Bill Detweiler, who is the chairman of our TBI/PTSD Committee, for the great work he does.

We're working with our legislative department. As the VA Mission Act is being rolled out, we're paying attention to it, we're doing the best we can to ensure that the components of that bill are being implemented the way that they're supposed to be. So we're paying close attention to that.

The System Worth Saving, we've been authorized for 14 site visits this year in your departments. We have listed 12 where we would like to go this year. That's in your report, you can read it. We don't have dates to those yet because we have to work with central office and the local VAs in order to schedule those. When we come to your department with a town hall meeting and a site visit, any help that you can provide, as a national leader, for us is appreciated. Also, it helps us to bring that VA closer to where it belongs at that local level as we work with your departments to make those things happen.

In our claims program, we have over 3,000 accredited claims representatives working for The American Legion across the country, as we're working to try to work with VA to lessen that backlog, VA's backlog right now of 85,000 claims. Our last year, which was July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, we had 12,624 American Legion claims that were overturned in favor of the veteran. That's 73 percent of our claims are going back to help that veteran. That's significant, because it's not only the compensation, but when you think about, when a veteran gets a higher rating on a VA claim, it affects other parts of their lives, too. Health care comes to mind, certainly. Certain fees, government fees. A lot of states have benefits for veterans that are given to people with certain disability rating compensation. So it's really an important thing that our veterans get what is entitled to them.

Another thing that we have published for you to read is the ROAR schedule. When we go to the Regional Office Action Review team meetings, where we go in and help the regional office work on the claims process, to ensure that claims on the American Legion power of attorney are being adjudicated properly.

Commander, VA&R never rests and we are constantly working. Our commission, our committee members, our staff, work for veterans daily: Sundays, Saturdays, Wednesdays, it doesn't matter. I want to recognize Chanin Nuntavong, who is our new director. Greg Nembhard is our new deputy director for claims. Chanin and Greg and I were out yesterday afternoon to the Geiger Center to meet our veterans board staff, and that program is moving along beautifully. As now in Washington and Indianapolis, we are helping veterans all across this country with their appeals. So there's some really good things happening there.
Commander, your VA&R Commission stands ready to help in any way that we can. It's truly an honor and privilege to do this work, I can think of no higher calling.

Before I conclude my report, sir, I think, sir, that I'm going to ask you to entertain a motion that Dr. Murray Altose from Cleveland VA be recognized as The American Legion VA Physician of the Year, and Keith Harmon from Eastern Colorado Health Care System, as the VA Health-care Provider of the Year.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is my motion, sir. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion and a second for approval of the motion. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is passed. (Applause)

Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Ralph P. Bozella, Colorado, Chairman

There were five (5) resolutions from the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission submitted to the Resolution Subcommittee of the National Executive Committee for consideration. Four (4) resolutions were referred for consideration by the 2018 National Convention. One (1) resolution was presented by the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission.

Two (2) were forwarded to the National Executive Committee for adoption:

(Origin: Resolution 97, Washington; 2018 National Convention)
Encouraging VA To Conduct Research on the Effects of Anti-Malarial Drug Mefloquine For A Suspected Link to Mental Health Disabilities

(Origin: VA&R)
Continuous Glucose Monitoring And Veterans Care

Three (3) were rejected:

(Origin: Resolution 9, Montana; 2018 National Convention)
Establish A Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Committee

(Origin: Resolution 55, Illinois; 2018 National Convention)
Veterans Health Administration Provide Assistance with Continuous Airway Pressure Machine Maintenance

(Origin: Resolution 63, Illinois; 2018 National Convention)
Permanent Building For The Court of Appeals For Veterans Claims

Health Administration Update

On June 6, 2018, President Donald Trump signed into law the “VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018” or the “VA MISSION Act of 2018”. This law is designed to greatly improve veteran access to VA healthcare. This VA reform law affects a wide range of areas from access to care outside the VA, expansion of the caregiver program, elimination of barriers for VA healthcare professionals to practice telemedicine, provide additional resources for hiring and retention of VA healthcare professionals, allow VA to provide transplant procedures on live donors, etc. Following is the full breakdown of the MISSION Act’s requirements.

- Consolidates seven VA community care programs into one streamlined program.
- Removes arbitrary 30-day/40-mile barriers to veterans’ care in the community.
- Authorizes access to walk-in community clinics for enrolled veterans who have previously used VA healthcare services in the last two years.
• Authorizes local provider agreements to remove bureaucratic red tape and to meet veterans’ needs for care in the community.
• Creates standards for timely payment to community care providers.
• Keeps the cost of community care in line with the cost of VA healthcare to ensure a veteran does not pay more for outside care.
• Requires the VA to monitor the program and report to Congress on the care provided to veterans.
• Requires the VA secretary to develop an education program to inform veterans and VA providers about veterans’ healthcare options.
• Establishes a program to provide continuing medical education credits for community care providers on treating veterans.
• Requires the VA to establish and submit to Congress a strategy to ensure all VA and community care programs are operating efficiently and effectively based on a number of factors including veterans’ satisfaction and access guidelines and quality standards, among others.
• Strengthens the process for VA and partnering healthcare providers who prescribe opioids to veterans.
• Ensures providers removed or suspended from VA practice do not treat veterans in the community.
• Provides $5.2 billion for the Veterans Choice Fund.
• Removes barriers for VA healthcare professionals to practice telemedicine.
• Provides additional resources for hiring and retention of VA healthcare professionals.
• Strengthens peer-to-peer support for veterans undergoing care for trauma or in rural areas.
• Establishes mobile deployment teams for underserved and rural facilities to provide specialized and routine healthcare.
• Allows VA to provide transplant procedures on a live donor.
• Allows the VA to modernize assets and infrastructure.
• Expands eligibility for VA’s Caregiver Program to veterans of all generations.
• Requires VA to implement an information technology system to better support, assess and monitor the program.

Physician and Provider of the Year Awards

This year the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Commission received nominations from the Departments of Colorado, Oklahoma and Ohio for the awards. The Department of Colorado nominated Keith Harmon, acting Associate Director for Patient Care Services VA Eastern Colorado Healthcare System for the Healthcare Provider of the Year. The Department of Oklahoma nominated Dr. Thomas Schneider, VA Medical Center, Muskogee, OK for the Physician of the Year, and the Department of Ohio nominated Dr. Murry Altose, former Chief of Staff, VA Cleveland Healthcare System. Based on this year’s nominations, the VA&R Commission Executive Committee recommended Dr. Murry Altos as the VA Physician of the Year and Keith Harmon as the Provider of the Year.

VA Committee Appointments

Roscoe Butler, Deputy Director for Healthcare was appointed to VA’s VSO Suicide Advisory Committee and to VA’s National Academic Affiliations Council (NAAC). The VSO Suicide Prevention Advisory Council is charged with improve Suicide Prevention training, communications and outreach with our VSO and MSO partners. The VA’s National Academic Affiliations Council is charged with
advising the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on matters affecting partnerships between VA and its academic affiliates.

Keronica Richardson was appointed to the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. The Advisory Committee on Women Veterans assesses the needs of women Veterans, with respect to VA programs such as compensation, rehabilitation, outreach, healthcare, etc. The Committee reviews VA’s programs, activities, research projects and other initiatives designed to meet the needs of women Veterans; and makes recommendations to the Secretary on ways to improve, modify, and affect change in programs and services for women Veterans and follows up on all those recommendations.

Legion Volunteering

The American Legion’s Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program continues its advocacy on behalf of veterans using Veterans Health Administration medical facilities. As of the end of the 3rd quarter, 2018, there are 4,319 regularly scheduled and 9,988 occasional volunteers who serve veterans in VA medical centers, outpatient clinics, Vet Centers, Fisher Houses and State Veterans Homes across the nation.

The regularly scheduled volunteers contributed 517,046 hours and occasional volunteers contributed 45,382.25 hours for a total of 562,428.25 hours volunteered by members of The American Legion. These combined services contributed result in savings to the Department of Veterans Affairs of more than $13.886 million. While the number of total volunteers and hours continues to decrease from previous years, the commitment of The American Legion’s volunteers remains strong.

The VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC) Executive Committee (EC) fall meeting is scheduled for October 18-19, 2018, at the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Headquarters in Washington, DC.

TBI/PTSD Committee

The TBI & PTSD Programs Coordinator has worked alongside of the VHA Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in order to draft best practices and procedures for The American Legion Suicide Prevention Program. The TBI & PTSD Committee has looked at developing this program further recommends these best practices and procedures for further used.

The TBI & PTSD Programs Coordinator has worked on the development on a comprehensive white paper on veteran suicide. The objectives of this white paper are to examine the recent trend of veteran suicide, discuss potential causes and recommend steps to take in order to address this crisis. This publication has been printed in larger numbers and a version is available online.

The TBI & PTSD Programs Coordinator has also worked to edit and update the 2013 publication, The War Within with Jeff Stoffer and his media team. This Publication is titled The Road Home and has been printed in large numbers and is also available online. This publication seeks to inform veterans on a variety of topics including:

- TBI/PTSD/MST and the high rates of overmedication
- Complementary and alternative medicines and treatments for PTSD
- Ways to regain a sense of purpose and sense of belonging
- Recent advancements in science

The TBI/PTSD Committee met in Minneapolis, MN, on Friday August, 24, 2018, during the 100th National Convention. During the meeting, the TBI/PTSD Committee toured the Brain Sciences Center led by Dr. Brian Engdahl, the Director of the Domenici Research Center for Mental Illness. Dr. Engdahl provided a presentation on Magnetoencephalography (MEG). The MEG is a neuro-imaging device that can map out brain activity by measuring the magnetic fields of the brain. Using this technique, a medical provider can observe the brain activity of an individual with PTSD and an individual without.
The Committee also heard from Chad Spangler, Director of the Outward Bound for Veterans Program. He provided a presentation on his organization’s mission and how they assist veterans recovering from the psychological injuries of war. Outward Bound provides no cost wilderness expeditions to veterans designed to help them rebuild self-efficacy and sense of purpose through challenge and teamwork. Extensive research on Outward Bound for Veterans shows that their programs significantly improve overall mood and interpersonal relationships.

The Committee finally heard from Dr. Michelle Madore, a clinical neuropsychologist with the Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) Clinical Program, VA Palo Alto Health Care System. rTMS is a medical device that uses strong pulsating magnetic waves in order to activate circuits in the brain and improve mood. Research on rTMS shows significant improvements in depression, anxiety, and overall brain function.

Claims Update

The American Legion continues to press the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) on improving their administrative processes while improving upon the quality and accuracy of claims decisions. Since 2012, The American Legion has encouraged veterans to file for VBA benefits via the fully developed claim (FDC) process. The enactment of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 (Appeals Modernization Act) has led to rapid implementation of the new design. The VA launched the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP) in November 2017, providing veterans the opportunity to use the new review process in the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act. Through RAMP, the VA aims to provide eligible veterans with resolutions to the appealed claims as early as possible; the current goal is 125 days. It will run through February 2019, at which point the Appeals Modernization Act will be fully implemented. Individual VAROs will implement the program; VARO personnel will identify veterans that have filed appeals and invite them to “opt-in” to the improved system and reduce the inventory of appeals nationwide. Cheryl Mason, Chairman of the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, and Paul Lawrence, Undersecretary for Benefits at VA provided an update to the Appeals Modernization Act during the Legion’s 2018 National Convention in Minneapolis. The current op-in rate is only at 12% and the average number of days for adjudication is 142. The success of the program is highly dependent on veteran participation.

In 1985, The American Legion authorized the National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Commission to conduct Department Service Officer (DSO) schools bi-annually for accredited representatives of The American Legion. It represents the organization’s ongoing commitment to developing a network of highly trained and experienced service officers responsible for effectively advocating for veterans and their families.

The purpose of these sessions is to provide current information about changes in veterans’ law and VA adjudication policies. Through these efforts, American Legion service officers improve their advocacy skills. The program of instruction includes basic training for new service officers, and advanced training on issues relating to claims processing, disability ratings, personal hearings, development of appeals, and the interpretation and application of precedent decisions by the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

DSOs received training from the following organizations in 2017-2018:

- Veterans Health Administration
- Veterans Benefits Administration
- National Personnel Records Center

Individual department participation remains high; over 275 accredited representatives attended the training sessions over the past year. During this reporting period, DSO School was held:

- February 28–March 2, 2018 (Washington Hilton, Washington, DC)
American Legion accredited representatives continue to struggle with the creation and implementation of National Work Queue (NWQ). NWQ is a program designed to redirect cases to VA regional offices (VAROs) throughout the nation. Conceptually, the program would seem viable; however, American Legion representatives report difficulty in reaching VA personnel to discuss case outcomes at other VAROs. The problem is compounded by time zone differences and staff availability.

A common ongoing complaint among DSOs is the lack of correspondence that is received by VA. VA will mail correspondence to veterans and indicate the veteran’s DSO received a courtesy copy of the letter. DSOs are reporting they neither receive a courtesy copy nor an electronic alert within VBMS to inform them of the correspondence.

Our accredited representatives continue to work tirelessly to honor those that have served. Currently the American Legion has nearly 3,000 accredited representatives. With this number of professional representatives, The American Legion continues to be instrumental in reducing the more than 85,000 backlogged claims. The American Legion currently has over 4,800 cases at the various Regional Offices throughout the country and more than 52,000 active cases at the Board of Appeals for Veterans’ Claims (BVA). Between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018, The American Legion represented 8,054 claimants seeking benefits. For the claims receiving dispositions (12,624), over 73% of the claims were either determined to have been inadequately developed and prematurely denied or were erroneously denied by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The awarding of the benefits permits access to other benefits, such as access to free VA healthcare, increased federal hiring preference, and elimination of funding fees for VA mortgages.

**Proposed VA Regional Office Review (ROAR) For 2019**

The American Legion VA&R Claims Services Division plans to visit 8 VA Regional Offices between January and December 2019, to review the claims processes and quality of service to Veterans.

Site selection is based on the most recently visited Regional Offices.

- New York, NY Regional Benefit Office
- Newark Regional Benefit Office
- Little Rock, AR Regional Benefit Office
- Lincoln, NE Regional Benefit Office
- Anchorage, AK Regional Benefit Office
- Providence, RI & Hartford, CT Regional Benefit Office
- Wilmington, DE Regional Benefit Office

**Cemetery Update**

The National Cemetery Committee and staff last met on August 25, 2018, during the National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The committee heard from Ms. Amorphan Callahan, Executive Cemetery Director, Fort Snelling National Cemetery and Mr. John Knapp, Deputy Director, Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Ms. Callahan and Mr. Knapp provided an overview of National Cemetery Administration (NCA) services, eligibility criteria and ongoing initiatives to help improve access to NCA benefits. New initiatives aimed to increase access include the opening of new national cemeteries in New York, Colorado, Florida and Nebraska and the addition of new columbarium walls in high density urban cemeteries located in California, New York and Illinois. With these additions, VA’s goal of providing an option to be buried at a NCA cemetery within 75 miles from home of record to every veteran is currently at 92.3%. The committee also heard from Ms. Norka Rojas, Director of Interment Services, Arlington National Cemetery and US Army Major Shannon Way, Strategic Planner, Arlington National Cemetery. Ms. Rojas provided an overview of Arlington to include eligibility, unique military honors, the
demand for services and the challenges in scheduling honors. Major Way provided an update on Arlington National Cemetery’s (ANC) second national dialogue survey focusing on what the American public thinks should be the future of ANC as it nears capacity levels. Major Way explained that at current pace, ANC will reach maximum capacity by mid-century (i.e. mid 2040s) and will cease to operate as an active cemetery. ANC has undertaken steps to start a national dialogue on what the future of NCA should be. Over 96% of respondents would like to see Arlington Cemetery continue as an active cemetery well into the future. The respondents also stated that priority should be given to those killed in action (KIA) and Medal of Honor recipients.

Testimony

On Wednesday, September 5, 2018, Greg Nembhard, Assistant Director, DoD Boards, testified before the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on pending legislation. The American Legion testified in support of H.R. 4312 “Fallen Warriors Battlefield Cross Memorial Act”, H.R. 6409 “Honoring Veterans’ Families Act” and H.R. 6420 “Permit the Secretary of VA to Establish the Veterans Legacy Program.” H.R. 4312 would permit the display of the Fallen Warriors Battlefield Cross (boots, helmet, ID tags and inverted rifle) at all cemeteries operated by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), H.R. 6409 would require VA to add inscriptions to headstones and markers of eligible spouses and children, and H.R. 6420 would permit the VA secretary to establish a grant-based program with institutions of higher learning to conduct research at NCA cemeteries for the purpose of creating educational material that will be used in the Veterans Legacy Program.

VA Medical Center Proposed Site Visits for 2019

The American Legion through its System Worth Saving program plans to visit 12 VA medical facilities between January and December 2019, to review the quality of healthcare, access, outpatient wait time, and other key healthcare outcomes. Site selections were based on compiled information and rankings based on complexity and severity of challenges with access, wait time, suicide rates and other factors.

- James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital - Tampa FL (2011)
- Lexington VA Medical Center, Lexington, KY (2011)
- Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks, Fayetteville, AR (2014)
- VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System - Colmery-O’Neil VA Medical Center - Topeka KS (2005)
- Central Alabama VA Health Care System – Montgomery, AL (2016)
- VA Illiana Health Care System – Danville, IL (2008)
- Martinsburg VA Medical Center - Martinsburg WV (2011)
- VA Palo Alto Health Care System – Palo Alto CA (2011)
- Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center – Wilkes-Barre PA (2005)
- Washington, DC VA Medical Center – District of Columbia (2014)
- W. G. (Bill) Hefner VA Medical Center - Salisbury, NC (2012)

Women Veterans NEC Report

The American Legion’s Women Veterans Healthcare Program continues to recognize and understand that women veterans face remarkably different experiences than their male counterparts when transitioning in and out of combat roles, in between services or back to
civilian life. The American Legion must continue to improve the quality of life for women veterans by advocating for gender-specific healthcare to meet women veteran’s needs.

The Women Veterans Healthcare Coordinator continues to write several letters of support for various members of congress. The following are recent bills that were supported by the American Legion’s Women Veterans program:

- **HR.3558, The Improve Access to Care for Our Female Veterans Act.** This bill will improve the VA’s procedures for ensuring that deficiencies are reported accurately and timely by clarifying and strengthening roles and responsibilities for inspections in VA medical facilities.

- **HR. 3558, The Improve Access to Care for Our Female Veterans Act** from the Office of Representative Susan Brooks (IN). The bill seeks to ensure all areas in VA facilities adequately meet privacy and security standards. Safety and privacy accommodations can be made through simple investments such as installation of privacy curtains or locks on doors. These minor modifications help create an environment that allows all VA patients, but particularly women, to fully engage in their treatment and recovery without privacy concerns. Lack of these reasonable accommodations may be particularly troubling for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress or other disorders related to military sexual trauma.

- A draft bill from the Office of Congressman J. Luis Correa. This draft bill will provide for certain reporting requirements relating to medical care for women veterans, the wait times, the driving time required for veterans to attend appointments and the reasons why appointments could not be scheduled with non-Department medical providers.

The Women Veterans Healthcare Coordinator continues to work with the American Legion’s membership department to develop new and innovative ways to recruit more women veterans. The Women Veterans Healthcare Coordinator briefed the members of the 21st Century Committee Meeting at the National Headquarters in Indiana. This briefing consisted of the mission statement, specific demographics for women veterans and minority veterans, and the areas of major health concerns for women veterans.

Community engagement is a vital to the American Legion Women Veterans Program. The Women Veterans Healthcare Coordinator continues to speak at different speaking engagements in the community about the American Legion’s program to spread awareness. Some of these speaking engagements include speaking on Capitol Hill, the Virginia Women Summit, the Department of Veterans affairs, the American Legion’s post and various other institutions. The topics vary but mostly covered healthcare, benefits and military sexual trauma.

The Women Veterans Healthcare Coordinator continues to participate in high-quality women veterans’ events on behalf of the American Legion at the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Women Veterans and the committee on the Health of Women Who Have Served Report. Both of these are appointed voluntary positions. The Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Women Veterans committee assesses the needs of women Veterans, with respect to VA programs such as compensation, rehabilitation, outreach, healthcare, etc. The Committee reviews VA’s programs, activities, research projects and other initiatives designed to meet the needs of women Veterans; and makes recommendations to the Secretary on ways to improve, modify, and affect change in programs and services for women veterans and follow up on recommendations. The committee on the Health of Women Who Have Served Report takes a closer look at the health differences between women who have served and women who have not served. This distinctive study, developed in collaboration with an advisory group of leading military, veterans, and public health organizations, establishes a baseline portrait of the health of women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces compared to the health of civilians, with additional comparisons by age and race/ethnicity.

The System Worth Saving site visit program also serves an imperative role in the Women Veterans Program. The visits span across the United States included sites such as
the Manchester, New Hampshire VA; the Jesse Brown, Chicago VA and the Washington DC VA Medical Center to help show the disparities among different VA systems that provide care to women veterans. The System Worth Saving program identifies challenges and best practices related to veteran’s healthcare and benefits. The Women Veterans Healthcare Coordinator plans to participate in more site visit in the upcoming year.

Addendum A

Rejected
Resolution No. 55 (IL) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Veterans Health Administration Provide Assistance With Continuous Positive Airway Pressure Machine Maintenance
Resolution No. 63 (IL) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Permanent Building For The Court of Appeals For Veterans Claims
Resolution No. 9 (MT) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Establish a Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Committee

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion to receive and file the report of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission with the exception of two resolutions, one addendum. ....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion and a second to accept the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission report with the exception of two resolutions and the addendum. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is passed.

Resolution No. 17: Encouraging the Department of Veterans Affairs To Conduct Research On The Effects Of Anti-Malarial Drug Mefloquine For A Suspected Link To Mental Health Disabilities
Origin: Resolution No. 97 (WA) 2018 National Convention
Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, Mefloquine is an anti-malarial drug that has been commonly used in military settings since its development by the U.S. military in the late 1980s; and
WHEREAS, The anti-malarial drug Mefloquine (commonly marketed as Lariam) had until recently enjoyed a long history of preferred use in certain military settings in the prophylaxis of chloroquine-resistant Plasmodium falciparum malaria; and
WHEREAS, Originally developed by the U.S. military in a Vietnam War-era drug development program and subsequently licensed for prophylactic use in the U.S. in 1989; and
WHEREAS, Mefloquine has, in the over quarter century since, been widely used by the U.S. military and by various international militaries during deployments in malaria-endemic areas, including the Horn of Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, Australia, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, particularly during recent large-scale operation in Iraq and Afghanistan; and
WHEREAS, Recently, Mefloquine was recognized as an idiosyncratic neurotoxicity that may cause permanent injury to the central nervous system; and
WHEREAS, Very common side effects including insomnia and abnormal dreaming affecting greater than 10% of the prescription users and common side effects including anxiety and depression; and
WHEREAS, Other side effects described as uncommon but reported in between one and ten prescribed users per 1000 including agitation, aggression, restlessness, panic attacks, mood swings and confusion; and
WHEREAS, Among susceptible individuals, such symptoms may progress to a potentially life-threatening condition; and
WHEREAS, With recent understanding of the adverse neurological effects of Mefloquine on structures in the brainstem, research had emerged demonstrating that
Mefloquine may impair motor learning during certain complex tasks, such as those comparable to marksmanship, with clinical implications for Mefloquine users; and

WHEREAS, Although not unique to military settings, concern of suicide associated with use of the drug has also been a pervasive concern, particularly in the U.S. military, dating at least back to the first large-scale deployment of troops to Iraq in 2003 during which use of Mefloquine was widespread; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion encourage the Department of Veterans Affairs to conduct research on the effects of Mefloquine as a reviewable condition for mental health disabilities.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: This Resolution 17 was approved by the VA&R Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to approval Resolution No. 17. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 18: Continuous Glucose Monitoring and Veterans Care
Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, As of 30 September 2018, there are an estimated 19.6 million veterans, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, of which approximately nine million veterans are enrolled in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) health care; and

WHEREAS, Diabetes Mellitus is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to the VHA, nearly one in four veterans receiving care from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has diabetes, which equates to roughly 2.25 million veterans with diabetes; and

WHEREAS, Patients with diabetes need to monitor blood glucose levels multiple times during the day, but only one in three comply with accepted monitoring prescriptions; and

WHEREAS, Many patients are unwilling to “prick” their fingers multiple times and/or dedicate the necessary effort to perform traditional blood glucose readings; and

WHEREAS, Traditional blood glucose monitoring only provide a point-in-time reading and can miss potentially dangerous high or low blood glucose levels; and

WHEREAS, Modern technology is available that allows continuous glucose monitoring which can improve management of a patient’s diabetes; and

WHEREAS, These continuous glucose monitors provide real-time measurement of glucose levels, which can show patterns and trends; and

WHEREAS, Most private insurers including the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs cover continuous glucose monitoring; and

WHEREAS, Uniform guidance from the VHA was last issued in 2014, and has not been updated to account for improvements in technology and reduced cost of equipment; and

WHEREAS, Updated guidance from the VHA can help improve the health of veteran patients suffering from diabetes; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion strongly encourage the Veterans Health Administration to issue uniform and comprehensive guidance that facilitates veterans’ access to continuous glucose monitoring devices.
RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: This resolution was approved by the VA&R Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion to accept Resolution No. 18. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Attached to this report is Addendum A. I move that the action of the VA&R Commission become the action of the NEC. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second that the actions of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried. The chair now recognizes Walter W. Ivie of Texas, chairman of the Media & Communications Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Media & Communications Commission
Walter W. Ivie, Texas, Chairman

Commander Reistad, past national commanders, members of the National Executive Committee, staff, and guests. You have my written report, so I will simply address some key points.

In this year of celebrating 100 years of service to community, state, and nation, The American Legion Media & Communications program finds itself at a crossroads. At this time the Media & Communications Division is significantly behind in advertising revenue. The reasons are easy to identify: Membership has declined; the business world is cutting back on advertising spending, primarily in print. The post office's mailing increases are hitting us hard now. Yet, there is reason for optimism.

Our membership loves The American Legion Magazine. Once again, an independent auditor has ranked it as the best read magazine among 180 surveyed. And The American Legion's national website received a Bronze Award for Excellence from the Association of Media and Publishing over the summer. Meanwhile, the Legion's digital media program continues to see impressive growth and engagement. But we will not sit back and hope that the post-9/11 generation follows in our footsteps. We are making concerted efforts to inform, educate, and entice them about The American Legion.

For example, four young, emerging leaders will be the "I am The American Legion" subjects in the October through January magazines. Among them is Derric Grimes, a district and post commander from North Carolina. His desire to continue his service and involve his family is similar to millions of other young veterans. Consider the quote from Derric: "What drew me into The American Legion was the focus on family. Post 116 has always been family focused. You see that in our programs and the focus on families."

Derric's words, and those of other Gulf War veterans, are being heard loud and clear by the Media & Communications volunteers and staff. We have convened meetings with a task force of Gulf War era veterans. We have used those conversations to research and create a budget-conscious strategic approach for reimagining our media program, that is inviting them and their generation to join, without disenfranchising members from previous war eras. Details are still being worked out. However, we are confident that this approach will create new opportunities to engage members and draw in new ones, as The American Legion begins its second century of community service, patriotism, and activism for our nation's veterans, servicemembers, and their families.

Mr. Commander, on behalf of the American Legion Media & Communications Commission, thank you and the NEC for your support. Before I conclude my report, I again want to thank all the staff in the Media & Communications Division. They are doing an outstanding job, helping us get the message out to the public, and hopefully inform people about the good work that The American Legion is performing. That concludes my report, Mr. Commander.
The mission of The American Legion Media & Communications Commission continues to evolve in a fast-paced year of improved news coverage, revitalized digital media, increased brand awareness, expansive external outreach and promotion of the organization, its programs, stances and initiatives.

Among the notable achievements of the media program since Spring Meetings:

- American Legion Magazine continues to be the best read magazine out of roughly 180 U.S. titles surveyed by independent auditor GfK MRI Doublebase. In fact, American Legion Magazine is the only U.S. magazine that has at least 7 of every 10 readers saying they had read each of the most recent four issues.
- The national website, www.legion.org, received a Bronze Award from the Association of Media and Publishing at its annual conference during the summer.
- Our social media audience continues to grow. Our Twitter follower count is expected to crest 100,000 by year’s end. The Legion’s LinkedIn page recently surpassed 10,000 followers.
- The three primary e-newsletters grew their combined audiences by more than 1 million from September 2017 through this past September, with the Centennial Celebration e-newsletter growing by 653,316 new subscribers.

These positive metrics come at a time when financial results are lagging, due primarily to the membership decline and businesses aggressively steering advertising dollars from print toward digital. Overall, the division is over budget by $242,079, through the end of August.

On the bright side, the November magazine generated more than $950,000 in revenue — the best month since March 2015. However, the average of the February-October issues was $668,600, putting us around $745,000 below budget for the year.

At the same time, digital advertising sales have slowed somewhat. Through the month of September, digital advertising is down $18,862 from budget.

In addition to declining revenue, we are experiencing higher costs related to magazine production and distribution. We are over budget on paper prices by $66,000. Additionally, we are over budget on our postage costs by $197,759. The dramatic increase in postage costs is directly linked to a 2 percent increase by the United States Postal Service. Currently, we are slightly under budget on printing costs by roughly $5,000.

While there is no sign that the membership decline will reverse itself, advertising will pick up or the Postal Service will reduce costs, Media and Communication staff members are busily creating strategies and tactics to reimagine the national organization’s media program.

Among the highlights being researched and planned is a new, digital-only product aimed at veterans in the Gulf War era and younger. Since the product is digital only it will not require money to print or mail it. The editorial content will be aimed at the younger audience and will allow our advertising sales vendor to target a different set of advertisers. This will not detract from the well-respected and well-read American Legion Magazine. Instead, it will be a separate product to engage the 21st century American Legion member.

Other initiatives are under consideration, each with the goal of engaging members of all war eras, creating new revenue streams and minimizing costs.

Staff members are also focusing on several key areas instrumental to the Legion’s continued success.

Another area of concentration for the division is The American Legion’s 100th Anniversary celebration. Division staff members are actively involved in all aspects of the planning and execution of the program. The mobile-friendly centennial website is nearing completion, FatHead wall hangings and chronologies will soon be available, and a Centennial bookazine is planned for early 2019.
Additionally, more Every Department Has a Story placemats are being wrapped up. Staff members are working with departments with the goal of finishing each department by the time the centennial celebration concludes.

Staff members are also working with NALPA and other internal and external groups to solidify The American Legion’s branding strategy. For example, staff members are providing stories, speeches, ad slicks, videos, PSAs and other materials for department and post public relations volunteers that can be used in their media.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Media & Communications Commission. We have no resolutions, no addendum. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to receive and file the Media & Communications Commission report. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? It's passed.

The chair now recognizes Richard W. Anderson of Connecticut, chairman of the Americanism Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Americanism Commission
Richard W. Anderson, Connecticut, Chairman

Thank you, Mr. Commander, members of the National Executive Committee, national officers, and guests all. Compared to Chairman Schlee, I am a relatively new kid on the block. So I do not trust my memory to give you a report of the entire commission's proceedings, so I'm going to rely on my notes. My oral report only scratches the surface of the many programs and activities of the Americanism Commission, the council, and committees. Copies of my detailed report have been distributed for your review, so I will only brief you on a few of the highlights of our recent meetings.

The Americanism Commission first wishes to congratulate the Department of Delaware for picking up its first American Legion World Series championship title with the hard-won victory of American Legion Wilmington Post No. 1 this past August. The commission also wishes to recognize the city of Shelby, host American Legion Post No. 82 in Shelby, and the hundreds of volunteers who made this year's American Legion World Series another outstanding, enjoyable, and exciting event.

During the national tournament in July and August, American Legion Baseball websites received over 2.5 million hits, including a record-setting August. Official American Legion Baseball Facebook and Twitter accounts received over 1.3 million impressions over the course of the national tournament play.

The biggest transaction was received due to two stellar plays during the championship game, both of which went viral on social media and were ranked first and third on ESPN's Sports Center. Those two plays alone reached over 7 million people on social media, and countless more on television worldwide. Additionally, ESPNU re-aired ten games Sunday through Wednesday, which was up from the two games that were re-aired last year. Congratulations again to the 2018 American Legion World Series championship team, and to all those who had a hand in making this year's national tournament a resounding success.

As many of you may recall, during spring meetings earlier this year, the national headquarters of the Boy Scouts of America had just announced that on February 1, 2019, they are changing the name of their youth program for 11- to 17-year-olds that is currently called the "Boy Scouts" program to that of "Scouts BSA." Boy Scout national headquarters also announced that beginning February 1, girls may begin enrolling in the Scouts BSA program. Girls had already begun enrolling in the Cub Scouts late this year.

Beginning with enrollment of girls next year into the Scouts BSA program, both girls and boys will have equal availability to all of the same scouting activities, ranks, merit badges, awards, and path to Eagle Scout. When the Boy Scouts national headquarters announced those upcoming changes last May, there was surprise and uncertainty among some of our Legion membership. What does that mean? What will those changes look like?
At the spring meetings last May, I called for the Americanism Commission to take time to give the matter further study. And in order for us to receive firsthand knowledge and information about those changes, I extended an invitation for a representative from the Boy Scouts of America national headquarters to join the Americanism Commission in the convention city this year, which they did, and provided an excellent briefing.

During that briefing, they emphasized that the organization itself is not changing its name. It will continue as the Boy Scouts of America. They are only changing the name of the flagship youth program within their organization. He also took opportunity to explain that, while girls are being welcomed into the Scout membership, Cub Scout dens and Scout troops themselves will not be gender mixed. Individual Cub dens and individual Scout troops will still be single gender. There may be many times on special occasions, such as an award ceremony or a talent show, that groups of dens, known as Cub Scout pack, or groups of Scout troops, known as a troop committee, will come together. But it is the single-gender den and single-gender troop that will meet individually on a regular basis. Boy Scout national headquarters emphasized that their youth programs of Venturing, Sea Scouts, and Exploring have been serving both boys and girls together for many decades.

As chairman, I feel, as a commission, we have done our due diligence. We have heard directly from the Boy Scouts of America, the chairmen from our respective departments across our nation, and taken that information into consideration. The bottom line is that the Boy Scouts of America is not changing its over 100-year-old mission and focus of offering personal growth in citizenship, leadership, and character development for youth that it has always offered, nor does it plan to change the mutual values that attracted our organization to the Boys Scouts in 1919 in the first place. What is changing is that all of those same opportunities and values will now extend even further, to touch the lives of countless more America's youth: the lives of girls and young ladies.

I proposed to the Americanism Commission that at our next meeting next spring, that the Boy Scouts of America have implemented their new program name and membership change on February 1, that the Americanism Commission take opportunity to update our currently existing resolutions to reflect that new transformation of their organization, and that the commission take further opportunity at that time to formally reaffirm support of the Boy Scouts of America. The Americanism Commission hopes the body of the National Executive Committee agrees that the alliance formed over the last 100 years between The American Legion and the Boy Scouts of America should endure.

At this time, I'd like to thank the staff of the Americanism Division that worked so diligently in this building to support the many, many challenges that face the Americanism Commission today. At this time I'd like to introduce Jill Druskis, our director; Steve Cloud, director of baseball; Meagen Sweet; Tyler Mitchell; and Jeff Hendricks. (Applause)

Commander Reistad and members of the National Executive Committee, the Americanism Commission again thanks you for your longstanding support. Unless there are any questions, this concludes my report, commander. And once again, I thank you for the opportunity of serving in this capacity.

Report: Americanism Commission
Richard W. Anderson, Connecticut, Chairman

The Americanism Commission met at the Sheraton Hotel City Centre in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Monday and Tuesday, October 15-16, 2018. The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. and the roll call was taken. Following opening remarks, the minutes from the pre-convention commission meeting held on August 25, 2018, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, were approved.

JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH AND THE YOUTH CADET LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

The members of the Committee on Children & Youth and the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee met on Monday, October 15, 2018, in the Michigan Room, 21st
Floor of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel. The committees exchanged information about their respective focus and programs. Vice President of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (CWF), Peggy Moon, provided the Children & Youth Committee with an update. Now in its 65th year, CWF has awarded $766,761 to 24 non-profit organizations for the 2019 calendar year. These grants were determined during the annual meeting of the board of directors, held at the Sheraton Hotel City Centre in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Sunday, October 14, 2018.

Program Manager Meagen Sweet reported that for the 2017-2018 children & youth program year (1 June through 31 May), $13,171,980 in expenditures and contributions, inclusive of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, American Legion posts, Sons of the American Legion squadrons, and American Legion Auxiliary units, and other supporters,

The Committee discussed the 12th annual national Children & Youth Conference that was held September 22-23, 2018, at the Sheraton Hotel City Centre in Indianapolis. This conference segment shared training, information and networking to 68 Legion family representatives of 45 departments.

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

Mark Avis (MA), Vice-Chairman of the American Legion Baseball (ALB) Committee reported that the ALB Committee met Sunday, September 30, 2018, at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, in conjunction with the 58th annual American Legion Department Baseball Chairmen’s Conference. During the chairman’s conference, congratulations were extended to the Department of Delaware for laying claim to its first ever American Legion World Series championship title when the team sponsored by American Legion Post No. 1 in Wilmington, Delaware, took the series in Shelby, North Carolina, in August 2018.

The ALB Committee made recommendation to the Americanism Commission that Neil Walker of the New York Yankees be awarded the 2019 American Legion Baseball Graduate of the Year. Walker played American Legion Baseball for American Legion Richland Post No. 548 in Pennsylvania, and was inducted in the American Legion Pennsylvania Baseball Hall of Fame in July 2017.

The ALB committee made the recommendation to the Americanism Commission to reject Resolution No. 27 (TX) Recruitment of American Legion Baseball Players. After discussion by department baseball chairman at their annual conference, the originator of the resolution sought to withdraw its consideration in favor of proposing a rule change in the future through the established process and incorporation of further research recommended during the discussions.

The ALB Committee completed a review of the 2019 Baseball Rulebook, making minor edits and clarifications to Rules 1.I. Designated Hitter (DH); 1.R Pitching Rule; and 2.D Proof of Eligibility.

The ALB Committee discussed and recommended to the Americanism Commission exploring an increase in the national registration fees of $25 beginning with the 2020 season, accompanied by a request for a portion of that increase being earmarked to fund a junior national regional tournament. An additional discussion and recommendation involving the junior baseball program includes completing a survey of department ALB chairmen regarding current interest levels at the 10-12 and 13-15 year old divisions and to develop an implementation plan for a beta-test program for interested departments.

The ALB Committee recommended realignment of the Department of Pennsylvania to the Great Lakes Region and the Department of West Virginia to the Mid-Atlantic Region for the 2019 and 2020 regional tournaments pairings.

AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE

A total of 18,262 young men participated in the 50 American Legion Boys State programs during 2018, reflecting an overall decrease of 877 participants from the previous year. There were 610 “no shows” this year, an increase of 27 from 2017. This year 50
programs are referenced due to Washington D.C. establishing an American Legion Boys State program and having two delegates attend American Legion Boys Nation this past summer.

The 83rd annual conference of American Legion Boys State directors was held September 29-30, 2018, as a conference session of the annual national combined Americanism Conference. Past National Commander and Boys Nation staff member Dale Barnett (GA) served as conference chairman. This conference segment shared information and provided networking opportunities for 192 Boys State directors and Legion family representatives of 41 departments.

The conference convened on Friday evening in joint session with The American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Directors. The joint session discussed Resolution No. 28 NEC May 2018 Citizenship, Residency, or Visitor Status for Youth Participation in American Legion Youth Programs at the National Level and Resolution No. 29 NEC May 2018Reasonable Accommodation for Participation in American Legion Youth Programs at the National Level.

Tyler Mitchell (IN), Youth Education Program Manager of the Americanism Division, updated the joint session regarding the Samsung American Legion scholarship online application process and enhancements planned to the process for 2019.

Once the joint session closed, “Boys State by the numbers” was discussed and some of initiatives National Headquarters is taking to assist programs in increasing their participation numbers, such as starting relationships with organizations at a national level to assist in recruiting. Those organizations discussed were the National School Counselors Association, National Home School Association, National High School Principals Association and the National Council for the Social Studies. Additionally, best practices were discussed.

Program Manager Tyler Mitchell presented the Legion.org platform called the American Legion Boys State Information Hub for all American Legion Boys State directors and chairmen. The intent behind the American Legion Boys State Information Hub is to keep programs connected year round, share information so all programs can benefit from each other, and allow programs to examine their own documents for quality. An additional feature being created is the ability for programs to have a forum to ask each other questions.

Al Remaly, a former member of the executive board of the Indiana Association of High School Principals, gave a one hour presentation called, “Engaging and Understanding High School Principals.”

Congratulations were extended to the Department of California for the election of Joshua Cheadle as the 2018 American Legion Boys Nation president.

**YOUTH EDUCATION**

The Committee on Youth Education met on October 13-14, 2018 in Panorama B, 21st floor of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel. The Committee selected and recommends the following students as recipients of 2018 Samsung American Legion Scholarships as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Top 10 National Scholars - $10,000 scholarships</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebecka Denney (UT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jared Goetz (WA)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Central Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Max Bowman (IL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Alwin (WI)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Garrett Geidel (DE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valerie Puliafico (MA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Runners-up - $5,000 scholarships</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria Gonzalez (WA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicholas Vitiello (NV)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Central Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eliza Mount (IN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tessa D’Souza (KY)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Benjamin Currey (RI)</td>
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<td>Peter Davin (NJ)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Remaining Department Finalists - $1,250 scholarships</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Region</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priscilla Joslin (AK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japheth Carlson (OR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tate Flint (UT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Hastings (CA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hailey Matthews (OR)</td>
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<td>Alexis Fuller (ID)</td>
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<td>Kalena Oorlog (AZ)</td>
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<td>Alexy Carolan (RI)</td>
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<td>Sabrina Piccirillo-Stosser (NY)</td>
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<td>Jason Rickenbacher (CT)</td>
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The Committee gave discussion and consideration to Resolution No. 13 (CO) Remove Expected Family Contribution From Legacy Scholarship Application, and recommended to the Americanism Commission that this resolution be held for further study in order to request amplifying information from The American Legion Department of Colorado regarding some information that is provided as background in WHEREAS clauses, and to provide greater clarification of the intent and outcomes they are seeking with the proposal of this resolution.

The Committee on Youth Education also considered Resolution No. 28 (CT) Support a Relationship With the Joe Foss Institute, recommending to the Commission that it be held for further study so staff may have opportunity to compile more information about the Joe Foss Institute, and also research if any states already have any type of citizenship test mandate for high school students – that research will subsequently allow the COYE deeper assessment and discussion to make a recommendation on this resolution at its next meeting.

The Committee discussed and recommended the following enhancements to the Americanism Commission for the Samsung American Legion Scholarship application:

- Remove the required school seal/stamp/notary on the application. The committee recommends removal due to many schools not having this ability, difficulty seeing seal online and after careful consideration of its relevancy.
- Nationally promote the essay answers on the application that are written about what The American Legion’s next focus should be upon.
- Reword the first essay question on the application for more clarity
- Refinement of procedures for breaking tied scores

In order to make more Americans aware that veterans are still serving their nation by serving in the classroom, the Committee is promoting Veterans in the Classroom throughout the nation during the week of Nov. 12-16, which is the National Education Association’s American Education Week. Legionnaires teaching in the classroom, coaching at a school, or are a guidance counselor or principal at a school, will be highlighted on social media channels of our national organization American Education Week.

Program Manager Tyler Mitchell briefed the Committee on his attendance to the annual conference of the National Scholarship Providers Association (NSPA) that was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, October 3-5, 2018. Mitchell reported that the information he learned substantiates that The American Legion is on the right path when it comes to the online application, and the evaluation, accessibility and payout of its scholarships.

**AMERICAN LEGION JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS**

The 4th annual Junior Shooting Sports Chairmen’s Conference was held September 22-23, 2018, at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana. Loren Sperry (WA) served as the Junior Shooting Sports Program Conference chairman. Fourteen departments were represented by either their Junior Shooting Sports chairperson or designee; there were 15 attendees present. Conference topics presented and discussed included: review of risk management policies, Resolution No. 28 NEC May 2018 titled Citizenship, Residency, or Visitor Status for Youth Participation in American Legion Youth Programs at the National Level and Resolution No. 29 NEC May 2018 titled Reasonable Accommodation for Participation in American Legion Youth Programs at the National Level, junior shooting program best practices, and the process for affiliating with the American Legion Junior Shooting Sports program. The junior shooting department chairmen recommended to the Americanism Commission that effective with the 2019-2020 shooting season, shooting clubs wishing to affiliate with The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program do so annually and develop an online affiliate registration process similar to that of The American Legion Baseball program. Currently, there is no affiliate renewal process in place. An online affiliate registration and annual online affiliate renewal will allow department junior shooting sports chairmen immediate access to up-to-date club information for more effective communications.
The Departments of Georgia and Illinois each received congratulations for precision shooter Jared Eddy (GA) and sporter shooter Bailey Hoenig (IL) having captured national wins in their respective categories of The American Legion’s Junior 3-Position Air Rifle Championship at the Olympic Training Center’s USA Shooting Range in Colorado Springs, Colorado, this past July.

**AMERICAN LEGION ORATORICAL**

The 49th annual conference of American Legion Oratorical department chairmen was held September 29-30, 2018, as a conference session of the annual national combined Americanism Conference. David King (KY) served as conference chairman. This conference segment shared information, did an in-depth review of “Back to our Oratorical Basics”, and provided networking opportunities for 51 department oratorical chairmen and Legion family representatives of 36 departments.

The American Legion Oratorical department chairmen gave discussion to four resolutions regarding the American Legion Oratorical program. The chairman voted to recommend to the Americanism Commission rejection of the following three resolutions: **Resolution No. 32 (MS) Proposed Changed To The Oratorical National Finals; Resolution No. 81 (NY) Change Date Of Oratorical National Finals To May; and Resolution No. 83 (NY) Increase Amounts of Scholarships Awarded Winners Of National Oratorical Contest.** The Oratorical department chairmen also gave in-depth discussion to **Resolution No. 82 (NY) Proposed Change to the Oratorical Contest National Finals** that proposes a format change to the semi-final advancement of contestants and offers two proposals for changing the scholarship award structure, and because it was felt there are aspects of this proposed resolution that merits deeper assessment, the chairmen voted to recommend to the Americanism Commission holding this resolution for further study.

**DEPARTMENT CHAPLAINS**

The annual national department chaplain’s conference was held September 22-23, 2018, at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana. National Chaplain Fr. Philip Salois (MA) led the conference segment. Thirty-nine chaplains of the American Legion Family were in attendance.

Chaplain (CPT) Alex Beane, Indiana Army National Guard, provided an excellent lecture on Moral Injury, how it differs from PTSD, as well as how chaplains can provide assistance to those afflicted.

The conference also discussed Chaplains as Recruiters and how by building relationships with reserve component units, the interests of unit family readiness groups (FRGs) and deploying / returning service-members can be served, and the bonds of esprit de corps can be developed which may in turn grow into membership in the future.

The department chaplains discussed other areas of improvement, a need to include new department chaplain training at all future conferences, as well as continuing professional and ecumenical development for existing chaplains.

**SCOUTING**

The annual department Scouting chairmen’s conference this year will be a phone conference on Thursday, 15 November, 2018.

The Commission reviewed the upcoming organizational changes that the Boy Scouts of America announced last Spring would be effective on February 1st, 2019. Due to uncertainty as to what those changes meant, the Americanism Commission invited a representative from the Boy Scouts of America National Headquarters to the National Convention of The American Legion in Minneapolis to discuss in detail. The Boy Scout organization reported that the changes primarily center upon changing the name of their youth program currently called “Boy Scouts” to “Scout BSA” (there will not be a name change to the organization) and the inclusion of girls into membership of its Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA programs. Beginning in 2018, families already began choosing Cub Scouts
for their sons and daughters who are 5- to 10-years of age. On February 1st, 2019, Scouts BSA will be the program available for older boys and girls ages 11 to 17, and allow all participants opportunity to earn the highest rank of Eagle Scout. Cub dens and Scout troops will be single gender. Groups of Cub dens come together to form a larger unit called a Cub pack - a pack may be comprised of all girl dens, all boy dens or may have a combination. Scout troops will be single gender. All boy-troops or all girl-troops may maintain a separate troop committee, or may be “linked troops” under a single troop committee. The Boy Scout organization’s youth programs of Venturing, Sea Scouts and Exploring will continue to serve both boys and girls, just as they have for many decades. The Boy Scout organization will continue to offer quality leadership, character and citizenship development to all youth participating in all of its programs.

The Americanism Commission moved to recommend that The American Legion maintain its enduring bond and relationship with the Boy Scouts of America that was forged between the two organizations nearly 100 years ago. The Americanism Commission noted that given the Boy Scout oath calls “to do duty to God and my country” and the Boy Scout Law states that as a person “a Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent”, it was a natural back in 1919 for the Boy Scouts of America to be the first youth activity officially recognized by Legionnaires, and it remains natural yet today as both organizations still closely align in the goal of developing youth who are of responsible character and citizenship. The Americanism Commission will seek to formally update resolutions and reaffirm the 100-year relationship between The American Legion and the Boy Scouts of America at the 2019 Spring meetings.

RESOLUTIONS
At the meeting of the Americanism Commission held at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 15-16, 2018, a total of eleven resolutions were given consideration.

The following resolutions were recommended for approval by the Americanism Commission, and forwarded to the Finance Commission for consideration and concurrence:

- Modification of Agreement for Permanent Site of The American Legion Baseball World Series
  The Americanism Commission forwarded the following resolutions to the National Executive Committee Subcommittee on Resolutions, with recommendation for approval:

- Honoring the National Motto of “In God We Trust”
  Recommendations for the remaining nine resolutions are detailed on Addendum A attached. The commission further recommends the dates for Americanism programs and conferences as outlined on Addendum B attached to this report.

Addendum A

Held for Further Study
Resolution No. 12 (CO) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Constitution Day
Resolution No. 13 (CO) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Remove Expected Family Contribution From Legacy Scholarship Application
Resolution No. 19 (CT) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Girl Scouts Of America As An Official Program Of The American Legion
Resolution No. 20 (CT) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Support A Relationship With Joe Foss Institute
Resolution No. 82 (NY) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Proposed Change To The Oratorical Contest National Finals
Rejected
Resolution No. 27 (TX) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Recruitment of American Legion Baseball Players
Resolution No. 32 (MS) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Proposed Change To The Oratorical Contest National Finals
Resolution No. 81 (NY) (2018 Natl. Conv.): Change Date Of Oratorical National Finals To May

Addendum B

The Americanism Commission recommends the following dates for the events/meetings from our report, presented to the body for disposition.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MEETING DATE</th>
<th>EVENT/MEETING</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 17-18, 2018</td>
<td>Scouting Chairman’s (Phone) Conference</td>
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<td>Scout Chairman’s Conference</td>
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RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of the Americanism Commission with the exception of one resolution, Addendum A, and Addendum B. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the Americanism Commission with the exception of one resolution, and Addendum A and B. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 9: Honoring the National Motto of “In God We Trust”
Origin: Americanism Commission
Submitted By: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The Preamble to our American Legion’s Constitution begins with the sentence, “For God and Country”; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has always begun all official meetings with a prayer and closed them with a benediction; and

WHEREAS, Through the history of our nation, there are numerous references to biblical quotations throughout our federal government buildings including the White House, Senate Chamber, House Chamber, Supreme Court and every state in the union can attest to the same in their respective buildings; and

WHEREAS, An act of Congress on April 22, 1864, formally put the motto on coins, having first appeared on the short lived two cent bronze piece coined in May 1864; and

WHEREAS, By 1866, “In God We Trust” was appearing on the $5, $10 and $20 dollar gold pieces, the 5 cent piece, the 25 cent piece, the 50 cent piece and the dollar silver piece; and

WHEREAS, In 1955, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed into law specifying “that at such a time as new dies for printing currency are adopted, the dies shall bear the inscription “In God We Trust” and thereafter the inscription shall appear on all United States currency and coins”; and

WHEREAS, On July 30th, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed Public Law 84-851 codifying “In God We Trust” as the national motto; and

WHEREAS, In 2002, Public Law 107–293 reaffirmed the reference to “one Nation under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance and that God remains in our motto as codified in title 36 United States Code § 302; and
WHEREAS, The founding fathers based their way of life on religious convictions; and
WHEREAS, There is an old adage that soldiers knew which states “There are no atheists in a fox hole”; and
WHEREAS, Throughout our nation’s history where we experienced a declaration of war, a conflict or tragedy or national disaster, every leader’s speech has referenced “God” in making their address; and
WHEREAS, In this day and age with its seemingly ever increasing senseless acts having no real rationale, we need to recognize the importance of keeping and honoring “In God We Trust” in our lives from birth to death; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion honor July 30 each year as National Motto Day, upon which special attention is called to the history and heritage of “In God We Trust”; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support the honoring of our nation’s motto by encouraging the posting of “In God We Trust” as our national motto in public spaces; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 290 of the 98th National Convention of The American Legion, Cincinnati, Ohio, August 30, 31, September 1, 2016, is hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER FLOREZ: Resolution No. 9 has approval of the Americanism Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its approval. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 9. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion approved.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER FLOREZ: Commander, attached to the report is Addendum A and B. I move the actions of the Americanism Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion that the actions of the Americanism Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion approved. At this time, I will accept any contributions to Operations Comfort Warriors, to our Veterans and Children Foundation fund, and any other contributions to be made.

...National Vice Commander Spedaliere assumed the chair.

Operation Comfort Warriors Donations

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Commander, for the new fund, the Veterans and Children Foundation fund, Massachusetts would like to offer this envelope for $5,000; a check will be in the mail. (Laughter and applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Department of Massachusetts.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KOUTZ: Commander, first I want to thank Dan Ludwig. It's going to cost me $100 out of my pocket, but he found a check on the floor, so I got it back. But I want to thank everybody who is still working for Operation Comfort Warriors, thanks so much that you do. Indiana's doing a great job. Since the national convention we’ve got some donations here.

The first one is from the Wabash Correctional Facility from the inmate fund. We have posts in almost every prison in Indiana, and most of them work for Operation Comfort Warriors, they raise money for us. The first check is for $664, the second check from Wabash Correctional Facility is $337, for a total of $1,001. Got a donation from Kevin Hinton for $100; David and Linda Sharber from Mt. Vernon for $115. American Legion Riders Post 500, we just had their Zack's Ride, the tenth year for this. This year they raised
$13,407. Our department commander over here, his post had their first blues fest, first annual. Next year they're going to have a bigger and better. Rodney Strong, it's Byron Cox Post 72. The first check is for $7,150, and the second check is for $1,200, for a total from that blues fest, $8,350. So the total today from Indiana, $22,973. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Department of Indiana.

NEC MEMBER LAWRENCE WADE (PI): Lawrence Wade, NECman from Department of Philippines. A $500 check for Operation Comfort Warriors. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you.

NEC MEMBER JUDITH BEISCHEL (AZ): Commander, my Unit 58 was a little late for convention so they sent me $500 for the Legacy Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Judy. Paul?

ALTERNATE NEC MEMBER PAUL ESPINOZA (NM): Paul Espinoza, alternate NEC for the Department of New Mexico. An event we did at the American Legion Post 13, Department of New Mexico, for Operation Comfort Warriors, $600. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you very much.

NEC MEMBER GEORGE ROUNDTREE (DC): NEC George Roundtree, Department of DC. A check for $200, OCW. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you very much.

...National Commander Reistad resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: The chair now recognizes Daniel S. Wheeler from Virginia, national adjutant, for the purposes of announcements.

**Announcements**

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: If you are a new member of the NEC or a member of the NEC who wishes to have his photo retaken, please stop at the lounge outside on your left before you exit the building. Also I'll announce once more: The reception starts this evening at 5:00 in the Circle Suites, lower level of the hotel. If you're invited to some other reception, you will have been properly notified. Dinner starts at 6:15. And we convene tomorrow morning at 8:30.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Please join me in saluting the colors of our country by the numbers: One, two. We are now in recess.

...At 2:23 p.m., Wednesday, October 17, 2018, the National Executive Committee recessed, to reconvene at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, October 18, 2018.
At 8:30 a.m., the National Executive Committee reconvened, National Commander Reistad presiding.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I call this meeting of the National Executive Committee to order. Please join me in a salute to the colors of our country by the numbers: One, two. I now call on Father Philip Salois, the national chaplain from Massachusetts, for the invocation. Please uncover.

Invocation
Father Philip G. Salois, Massachusetts, National Chaplain

Heavenly Father, we give You thanks for the gift of this new day. As we prepare to finish up the business at hand, we ask You to send Your blessing upon every member in this room, all the National Executive Committee people. We ask You to also bless our voyage, our travels back home, whether it's by air or by car, that we may arrive safely back to our loved ones and our families. And we also remember all of our men and women in uniform who are serving our nation in very dangerous places, as in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. Bless them, protect them, safeguard them from all harm, and bring them home to their loved ones. And now let's have a moment of silence for our POWs and MIAs, those who are yet unaccounted for.

...The National Executive Committee observed a moment of silence.

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN SALOIS: Amen.

Pledge of Allegiance
Willie Ransom, Virginia, National Sergeant-at-Arms

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Please remain uncovered. I call on National Sergeant-at-Arms Willie Ransom from Virginia to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS RANSOM: Ladies and gentlemen, join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our country.

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I now call on National Adjutant Daniel Wheeler for roll call.

Roll Call
National Officers

National Commander
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia

National Adjutant
Daniel S. Wheeler, Virginia

National Vice Commanders
Paul I. Spedaliere, Connecticut
James E. Wallace, Michigan
James E. Pisa, Alaska
John F. Milburn, Maryland
Steve Sweet, Mississippi
Past National Commanders

Clarence M. Bacon, Maryland (Excused)  Thomas L. Bock, Colorado
John P. 'Jake' Comer, Massachusetts  Paul A. Morin, Massachusetts
Miles S. Epling, West Virginia (Excused)  Martin F. Conatser, Illinois
Robert S. Turner, Georgia  Robert W. Spanogle, Michigan
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, Pennsylvania (Excused)  David K. Rehein, Iowa
Bruce Thiesen, California (Excused)  Clarence E. Hill, Florida
William M. Detweiler, Louisiana (Excused)  Jimmie L. Foster, Alaska
Daniel A. Ludwig, Minnesota  Fang A. Wong, New York
Joseph J. Frank, Missouri (Excused)  James E. Koutz, Indiana
Anthony G. Jordan, Maine  Daniel M. Dellinger, Virginia
Butch L. Miller, Virginia  Michael D. Helm, Nebraska
Hon. Alan G. Lance, Sr., Idaho (Excused)  Harold D. Barnett, Georgia
Richard J. Santos, Maryland  Charles E. Schmidt, Oregon
Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania  Denise H. Rohan, Wisconsin
Hon. John A. Brieden, III, Texas

National Executive Committeemen

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New York        Edward Bertrand
North Carolina  Jeff W. Joyner
North Dakota    Robert L. Krause
Ohio            Robert M. Klostermeier
Oklahoma        Timothy W. Smith
Oregon          Robert D. Liebenow
Pennsylvania    Dennis C. Haas
Philippines     Lawrence E. Wade
Puerto Rico     Angel O. Narvaez-Negron
Rhode Island    Cory D. Bates
South Carolina  Michael D. Strauss
South Dakota    James Huls
Tennessee       Don E. Mathis
Texas           C. W. Sparks, Jr.
Utah            Terry D. Schow (Excused) Richard G. Fisher
Vermont         Marlys A. Lemnah
Virginia        Michael F. Mitrione
Washington      Ken C. Lee
West Virginia   William W. Kile
Wisconsin       Robert L. Shappell
Wyoming         Terry E. Miller

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: That completes the roll call.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Adjutant Wheeler. I have several items of business I want to take care of this morning before we get back to the committee reports. The first is, I would like to revisit my appointments to the IT Oversight Committee.

At this time I'm requesting that Mr. Warnken amend his motion previously adopted to now read that the members of the committee are: Gaither M. Keener, Jr., of North Carolina, chairman; David O. Warnken, Kansas, vice chairman. Members: Paul A. Evenson, South Dakota; James M. Rohan, Wisconsin; Reverend Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion to amend those appointments as read. ....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and second to amend the appointments as read. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed. I would also like to revisit my appointments to the Foreign Departments and Outlying Posts Study Committee.

At this time I'm requesting that Mr. Warnken amend his motion previously adopted to now read that the members of the committee are Robert E. Newman of Indiana, chairman; George V. West, New Hampshire, vice chairman. Members: Jimmie L. Foster, Alaska; Douglas C. Haggan, France; William M. Detweiler, Louisiana; E.C. Toppin, North Carolina.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I amend my motion to reflect the new appointments to that committee. ....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion to amend the appointments to that committee. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

One last thing. We come here to Indianapolis for these meetings at least twice a year. In the process, we shop locally, we eat locally, we have a lot of contact with the people in the downtown Indianapolis area, and we don't give much consideration to the impact that we have, both through our generosity and our patriotism. Last night, after the presentation of the entertainment that we had after dinner, a check was presented to us for The American Legion Charities in the amount of $100. And if any of you recall the bartender downstairs, tall fellow with a goatee, his name is Martin. Martin probably doesn't make a heck a lot of
money, but Martin has indicated to us through his check how much he appreciates what we do. And apparently, he had an opportunity to see part of the presentation last night and was very moved by it and, as a result, gave us $100 to The American Legion Charities. I just wanted to pass that along to you. I just so happened this morning to have breakfast at the Hilton, and he's working there as well, so we know he's a hard-working guy and we see him often. So if you happen to see him again, let him know how much we appreciate it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

With that, we'll move into the remainder of the commission reports. The chair recognizes Randall A. Fisher of Kentucky, chairman of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission.

**Oral Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission**  
**Randall A. Fisher, Kentucky, Chairman**

Commander, NEC, past national commanders, staff and guests. I don't have any paperwork, commander. *(Laughter)*

Mike Schlee will surely be missed. I was on the Foreign Relations Commission with him. He's an excellent person, dedicated Legionnaire, and really fine person. We are surely going to miss him very much.

I'd like to introduce my director, Joe Sharpe, Mark Walker, Jasmine, Ariel, you do a heck of a job. Since convention, they participated in 20 jobs fairs just since August. They're spread out, they do a lot of work, homeless programs, GI Bill. They do a very good job there in Washington, DC with all the resolutions and the things they have to do. They network with the companies, they have them come in for the job fairs. *(Applause)*

We all wear different hats; it seems like all the commissions overlap. There's some overlap there. We do a lot of different things for our veterans. I'm retired as an American Legion service officer, so I still go to the hospital on Fridays and will see about 40 to 65 veterans in about five hours. We do it to assist with eligibility, help them with GI loans, working program, homeless program.

Lexington is a two-division hospital and they have a treatment program on site, and they treat the veteran there for any kind of substance abuse or any medical problems. And then we put them out in a high-rise in the community and the Legion helps pay for their deposit on the apartments. We do an excellent job, everyone does. State, national, post, county, I commend you on the job you all do. The NEC, you never stop serving.

I had a veteran call me. I did a claim for him a couple of years ago. When he calls me, he always says, "It's two CDs." So I did a claim for him. He lost his job, went through all his unemployment and his 401(k); couldn't find a job. He's like 59. He came to me to file a claim and he needed some denture work. I said, "Well, the VA won't do that, but I have a retired dentist, chief of dentistry that just retired and he runs a clinic, but it goes on income." So I'm filling the form out for him. For income, and I said, "No social security, no pension." I went down to the CDs, and before I put the "none" in there, he says, "I got two CDs." And I said, well, this guy lied to me, he's got some money. So before he could ask him he said, "It's Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty." *(Laughter)*

That was his answer; you never know. But we continue serving, all of us do. Like I say, we wear our different caps and take care of our veterans and their families and everything.

We have nine resolutions. One of them was rejected administratively. We have eight that's going to come up, one briefly that I'll talk about and that's transferability. That's our GI Bill that we had President Trump on stage last year sign that in. It was a great GI Bill for life.

Now the DoD has come in and said that they want to change it for retention purposes and people transition out. Mike Schlee gave the numbers yesterday for 2017, but we haven't gotten the numbers for 2018, and we've been pressing them. None of the VSOs have.

I asked them how this part of the transferability--if you've been in your first enlistment up to 16 years, you can transfer your GI Bill to your wife or your children or whatever. But
the disabled veterans are not even included in that, they're taken out of it completely. Anybody in that board, we're totally, totally against this, changing that GI Bill. You know, what difference did it make? Once you get to 16 years, you can't transfer that, no matter how many more years you'd stay. It just doesn't make sense how this would affect retention and enlistment into the military services. I know they're down for 2017, not by much, all the branches are, including National Guard and reserves. But the staff are working on that. There's a resolution in your packet. I won't go over any of that at all.

I want to thank everyone again, the NEC, the Legion, past national commanders, all the work that you guys do to take care of our veterans. It's a pleasure to serve on this commission, and that concludes my report.

Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Randall A. Fisher, Kentucky, Chairman
October 15, 2018

The National Veterans Employment & Education Commission met on October 15, 2018, at the Sheraton in Indianapolis, Indiana, for the purpose of considering those matters that had previously been referred for study, and to discuss a range of other current matters.

Presiding: Randall A. Fisher (KY), Chairman
Also in attendance were:
The staff member present was Joseph C. Sharpe, Jr. (DC), Director for the National Veterans Employment & Education Division, James Fratolillo, Chairman, Employment & Veterans’ Preference Committee, Dennis Tipsword, Vice Chairman, Veterans Employment & Education Commission and Eric Measles, Chairman, Veterans Education, Other Benefits and Homelessness Committee.

MATTERS RECEIVED, CONSIDERED AND ACTED UPON BY THE COMMISSION:

Resolutions

Your Subcommittee considered nine (9) resolutions. One (1) was referred from the 2018 Spring National Executive Committee, which has been disposed of administratively and eight (8) from the Veterans Employment & Education Commission have been forwarded to the National Executive Committee for approval.

The Commission then discussed the following issues:

Licensing and Certification

The American Legion has a long history of advocacy on behalf of increased civilian credentialing opportunities for servicemembers and veterans, based on our longstanding conviction that this promotes the professionalization of the military force and enhances the prospects for veterans to make a seamless transition from the military to the civilian workforce. We conducted the first systematic study in this area in the mid-1990s, and since then have undertaken numerous initiatives to further facilitate the credentialing of servicemembers and veterans. This includes numerous credentialing roundtables held over the past ten years as well as two highly successful National Credentialing Summits held in 2012 and 2015. Legion staff members have also served on advisory committees, we have worked closely with Congressional leaders and staff to promote legislation that will facilitate the ability of servicemembers and veterans to attain civilian credentials, and we have informed numerous White House initiatives on credentialing.

One of the most compelling takeaways from our work in this area has been that facilitating the credentialing of servicemembers and veterans is a complex issue that involves a multitude of stakeholders. We’ve worked to bring order to this multifaceted issue by convening key groups of stakeholders, and coordinating the development of
strategies to overcome the unique barriers to credentialing faced by those whose primary occupational training is gained during military service. Significant progress has been produced by the commendable efforts exerted by a variety of stakeholders. Consequently, The American Legion established a Credentialing Executive Task Force. The mission of the Task Force is to promote the transferability of military skills and experience by bring together key stakeholders to identify strategies and promote initiatives that will expand upon progress and promote wider awareness in the fields of licensing, certifications, and credentialing. The meeting centered on topics listed below:

- State Licensing and Regulation Issues
- Ensuring the Quality of Credentials
- Employer and Labor Union Initiatives to Support Credentialing of Servicemembers and Veterans
- Future Summit Planning

Participants included representatives from the Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Labor’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS), Teamsters, Institute of Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University, Credential Engine, Pearson VUE, Colorado State University – Global Campus, Helmets to Hardhats, U.S. Coast Guard, FASTPORT, Microsoft, Solid LLC., Uniformed Services University, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Soldier for Life, JobPath, American Council on Education (ACE), and Emory-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Cooperation among The American Legion, state governments, private sector employers, institutions of higher learning and the federal government have been crucial to effect the necessary changes in policies and practices to fully recognize the education, training, and experience provided to transitioning veterans. The American Legion will continue to work with the White House, National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, government agencies such as the departments of Defense, Transportation, Energy, Labor, and others, as well as congressional representatives, military training commands, credentialing boards and the private sectors.

Small Business

The American Legion views small business as the backbone of the American economy. It is the mobilizing force behind America’s past economic growth and has given the United States a competitive advantage in the global economy. Small business development will continue to be a major factor in our nation’s economic and national security well-being as we move further into the 21st Century. Reports show that small businesses have generated 65 percent of net new jobs over the past 25 years, and 67 percent following the 2009 recession. Furthermore, there are nearly 28 million small businesses in the U.S. and 99.7 percent of all firms are small businesses. Listed below are several facts regarding veteran business owners according to the Small Business Administration (SBA):

- Veterans are 45 percent more likely to be self-employed
- According to the U.S. census, about 2.4 million, or 1 out of 10 of all U.S. small businesses are veteran-owned
- Veteran-owned small businesses generate over $1.2 trillion in receipts

The American Legion recognizes the benefits of American entrepreneurship, not only for the overall American economy but also for the transitioning servicemember seeking to develop their own business and becoming local job-creators. The American Legion knows that giving veterans the resources they need to start businesses will assist in stimulating the nation’s economic recovery. Veterans, when compared to their civilian counterparts, are more successful at creating a lasting small business. Encouraging and supporting veterans is the first step to recovering from a near 40-year low in entrepreneurship in the United States.

Many veterans channel the skills and leadership ability they develop in the military to starting a business. Having served in the military, there are a fair amount of resources one
can take advantage of when establishing a business. Listed below are a few of these resources:

- Small Business Administration (SBA) Veterans Advantage Loan Program
- SBA Operation Boots to Business Training Program
- Women Veterans Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE)
- Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV)
- The Bunker – Startup Incubator

Furthermore, the federal government is the nation’s largest purchaser or goods and services, and many federal agencies contract with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs). The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized under the Veterans First Program to enter into contracts first with SDVOSBs and then with Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs), but Congress has made findings that VA has entered into contracts pursuant to the Veterans First Contracting Program with companies that were not legitimate SDVOSBs or VOSBs. The American Legion supports the following objectives:

- Verification improvements for veterans’ business within the VA. In the interim we still expect, VA to adopt a more streamlined and efficient standard for verification, but with continued vigilance in investigating fraudulent veteran-owned businesses.
- A universal system of tracking cost savings in VA contracting competitions to ensure the use of standardized contracting procedures. Currently, VA procurement officials measure savings using inconsistent local policies and disorganized templates, leading to inaccurate contracting data and to inefficient and costly procurement results. Under this practice, the VA has misspent billions of dollars due to its negligence and disregard for procurement rules. This is why it is essential to pass legislation streamlining and modernizing VA’s procurement process (i.e., H.R. 2006).
- Legislative and/or administrative proposals that support reasonable set-aside of federal procurements and contracts for businesses owned and operated by veterans. We believe that though the 3 percent SDVOSB contracting goal should be increased to 5 percent.
- Legislative and/or administrative proposals that extends a contracting program similar to Veterans First Program at VA over to the Department of Defense.

Lastly, The American Legion continues to work closely with business leaders and government authorities to help veteran-owned small business and increase the role of veteran-owned businesses in communities around the nation. Veterans are natural entrepreneurs. They are disciplined, goal-oriented self-starters. Accustomed to accountability, they know the value of being decisive and flexible. Leveraging the talents of veterans will promote self-employment and will help stimulate the economy. Veterans know the value of veteran employees better than anyone else, and veteran-owned small businesses are one among the best employers of veterans.

**The American Legion Small Business Task Force**

The American Legion Small Business Task Force sponsored a number of events this year to assist veterans, disabled veterans, Reservists and active-duty military members in obtaining employment, to include starting and growing their own businesses.

- February 28 Washington Conference Boots to Business Workshop
- February 28 Washington Conference Advance Business Workshop
- August 24 National Convention Women-Owned Small Business Conference

During The American Legion’s 100th National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the National Veterans Employment & Education Commission hosted a successful Women Veteran Small Business Summit. The RISE women veterans and
spouses small business conference was held on Friday, August 24, in Minneapolis. The event was held in partnership with The American Legion, the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University and The American Legion Auxiliary. RISE was a one-day exclusive entrepreneurship training event for women veterans, active-duty service women, and women military spouses/life partners. Over the course of the day-long event, over 40 women veterans and spouses were exposed to a strong team of nationally acclaimed speakers, expert instructors, military friendly business resource providers, and successful veteran women and military spouse entrepreneurs, all prepared to assist them explore the lifestyle of an entrepreneur, pathways to small business ownership, and the community of support available to them.

Attendees were able to connect and network with local women veterans and military spouses/life partners who shared the same passion during the network sessions and reception. In addition, attendees were able to network with 10 local and national business resources that were present throughout the day including the Small Business Administration (SBA), Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC), SCORE, AARP, Legion, Auxiliary, and various 7(a) lenders. IVMF also invited successful entrepreneurs in Minnesota and Wisconsin to discuss their path to growing a business. The keynote speech was presented by a local women veteran and confectionary business owner, Christine Lantinen, CEO of the Maude Group.

Breakout sessions were provided so attendees could choose their own track depending on where they were at in business. Kirk McLaren, Founder and CEO, Foresight CFO, hosted a session on the habits of profitability that focused on growth. Lida Citroen, a nationally renowned motivational speaker, provided two sessions, one on self-branding and the other on effective networking. The attendees walked away from the one-day conference with a more robust network of local entrepreneurs they can contact for help and knowledge of local and national small business resources.

**Veteran Homelessness**

Current estimates put the number of homeless veterans at 40,100 on any given night. Since 2009, veteran homelessness has dropped considerably, with 45 percent (or 33,311) fewer veterans experiencing homelessness in 2017 than in 2009. Veteran homelessness decreased both among those in shelters and those found in unsheltered locations. Between 2009 and 2017, the number of unsheltered veterans decreased by 49 percent (14,592 fewer veterans), and by 43 percent (18,719) among those staying in shelters. Three in five homeless veterans (62 percent or 24,690 veterans) were staying in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs, while two in five (38 percent or 15,366 veterans) were found in places not suitable for human habitation. Almost all veterans were experiencing homelessness in households without children (98 percent or 39,101 veterans). About 2 percent (955) were veterans who were homeless as part of a family.

The number of veterans experiencing homelessness increased by 585 people between 2016 and 2017. This 2016-2017 increase was driven entirely by an 18 percent increase in the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in unsheltered places (2,299 more veterans). Partly offsetting the increase in sheltered veterans, the number of sheltered veterans decreased by 1,747 people (or 7 percent). In three states, more than half of all veterans experiencing homelessness were unsheltered. Those states were: California (67 percent), Hawaii (62 percent) and Oregon (53 percent). While homelessness among veterans increased nationwide between 2016 and 2017, veteran homelessness decreased in 36 states and the District of Columbia.

Rental assistance and support services provided through HUD-VASH are a critical resource for local communities in ending homelessness among our nation’s veterans. The HUD-VASH program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for veterans experiencing homelessness provided by HUD with case management and clinical services provided by VA. At the local level, the HUD-VASH program operates as a collaborative effort between VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) and local Public Housing
Agencies (PHAs). The VAMC identifies veterans who are eligible for the program and refers them to the PHA to receive a HUD-VASH voucher. The PHA provides the rental subsidy, and the VAMC provides case management and clinical services. Since 2008, more than 93,000 vouchers have been awarded.

On August 28, 2018, during The American Legion’s 100th National Convention in Minneapolis, the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) opened its door to the Legion by giving us a briefing and tour of their facilities that house homeless veterans. On the site visit, the commission members met veterans and the organization’s leadership team. Started in 1993, MACV operates 12 facilities in the Minneapolis area and also has offices in Mankato and Duluth, Minnesota. Their facilities range from Building 47 located on the Minneapolis Department of Veterans Medical Center campus, which houses 13 veterans and provides counseling and rehabilitation services, to homes located in Minneapolis neighborhoods that provides shared housing for veterans and smaller houses for veterans with dependents. MACV is a nonprofit organization that has been serving veterans and their families who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless across the state of Minnesota for over 25 years. MACV’s mission is to end veteran homelessness by providing housing, employment and legal services. Through MACV’s efforts, Minnesota has reduced veteran homelessness by 57 percent since 2010, which is well above the national average.

Due to our work with homeless veterans and their families, The American Legion understands that homeless veterans need a sustained coordinated effort that provides secure housing and nutritious meals; essential physical healthcare, substance abuse aftercare and mental health counseling; as well as personal development and empowerment. Veterans also need job assessment, training and placement assistance. The American Legion believes all programs to assist homeless veterans must focus on helping veterans reach their highest level of self-management.

Lastly, The American Legion directly provides housing for homeless veterans and their families, including facilities in Pennsylvania and Connecticut. One of the goals of The American Legion is to help bring federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based institutions and other stakeholders to the table to discuss best practices, along with funding opportunities, so homeless veterans and their families can obtain the necessary care and help in order for them to properly transition from the streets and shelters into gainful employment and/or independent living.

Employment

The current rate of unemployment in the United States is 3.7 percent. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans is 3.9 percent. The total number of unemployed veterans from the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is approximately 131,000, with a total of 320,000 unemployed veterans from all eras. The American Legion has been hosting and participating in Job Fairs since 2007. The main purpose of participation in these Job Fairs is to educate veterans of their benefits, provide veterans outlets for employment and promote The American Legion.

The American Legion participates in approximately 100 Job Fairs a year through our national partnerships. A Hiring Our Heroes Hiring Event was held on Tuesday, August 28, during the National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This event was sponsored by U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, along with The American Legion Department of Minnesota. 34 employers and a total of approximately 40 registered jobseekers attended this event. Based upon the exit surveys, 158 resumes were exchanged, 20 interviews were conducted on-site, and there were 24 tentative job offers made. Prior to the Career Fair, a financial literacy class was hosted by Transamerica Corporation; resume review by the U.S. Chamber; and drafting resumes by our own, director of human resources, Rodney Rolland.

In addition, The American Legion has collaborated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC), Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Labor, Veterans’
Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS), Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), various State Workforce Agencies and various corporate sponsors, in hosting numerous veteran specific Job Fairs across the nation. The ‘Hiring our Heroes’ Initiative seeks to lower the unemployment rate amongst our nation’s veterans by bringing Job Fairs to many of the nation’s underserved communities.

In less than five years, Hiring Our Heroes -- a joint initiative of The American Legion and USCC -- has helped more than 31,000 veterans, servicemembers, and military spouses nationwide find jobs. USCC has hosted over 100 hiring events at Legion Posts and partnered with the Legion on more than 250 others. These events have resulted in 15 percent of all veterans being employed. The American Legion is scheduled to participate in 20 more Career Fairs by the end of the year. Currently, The American Legion is strategizing with USCC staff to identify where the best states and cities are for these events. The location of these events occurring in 2019 will be based upon individual state unemployment rates and places where there are substantial veteran populations. Listed below are the veteran jobseeker demographics:

- 11.1% of the veterans who attended our Hiring Fairs are student-veterans about to graduate
- 55.8% are under 24 years old
- 92% are enlisted and 8 percent are officer
- 82% have been employed for under one-year
- 18% have been employed for over one-year
- 34% reported some college (15% reported a bachelor’s degree and 2% reported a master’s degree or higher)

Several Department Highlights:

- **Department of Illinois** – held 1 Job Fair affiliated with the DOL
- **Department of New Jersey** – held 2 Job Fairs
- **Department of New Mexico** – held 1 Job Fair affiliated with the Department of New Mexico
- **Department of Puerto Rico** – held 1 Job Fair with headquarters assistance
- **Department of Texas** – held 1 Job Fair affiliated with DOL, 1 during the state convention, 1 during Fall Conference
- **Department of Virginia** – held 1 Job Fair in conjunction with their state convention, affiliated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Furthermore, the unemployment rate for veterans who served on active-duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time since September 2001 – a group referred to as Gulf War-era II veterans – edged down to 4.5 percent in 2017, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. The jobless rate for all veterans also edged down over the year to 3.7 percent. About 41 percent of Gulf War-era II veterans had a service-connected disability in August 2017, compared with 24 percent of all veterans.

**Highlights from the 2017 data:**

- The unemployment rate for male veterans (3.6 percent) declined over the year, and the rate for female veterans (4.1 percent) changed little in 2017. The unemployment rate for male veterans was not statistically different from the rate for female veterans.
- Among the 370,000 unemployed veterans in 2017, 59 percent were age 25 to 54, 37 percent were 55 and over, and 4 percent were 18 to 24.
- Veterans with a service-connected disability had an unemployment rate of 4.3 percent in August 2017, little different from veterans with no disability (4.5 percent).
- Nearly 1 in 3 employed veterans with a service-connected disability worked in the public sector in August 2017, compared with about 1 in 5 veterans with no disability.
- In 2017, the unemployment rate for veterans varied across the country, ranging from 1.7 percent in Maine and Vermont to 7.3 percent in Rhode Island.
Additionally, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division has established a new relationship with JobZone. JobZone is a Career Fair organization that caters to active-duty, veterans, National Guard and Reservists. All of the Career Fairs are held on military installations or just outside these installations. JobZone operates within the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

Education

On August 7, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division held a meeting at the Washington, DC, headquarters office, to discuss the Department of Education’s rule changes to Borrower Defense and Gainful Employment. A representative from Veterans Education Success, who served as a negotiator for Groups representing U.S. military servicemembers or veteran Federal student loan borrowers on the Department of Education’s Borrower Defense Negotiated Rulemaking committee explained the proposed changes. The rule was promulgated in the last year of the Obama administration, and provides debt relief to students who have been defrauded by institutions through deceptive, misleading and fraudulent practices. The main contention that Walter pointed to with the new rewrite of the rule is that it requires defrauded students to default on their loans before they are eligible to apply for debt relief.

Our staff member, who served as a negotiator for Groups representing U.S. military servicemembers or veteran Federal student loan borrowers on the Department of Education’s Gainful Employment Negotiated Rulemaking committee explained the proposed changes. The gainful employment rule, promulgated in 2011 and revised in 2014 has two components: (1) to mandate institutions provide prospective students information on outcomes before they enroll, such as graduation rates and job placement rates; and (2) to demonstrate that their graduates earn enough to adequately repay their loans by meeting a certain debt-to-income ratio for students who have graduated from each of their programs. The main contention with the rewrite is its elimination of any sanctions associated with programs that fail a debt-to-income ratio.

In summarizing both of these issues, it was agreed upon by the stakeholders that the trend of the Department of Education neglecting the concerns of veterans groups was troubling. Moving forward it was agreed that updates on these rules would be shared.

Furthermore, GI Bill transferability was a topic at the meeting. Our staff member provided a briefing on the Department of Defense revisions announced this July. DOD’s revisions to the policy limits GI Bill transferability to servicemembers who’ve served less than 16 years regardless of how many more years they commit to serving. Additionally, a provision within the policy that would allow med boarding servicemembers to be eligible for transferability was also removed. DOD’s public statement on this was “After a thorough review of the policy, we saw a need to focus on retention in a time of increased growth of the armed forces”.

It is difficult to articulate a rational case for how prohibiting servicemembers from applying for transferability benefits ultimately helps the military. While DOD was pressed to provide a more coherent explanation, their response in a private email reinforced the first statement’s ambiguity:

It was determined that the greatest need for retention inducements was in the population of servicemembers with fewer than 20 years of service. Given that electing to transfer benefits incurs an additional four year service commitment, the decision was made to establish the cut for transfer eligibility to the 16 year point.

We shared that this response was consistent with a trend in DOD to limit information shared with Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and Military Service Organizations (MSOs). Specifically, DOD has not provided information on its annual accession requirements for recruitment and retention, which have traditionally been shared with

VSOs and MSOs to discuss how they can be supported. What was agreed upon was that the process by which DOD had excluded VSOs and MSOs from this decision set a concerning precedent. Doing so sows confusion amongst not only organizations but among servicemembers who see this as moving the goalpost on transferability for a reason that cannot immediately be reconciled with retention and recruitment.

In summary, it was agreed that The American Legion, other prominent VSOs and MSOs, need to proactively seek information on accession requirements, and express concern for how this transferability came about without proper information or background.

Lastly, because of a software issue, the VA is struggling to pay student-veterans the housing allowance and other benefits provided to them via the GI Bill. The federal agency has paid some veterans too much, too little or nothing at all. It is up to two months late on payments in some cases, forcing potentially thousands of former servicemembers to spiral financially. The VA said the problem currently stems from an IT problem caused by changes to the law when President Trump signed the Forever GI Bill Act last year. New standards for calculating housing stipends were to be implemented on August 1, but it caused “severe critical errors” during testing that “resulted in incorrect payments,” VA stated. As a result, the VA decided to postpone the deployment of the system. It is now paying students under 2017 rates - ignoring the 1 percent increase for 2018 - and plans to reimburse students the difference they are owed at some point in the future. As of now, the agency does not know how many veterans are affected, but expects that 360,000 veterans will have to be paid the 2017 rate.

VA will be “unable to identify the number of veterans solely impacted by delayed payments” until they are able to process every veterans’ enrollment documents. Education Service has placed the Regional Processing Offices in a mandatory overtime status and have 202 temporary employees on hand to assist with the pending inventory. With these measures in place VA should be able to process over 16,000 claims per day. VA’s Office of Information Technology and Veterans Benefits Administration believe the problem could be solved by the end of the year, but many veterans said none of this has been conveyed to them, leaving them directionless. The Veterans Employment & Education Commission contacted VA prior to this problem about making necessary system changes in order for payments to be received in a timely fashion. We’ve met with VA regarding this issue and will continue to provide aggressive advocacy so student-veterans can receive their payments as soon as possible.

**Conclusion**

The National Veterans Employment & Education Commission is fully aware that it would be impossible to carry out its mandates without the active involvement of Posts, Districts, Counties, Departments and individual Legionnaires. We deeply appreciate their continued support and involvement. Chairman Fisher also thanks the National Commander, the National Adjutant, the National Executive Committee, and the staff of both the Washington and Indianapolis offices for the outstanding support and cooperation they have provided during the past year.

**Addendum A**

**Disposed of Administratively**

Resolution No. 15 (2018 Spring NEC): Support for Creation of Department of Veterans Affairs Economic Opportunity Administration

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission with the exception of eight resolutions and one addendum. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There’s a motion and second on the floor to receive and file the report of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission with
the exception of eight resolutions and one addendum. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion passed.

Resolution No. 19: Creation of The American Legion Credentialing Advisory Task Force
Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion’s Veterans Employment & Education Commission purpose is to ensure that America’s veterans have the opportunity to provide, with honor and dignity, the economic necessities of life for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of credentialing servicemembers and veterans is to decrease the unemployment rate, ensure that military training is on par with their civilian counterpart, and guarantee that America can take full advantage of a skilled labor force; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has a long history of advocacy on behalf of increased civilian credentialing opportunities for servicemembers and veterans, based on our longstanding conviction that this promotes the professionalization of the armed forces, while enhancing the prospects of veterans making a seamless transition from the military to the civilian workforce; and

WHEREAS, In keeping with this charge, The American Legion has convened key groups of stakeholders in government, academia, and industry in order to coordinate the development of strategies to overcome the unique barriers to credentialing faced by those whose primary occupational training is gained during military service; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That the Veterans Employment & Education Commission is authorized to establish the Credentialing Advisory Task Force in order to promote the transferability of military skills and experience by bringing together key stakeholders to identify strategies and promote initiatives that will expand upon progress and promote wider awareness in the fields of licensing, certifications, and credentialing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion Credentialing Advisory Task Force shall identify, recommend, and disseminate industry innovations and best practices in facilitating the credentialing of servicemembers and veterans to allow stakeholders to learn from and emulate successful initiatives; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion Credentialing Advisory Task Force become actively involved in initiatives underway to reform the nation’s credentialing system to: (1) stay abreast of civilian credentialing trends to ensure military credentialing policies and programs remain relevant; (2) ensure that the unique needs of servicemembers and veterans are considered; and (3) promote military training and experience as a more widely accepted form of demonstrating competency to perform in the civilian workplace.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: Resolution 19 has the approval of your Veterans Employment & Education Commission and that of our Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 19. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is approved.

Resolution No. 20: Creation of The American Legion Employment Innovation Advisory Task Force
Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion’s Veterans Employment & Education Commission purpose is to ensure that America's veterans have the opportunity to provide,
with honor and dignity, the economic necessities of life for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS, This includes initiating action concerning all matters affecting the economic well-being of veterans and/or the re-establishment of all war veterans returning to civilian life after a period of active service in the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, The Commission may survey, study and recommend solutions on problems relating to employment, unemployment, underemployment, re-employment and workers compensation of all war veterans who seek, or have, attachment to the labor force, public or private; and

WHEREAS, The Commission has convened government, non-governmental organizations, and private companies to bring forward solutions to The American Legion to champion with its federal agency partners for the purpose of enhancing employment opportunities for veterans and transitioning servicemembers; and

WHEREAS, This includes introducing both service delivery, business process, and technology innovations in support of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP); and

WHEREAS, This includes examining all aspects of TAP from résumé writing, financial planning, goal setting, job assessment, interviewing, networking, peer-to-peer support, family transition support, higher education, individual career development plans, entrepreneurship, Department of Veterans Affairs benefits, and other elements of holistic support of veterans ‘for life’ and transitioning servicemembers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That the Veterans Employment & Education Commission establish the Employment Innovation Advisory Task force to focus on employment issues and identify, recommend, and help guide innovative employment solutions for transitioning servicemembers and veterans; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion Employment Innovation Advisory Taskforce outcomes should provide a compelling set of innovations that will, if adopted by Department of Defense and other related agencies, improve the quality and timeliness of services, and relevance and usefulness of Transition Assistance Program that supports transitioning servicemembers and veterans; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion Employment Innovation Advisory Taskforce outcomes should demonstrate increased scalability, efficiency, and reduced costs to deliver these services, while at the same time substantially improving the quality of the ‘for life’ support of veterans.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: Resolution 20 has the approval of your Veterans Employment & Education Commission and that of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move. ...Second

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 20. Is there any discussion? The chair recognizes Past National Commander Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I'm questioning this resolution and the previous resolution. Would that mean that we're establishing two more committees within The American Legion or the VA?

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN FISHER: That would be within The American Legion.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Well, I surely don't feel that we need any more committees in The American Legion. I feel it's hard enough to replace the ones we have. I don't understand why the commission that established these two resolutions can't handle everything that's affected by the resolution. If I had a vote, I'd vote against it.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Is there any more discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? We can't tell. Chairman Fisher, will you please approach the microphone and tell the committee what you intend to do about these two committees, please?
COMMISSION CHAIRMAN FISHER: This was just two committees that was going to be set up to monitor what have been going on with these resolutions, the outcomes. Joe, would you like to add anything else to it?

DIRECTOR SHARPE: Well, we currently have two informal committees. They're made up of various representatives from the four federal agencies that deal with transitioning of veterans, and we have a number of private-sector corporations that are also involved. The goal is to ensure that veterans have a seamless transition as they leave the military. Right now, the four federal agencies that currently have that responsibility are stovepipes, they don't work together, they no longer work with the private sector. And our goal is to make sure that when veterans leave the military, that they're gainfully employed. We've had a number of informal conversations with these particular companies and federal agencies, and it was suggested that we try and formalize it.

Same thing with the education committee that we have. It's an informal task force made up of representatives from the federal government, various schools, various education organizations, to make sure that the credentialing of veterans, when they leave the military, is equivalent to what the private sector is looking for. Again, the goal is to ensure that, when veterans leave the military, that they're gainfully employed and that they are financially secure. We're trying to make sure that the federal agencies, along with the military, are considered a professional organization by those who want to join the military. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Chair recognizes Past National Commander Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Again, we have committees established by the authorization of the National Executive Committee that we have members on committees, such as Americanism. We have subcommittee on baseball, we have a gentleman there from Shelby, North Carolina, who is on as consultant because he's the expertise on that. We have VA&R, we have doctors that are on that committee as consultants, to help with the knowledge as Joe has explained. And same thing with this committee. We have individuals from outside of The American Legion that would bring great knowledge to handle what you want to handle, and they can be brought in as consultants, because there's no limit to the number of consultants we can appoint to any committee. They don't have to be Legionnaires. They can be a consultant on baseball that's a Sons of The American Legion, because of his expertise and the way he handles baseball in his particular state.

My whole argument is that, when you look at the book that you're going to be getting shortly on the appointments, I don't know about you, but in our state, we have trouble finding individuals to make the appointments because of the age of the members of The American Legion. Yes, I know this is on the outside, but I'd rather see them come in as consultants to your committee.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN FISHER: I know we've tried to get information from DoD and the VA, and that was one of the reasons they wanted a task force, someone to come in. But a consultant, as far as I'm concerned, would be just as well imposed to get this information from the VA, DoD, where these guys are after they leave the military, are they employed, are they going to school, are they being taken care of, a follow-up. Yes, ma'am?

NEC MEMBER MARY ERDMAN (AR): Mary Erdman, Department of Arkansas. I just have a question based on what Commander Comer was talking about. Could somebody from your current committee represent The American Legion?

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN FISHER: Yes, they are currently on the committee. They are consultants with the VA and with the DoD.

NEC MEMBER ERDMAN: That's not working?

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN FISHER: No, ma'am. They're not getting the information that they need.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Based upon Chairman Comer's objection to this resolution, I ask for a motion that we table it for further study.
RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that we table Resolution No. 20. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion on the floor to table Resolution No. 20 for further study. Is there any further discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is passed. I would like to entertain a motion to reconsider Resolution No. 19 as previously adopted, to table said motion for further study.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that we table Resolution 19 for further study. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Do you mean to reconsider Resolution 19 as previously adopted and table it for further study?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: My motion is to reconsider as previously adopted and table it for further study.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you for the clarification. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is passed.

Resolution No. 21: Support Reasonable Set-Aside of Federal Procurements and Contracts
Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, Government small business assistance for all honorably discharged veterans dates back to the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944; and

WHEREAS, Veterans have provided selfless military service to America and previous generations of veterans have achieved significant self-employed small business success in America; and

WHEREAS, Present policies and legislation ensure that not all veterans receive the same opportunity to prosper as small business owners, undermining their opportunity to succeed as part of the Department of Defense or government’s supplier base that is central to ensuring America’s success in the War on Terrorism, and America’s success in the international economic systems; and

WHEREAS, Veterans programs should never be at a disadvantage in competing with other government programs established by law; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion will support development and passage of federal, state and local veteran business development legislation to provide assistance to all veterans, to ensure opportunities exist for veterans to start or grow a small business; this includes the expansion and improvement of all entrepreneurship programs, loan programs and numerical goals for all veterans to compete in government procurement; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support legislation ensuring parity for veterans in all state and federal small business programs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 154 approved by the 2016 National Convention titled, Support Reasonable Set-Aside of Federal Procurements and Contracts is hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: Resolution 21 has the approval of your Veterans Employment & Education Commission and that of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 21. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The motion is approved and the resolution is adopted.
Resolution No. 22: Expanding Post-9/11 GI Bill for Student Loan Repayments
Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, Currently, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not possess the statutory or regulatory authority to retroactively apply Post-9/11 GI educational benefits toward a servicemembers student loan debt if such debt was accrued before his/her entrance into the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, According to the 2016 GAO report “Student Loans: Oversight of Servicemembers' Interest Rate Cap Could Be Strengthened" over 200,000 servicemembers collectively owe more than $2.9 billion in student debt, facing risks of loan defaults that may have disruptive consequences upon their release/discharge from active-duty; and

WHEREAS, The Post-9/11 GI Bill is not only a benefit that servicemembers earn, but also a program to recruit and retain America’s best and brightest men and women; consequently, providing loan repayment options for the military to bring in higher educated individuals is a powerful incentive; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion supports legislation that allows veterans that enter military service with pre-existing student loan debt to retroactively apply their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits toward the repayment of their student loans.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: Resolution 22 has the approval of your Veterans Employment & Education Commission and that of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There is a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 22. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The motion is approved, the resolution is adopted.

Resolution No. 23: Close the GI Bill Flight School Loophole
Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, The Post-9/11 GI Bill does not have a cap on tuition and fees allowable for flight training at public institutions of higher learning (IHLs); and

WHEREAS, Some private flight training companies have exploited this loophole by overcharging contract services to IHLs; and

WHEREAS, The absence of firm requirements have resulted in years of fraud, waste, and abuse within flight programs that take advantage of the GI Bill, including reports of schools that have charged over $130,000 on average, and one case where the Department of Veterans Affairs paid over $534,000 in tuition and flight payments for one student; and

WHEREAS, Even specialized aviation education at private aviation universities such as Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University have demonstrated effective and successful flight training and education to veterans under existing flight caps for private IHLs programs; and

WHEREAS, The Post-9/11 GI Bill must remain an honorable and fair investment of public dollars in order to safeguard its existence for future generations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion supports legislation to align the cost of Post-9/11 GI Bill Chapter 33 tuition and fees allowable for flight training at a public institution of higher learning with the existing rate on tuition and fees for private and nonprofit schools; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support legislation that provides veterans the option of accelerated Post-9/11 GI Bill payments in order to afford flexibility to pay for additional flight training; and, be it finally
RESOLVED, That all cost-savings projected by these measures be reallocated to Department of Veterans Affairs education programs.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: This has the approval of your Veterans Employment & Education Commission and that of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 23. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The motion is approved, the resolution is adopted.

Resolution No. 24: Support Funding and Changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs Grant and Per Diem Program
Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, The Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem (GPD) program allows the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to award grants to community-based agencies to create transitional housing programs and offer per diem payments; and
WHEREAS, The purpose of the program is to promote the development and provision of supportive housing and/or supportive services with the goal of helping homeless veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skills levels and/or income, and obtain greater self-management; and
WHEREAS, GPD funded projects offer communities a way to help homeless veterans with housing and services while assisting VA medical centers by augmenting or supplementing care; and
WHEREAS, Many homeless veterans have legal and past financial hardships they must overcome and GPD often serves as a transition point for veterans as they obtain permanent housing; and
WHEREAS, In 2017, more than 14,500 homeless veterans exited GPD to permanent housing. Where the average length-of-stay in GPD was 174 days (lowest since 2009); and
WHEREAS, The most recent data from the VA points to a need for over 12,500 GPD beds nationwide to continue to provide emergency housing and rapid stabilization services to homeless veterans with specialized needs – women veterans, single veterans with dependent children, veterans transitioning out of incarceration, veterans with mild to moderate mental illness, veterans who become homeless due to sudden or worsening economic hardship and loss of employment; and
WHEREAS, The GPD program has proved to be successful in rehabilitation of the veteran in helping him/her to become a productive citizen; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion supports Congress authorizing and making appropriations for the Grant and Per Diem (GPD) program to the level of need demonstrated in communities; and, be it further
RESOLVED, That The American Legion recommends the GPD program be modernized in order to keep pace with the Department of Veterans Affairs goal to end and prevent veteran homelessness; and, be it further
RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports any administrative proposal that will greatly increase the amount of technical assistance available to current and potential GPD providers; and be it finally
RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 325 approved by the 2016 National Convention titled, Support Funding And Changes To VA’s Grant And Per Diem Program is hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: Resolution 24 has the approval of your Veterans Employment & Education Commission and that of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. ...Second.
Resolution No. 25: Support and Expand Apprenticeship Opportunities for Servicemembers

Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, The American workforce is the foundation of our country’s economic competitiveness and prosperity, and significant talent shortages and skill gaps are slowing companies’ efforts to expand, innovate, and thrive; and

WHEREAS, President Trump’s Executive Order No. 13801, June 15, 2017, Expanding Apprenticeships in America, established the policy of the federal government to provide more affordable pathways to secure, high paying jobs by promoting apprenticeships and effective workforce development programs, while easing the regulatory burden on such programs and reducing or eliminating taxpayer support for ineffective workforce development programs; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Labor’s role is to promote the value of apprenticeships, ensure equal access to apprenticeship programs, and provide integrated employment and training information to apprenticeship sponsors and the local employment and training community; and

WHEREAS, Veterans benefit from apprenticeships by receiving a skills-based education that prepares them for meaningful careers; and

WHEREAS, Apprenticeship programs also helps employers recruit and retain a highly-skilled workforce; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense’s United Service Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP) has reached a milestone of 100,000 active participants as of 2017 and continues to expect further enrollment from servicemembers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion supports the Department of Labor’s efforts to promote and expand apprenticeship opportunities across critical sectors, including manufacturing, infrastructure, cybersecurity, and health care, to increase the number of high-quality apprenticeships driven by industry recognized apprenticeship programs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports the growth and expansion of the Department of Defense’s United Services Military Apprenticeship Program.

Resolution No. 26: Eliminate GI Bill Transferability Maximum Year Caps

Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, Since its enactment a decade ago, the Post-9/11 GI Bill has contained a transferability component designed to encourage military retention; and

WHEREAS, Said component has rested upon the premise that a servicemember meet requisite service requirements established by the Department of Defense (DoD) and the service branches, as well as commit to additional time in order to earn the benefit; and

WHEREAS, On July 12, 2018, DoD revised Instruction 1341.13 on transfer of education benefits to explicitly prohibit servicemembers with more than 16 years of total creditable service from applying to transfer Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to their families; and
WHEREAS, DoD proclaimed the change ‘to more closely align the transferability benefit with its purpose as a recruiting and retention incentive’ but has neglected to provide any evidence of how limiting transferability to servicemembers with less than 16 years of service supports DoD’s recruitment and retention requirements; and

WHEREAS, A 16 year cap on transfer of education benefits significantly limits America’s most dedicated servicemembers ability to execute the full economic potential of that benefit in the way that best suits them and their families; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion oppose the Department of Defense July 12, 2018 revisions to Instruction 1341.13 that limits GI Bill transferability to servicemembers with no more than 16 years of service; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support legislation that prohibits any transfer of education benefit limitations based on a maximum number of years of service in the armed forces.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: Resolution 26 has the approval of your Veterans Employment & Education Commission and that of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There’s a motion and a second to adopt Resolution No. 26. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The motion is approved, the resolution is adopted.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER LIEBENOW: Attached to this report is Addendum A. I move that the actions of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There’s a motion and a second that the Veterans Employment & Education Commission report become the actions of the National Executive Committee. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is approved.

The chair now recognizes Frederick Doten of Nevada, the national historian, for the purpose of a report.

Report: National Historian
Frederick S. Doten, Nevada, National Historian

National Commander Reistad, national vice commanders, members of the NEC, past national commanders, fellow Legionnaires and guests, good morning. It is both a privilege and an honor to address you as the national historian of the world’s largest and most respected veterans service organization.

I would like to thank Commander Reistad for this appointment; and I would also like to thank the Legionnaires of Nevada for their confidence by endorsing me for national historian. A special thanks goes out to Past National Commander Dominic DiFrancesco for his support and guidance as I traveled this journey.

As national historian my first task has been to oversee the judging of the department and post yearbook and narrative books for the year of 2017-2018. A special shout-out goes to the Legionnaires who prepared them. They did an outstanding job in preparing their books. They are to be commended on their love for their organization, dedication to this important work, and desire to record the history of their organizations. I would also like to thank the National Association of Department Historians of The American Legion for their service in judging the four contests.

A special thanks goes out to Past National Historian and Past National Vice Commander Fae Casper, for the training provided to attending department historians. This training is essential in their efforts to train post historians and perpetuate future histories within their department.
Finally, I would like to offer a special thanks to Howard Trace and the wonderful library staff, especially Lynda Lydick, for all their help in organizing and coordinating this year’s contest. At this time, I would like to announce the winners of this year’s contest.

**One-Year Department Narrative History Contest are:**
- First Award, Plaque, Department of North Carolina
- Second Award, Plaque, Department of Indiana
- Third Award, Plaque, Department of Colorado
- Honorable Mention, Department of West Virginia
- No Other Participants

**One-Year Department Yearbook History Contest are:**
- First Award, Plaque, Department of North Carolina
- Second Award, Plaque, Department of Nebraska
- Third Award, Plaque, Department of New York
- Honorable Mention, Department of Texas

Certificates of Participation are awarded to Departments:
- Department of South Carolina
- Department of Georgia
- Department of Massachusetts
- Department of Missouri

**One-Year Post Narrative History Contest are:**
- First Award, Plaque, Frierson-Nichols Post 8, Winter Haven, FL
- Second Award, Plaque, Pony Express Post 359, St. Joseph, MO
- Third Award, Plaque, Madelyn LaCanne Post 539, Green Bay, WI
- Honorable Mention, Harold L. Gregory Memorial Post 626, Ft. Worth, TX

Certificates of Participation are awarded to Posts:
- Clayton E. Moneymaker Post 237, Huntsville, AL
- Springfield Post 176, Springfield, VA
- Glen Arden Post 275, Glen Arden, MD
- Carroll Post 143, Carrollton, GA
- Frank B. Bartlett Post 7, Buckhannon, WV

**One-Year Post Yearbook History Contest are:**
- First Award, Plaque, Women Veterans of Southwest Missouri Post 1214, Springfield, MO
- Second Award, Plaque, Warren F. Hoyle Post 82, Shelby, NC
- Third Award, Plaque, Julius L. Shryer Post 430, Durant, IA
- Honorable Mention, Saxton-Willis Post 64, Heber Springs, AR
- Honorable Mention, Brunswick Post 9, Brunswick, GA

Certificates of Participation are awarded to Posts:
- Martin Wallberg Post 3, Westfield, NJ
- Scotts Hill Post 243, Scotts Hill, TN
- Charles S. Hatch Post 79, Berwick, ME
- Mohawk Post 308, Tulsa, OK
- Ibell-Jacobson-Smith Post 61, Deep River, CT
- New Hartford Post 1376, New Hartford, NY
- Codington County Post 17, Watertown, SD
- Earl Graham Post 159, Bryan, TX
- Horry Post 111, Conway, SC
- Bates-O’Brien-Howe-Wiegel-Roelli Post 214, Darlington, WI
- Colonial Heights Post 284, Colonial Heights, VA
- Harry Higgins Post 88, Ashland, OH
- Richard M. Nixon Post 679, Yorba Linda, CA
- Cornville American Legion Post 135, Cornville, AZ
- Adams, Hanna, Moore Post 156, Ellicott City, MD
- Park Post 23, Livingston, MT
The instructors, historians and judges for the contest were:

W. Frazier Brinley (CT); Ruth Higgins (MD); James Fratolillo (MA); Robert Gilmore, Jr. (AZ); Johnny B. Keel (LA); Rex C. McBeene (TN); Dan Watrous (OH); Tommy Hatton (GA); George Boddie (NH); Fae Casper (GA); Deborah Davis (CO); Charemon Dunham (SD); Robin Shingleton (WV); Paul Garrett (IL); Jackie Evonsion (CT); Paul Bennett (MO); Nellie DeBaker (WI); J. F. Woodruff (GA); Lynne Rollins (GA); Richard Dubay (MI); Harold D. Landis (OH); Bill G. Richard (NC); Freddrick Lee (SD); Nelson Blake (MA); Jerome L. Goolsby (MO); Pedro J. Colon-Ayala, Jr. (PR); Hortense Toliaferro (PA)

In closing I would request all here today to carry home to their historians that recording our second 100 years is still a priority that must not be forgotten.

Commander Reistad, this completes my report.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of National Historian Frederick Doten of Nevada, national historian. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to receive the report of the national historian. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is approved.

The chair now recognizes Kevin J. Bartlett of Michigan, national judge advocate, to address the eligibility of national officers.

Eligibility of National Officers

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: In accordance with the action of the May 9 through 10, 2018 meeting of the National Executive Committee held in Indianapolis, Indiana, copies of DD-214s or proof of discharge from the U.S. military indicating honorable service, proving eligibility for membership in The American Legion, has been submitted to the office of the national judge advocate by the following national officers: Brett P. Reistad, Virginia, National Commander; National Vice Commanders James E. Pisa, Paul I. Spedaliere, John F. Milburn, James E. Wallace, Steven Sweet; National Chaplain Father Philip Salois; National Historian Frederick Doten; National Sergeant-at-Arms Willie D. Ransom.

The above proofs I examined, and I certify that said individuals are eligible for membership in The American Legion, and report the same to the national adjutant. Proof of eligibility for other national officers has been submitted to the National Executive Committee on earlier occasions.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I now call for the confirmation of interim appointments. Chair recognizes Past National Commander Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Comrade Commander, I think this is a good time to remind the members of the National Executive Committee of what we're all about. In May we passed a resolution here on the NEC floor about national officers, national committees, department committees, to submit their DD-214. Unfortunately, we know that at the post level, if someone goes in as a member, that's when they should be asking for the DD-214, and they are not doing it.

Because through that resolution that was passed in May, back in my department, we went to the national chairman and state officers and we found two individuals had been a member for the last 40 years that were not eligible. We've got to do a better job. We know we need membership, but we don't need illegal membership.
I want to thank the National Executive Committee and all for passing that resolution, because it's in other states that was responsible for us putting that resolution there in the first place. I know there's problems in Wisconsin and West Virginia. It's just getting sad.

So Mr. Judge advocate, I know the job that you did in helping us in our situation. And I just want to, for the record, address the NEC and remind them that we've got to do a better job on who we're bringing into our organization.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Commander Comer.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: In regards to the confirmation of interim appointments, Mr. Commander, may I address the national adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Please do.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify the list of interim appointments is a true and correct list?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, without that list being read, I move that it be approved. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to confirm the interim appointments. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion approved.

Confirmation of Interim Appointments
National Executive Committee Meeting
October 17-18, 2018

Sally Nay (Massachusetts), Emblem Committee, Chairman (Replaces Robert A. Baranowski – resigned)
Michael P. Davis (Massachusetts), Marketing Commission, 2019 Member (Replaces Sally Nay – resigned)
William J. Chisholm (Massachusetts), Aerospace Committee, 2020 Member (Replaces Anthony E. Heath – resigned)
Michael E. Cassidy (Massachusetts), Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Council, Member (Replaces Michael P. Davis – resigned)

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: In regards to cancellation of posts, Mr. Commander, may I address the national adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Yes, you may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify the list of post cancellations and squadron charter cancellations are a true and correct list?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I move they be approved without being read. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to confirm the cancellation of post and squadron charters. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion approved.

Confirmation of Cancellation of Post and/or Squadron charters

On August 27, 2018, at the National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota the National Executive Committee approved the cancellation of forty-seven (47) Posts. The research done on each Post prior to any recommendation made as an attempt to see whether these Posts could be revitalized is based on the following criteria:
Community Size
Veteran Population

Thirty-Seven (37) Posts have been submitted and recommended for cancellation consideration during the 2018 Fall National Executive Committee Meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana.

* See Merging Post Information Below

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SAL Charters of The American Legion Presented to the National Executive Committee for Cancellation at the October 18, 2018 Meeting

On August 27, 2018, at the National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota the National Executive Committee approved the cancellation of forty-one (41) Squadrons.

Seven (7) Squadrons have been submitted and recommended for cancellation consideration during the 2018 Fall National Executive Committee Meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana.

* See Merging Squadron Information Below

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RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, in regards to confirmation of dates of future meetings, may I address the national adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Yes, you may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, are there dates of future meetings that require approval by the National Executive Committee?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: Yes, sir, there are.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I move that the dates be approved without being read, as they are published in the digest.

...Second

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second on the floor that the dates of future meetings be approved without being read. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion approved.
Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings

Proposed dates which require NEC approval

**2022 Washington Conference**
February 27-March 2

**2022 Spring Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
National Executive Committee  
May 2-3  
May 4-5

**2022 Fall Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
Commanders and Adjutants Conference  
National Executive Committee  
October 10-11  
October 10-11  
October 12-13

Previously approved by NEC

**2019 Washington Conference**
February 24-27

**2019 Spring Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
National Executive Committee  
May 6-7  
May 8-9

**2019 Fall Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
Commanders and Adjutants Conference  
National Executive Committee  
October 14-15  
October 14-15  
October 16-17

**2020 Washington Conference**
March 8-11

**2020 Spring Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
National Executive Committee  
May 4-5  
May 6-7

**2020 Fall Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
Commanders and Adjutants Conference  
National Executive Committee  
October 12-13  
October 12-13  
October 14-15

**2021 Washington Conference**
February 28-March 3

**2021 Spring Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
National Executive Committee  
May 3-4  
May 5-6

**2021 Fall Meetings**
Commissions and Committees  
Commanders and Adjutants Conference  
National Executive Committee  
October 4-5  
October 4-5  
October 6-7

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, may I address the national adjutant one more time?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Yes, you may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify the list of significant gifts to the library and museum is a true and correct list?
NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I move they be approved and recorded in the digest. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to approve the list of significant gifts to the library. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion approved. Thank you, Mr. Warnken.

Significant Gifts to the National Headquarters Library and Museum


Donated by Douglas C. Haggan: Physical and electronic version of The American Legion, Department of France history 1920 to 2018, 1 bound volume and 2 digital files; History of Paris Post 1 Mausoleum, 1 digital file; FODPAL records; Vanity plate from Post No. 123, Department of the Philippines.

Donated by John Cook: Sons of The American Legion cap from Tommy Wingate.

Donated by Deborah A. Davis: Registration coupon book from 1933 National Convention.

Donated by Bonnie Reno: Memorabilia of Legioneer Frank A. Griffin.

Donated by MacKay, Idaho Post 16: 1919 copy of the constitution of The American Legion.

Donated by Philip B. Onderdonk, Jr.: First and last pages of and the pen used to sign the Court of Veterans Appeals Act.


Donated by Colleen Wahlgren: 1963 Oratory Award medal.


Donated by Pat Evans: *Let’s Be Right on Flag Etiquette*, 1943 American Legion pamphlet.


Donated by Timothy L. Sheaf: Medal of Honor booklet published by The American Legion in the 1940s.

Donated by Brad Mitsch: 6 film reels of American Legion Parades.

Donated by Roberta (Robbie) Purner: Material from Wallace Seth Beden’s 1937 trip to Europe with The American Legion.

Donated by the family of Mary Vader McNamara: papers, awards, and memorabilia, including a baton, related to American Legion Drum & Bugle Corps competition.

Donated by the Genealogical Society of Marion County: History of the 11th Armored Calvary Regiment.

Donated by Susan Ashcraft: American Legion School Award Medal.


Donated by Commander Steve Fosness for Lee C. Prentice American Legion Post #36 (Fairmont, MN): gavel used at The American Legion Caucus in St. Louis, MO, May 8-10, 1919.
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: The chair now recognizes Charles D. Aucoin of Louisiana, chairman, for the report of the Subcommittee on Committees.

Oral Report: Subcommittee on Committees
Charles D. Aucoin, Louisiana, Chairman

Mr. Commander, national officers, my colleagues of the NEC, and guests. The future of The American Legion lies in your hands, for you have the responsibilities of recommending the most qualified members of your department to serve on the various commissions, committees, and councils. We stress this especially on the qualifications of the particular member to serve in the capacity that you recommend.

It's also imperative that these individuals you appoint understand and are committed to the aims and purposes of The American Legion. Also it is important, when members from your respective departments who are enlisted to serve, become deceased, that you notify the national adjutant's office so that changes can be properly addressed and appropriate people notified.

This subcommittee has reviewed over 1,200 recommendations over the past few days, so you can understand the importance of submitting them by the deadline issued, to give the national commander's executive assistant proper time to prepare these folders for the subcommittee's review. I thank you for your support in this matter.

I will stress the importance of filling out your appointment forms in their entirety and submitting them by the deadline. I would also ask that you use the revised template provided to you from the national headquarters office. If you have any questions about appointments, please refer to the new NEC orientation brochure.

Commander Reistad, thank you for the privilege of serving as the chairman of the subcommittee and for the qualified people that you have assigned to serve with me. I am pleased to present the following from the Subcommittee on Committees members who have assisted me this week, and would they please rise and be recognized: Our vice chairman, D. Joseph Jackson from Connecticut; Mary V. Erdman from Arkansas; James Huls from South Dakota; Michael Mitriotine, Virginia. Our other member, Mr. Terry Schow from Utah was ill this week and could not be with us, but we know he was with us in spirit. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for all of the hard work that you did this week. (Applause)

Commander, your committee met at national headquarters on Sunday, October 14, 2018, and remained in session all day Monday and Tuesday. We held interviews with 55 departments and received their recommendations. On behalf of the members of the subcommittee, I want to commend the National Executive Committeemen, department commanders, and department adjutants for the courteous presentations of their recommendations. Upon completion of the interviews, this report was prepared in rough draft and submitted to the national commander's office for his final approval. The report in its final form is now being placed on your desk.

We commend the staff on its excellent work in the preparation of this report, and especially the national commander's assistant, Ms. Debbie Andrews, for her patience and dedication throughout our deliberations this week. I also commend the members of my subcommittee for their hard work. Thank you, Mr. Commander, and all of those who helped in the selection of these appointments.

With the list on your desk, you have the opportunity to look it over. I recommend that we do not take the time to read it aloud at this time. Therefore, I move that the report be approved with the exception of whatever minor corrections may be required, and that the national commander be given the authority to make any interim appointments as deemed necessary. Commander, this completes my report. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the Subcommittee on Committees. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, please say aye. Any opposed? The motion is approved. Thank you,
sir. The chair now recognizes David Warnken of Kansas, chairman, for the final report of the Resolutions Subcommittee.

**Final Report of Subcommittee on Resolutions**  
**David O. Warnken, Kansas, Chairman**

Mr. Commander, your Subcommittee on Resolutions has been in session since October 15. We have considered all resolutions that have come before the committee, and have considered and acted upon, within the NEC, 27 resolutions.

I would like to stress the importance to the members of the National Executive Committee in keeping their departments informed of the actions by the National Executive Committee. The resolutions passed the last two days will be available within a few days on the Digital Archive at archive.legion.org.

I would like to take this time to thank the members of the committee who have done an outstanding job, who have attended every session, and participated in the discussion of these resolutions. You have sent quality people to that subcommittee, and it's certainly appreciated for the work that they do. My special thanks go to all committee members, including Vice Chairman Bill Kile of West Virginia; Dennis Boland from Florida; Marland Ronning, Minnesota; Dennis Haas from Pennsylvania; and Robert Liebenow of Oregon; Thomas Florez of Colorado, our new guy.

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I thank you all very much for your dedicated service this past week. Appreciation is also extended to Howard Trace and his staff, who served our committee. I also want to thank the document center, directors and chairmen of the commissions and committees on this week's work in order to bring the reports and resolutions to you. During our deliberations, we have met with a number of chairmen and staff who have been very helpful to us in explaining questions we had about a particular resolution.

Mr. Commander, it is a pleasure to serve as the chairman of your Subcommittee on Resolutions. We would like to thank the National Executive Committee in reporting of the various resolutions. You have been most cooperative. Mr. Commander, I move that this report be received and filed. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second that the final report of the Resolutions Subcommittee be received and filed. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The motion is approved.

We now move on to miscellaneous business and technical motions.

**Miscellaneous Business and Technical Motions**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I have a technical motion that the national adjutant be instructed to review the minutes of the NEC meeting and make any necessary corrections without changing the intent of the NEC meeting, and to proceed to edit and distribute these minutes. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second on the floor. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Any opposed? Motion is approved. I do have some closing remarks, and I hope you don't mind me doing those from up here. It's rather short.

**Closing Remarks**  
**Brett P. Reistad, Virginia, National Commander**

There's a little bit of history made at every one of our National Executive Committee meetings, but this session, I believe, was more consequential than most. For many years it seems as if hundreds of veterans, many of them Legionnaires, have asked us to open up
eligibility for Cold War veterans who fall between our current war eras. We're not there yet, but Resolutions 1 and 2 represent significant moves in that direction.

I'm also excited about The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. It's off to a great start, thanks to the $507,415 in donations from yesterday. As I mentioned earlier, this is my fundraising project until March, when I am going to focus more on the centennial coins.

You passed some truly outstanding resolutions pertaining to public policy. Expediting citizenship for veterans, recognizing the brave translators who assisted us in war zones, and opposing certain DoD-imposed caps on the Forever GI Bill will truly make a difference to people who deserve the gratitude of our nation.

Since many of you do have flights to catch, I won't rehash all of the reports and activities that you've already witnessed here, but I would like to try this one more time.

Team...

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: "100!"

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Team...

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: "100!"

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Team.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: "100!"

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, and have a safe trip home and God bless you all. *(Applause)*

Please stand and uncover. I call on Father Philip Salois, our national chaplain, for our benediction.

**Benediction**

**Father Philip G. Salois, Massachusetts, National Chaplain**

Dear Lord, please bless us as we go our separate ways. We have enjoyed camaraderie among each other, renewing old friendships. And we've done a lot of good work, good business work to enhance the work of veterans, veterans' benefits, and for our membership. We ask You to continue to help us to grow in our membership and to continue to do the good work we are for all of our veterans, those that are in our organization and those who are yet to be in our organization. Our safe travels, we ask You to bless all of our travels, that we might reach our destinations in safety. And for all those who are in need of our prayers for good health, we ask You to bless each and every one of us with continued good health until we meet again. We make this prayer in Your Holy Name. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Please recover and join me in a salute to the colors of our country by the numbers: One, two. This meeting of the National Executive Committee is now adjourned.

...At 9:30 a.m., Thursday, October 18, 2018, the National Executive Committee meeting of The American Legion was adjourned, sine die.
Abbreviations

AARP ................................................................. American Association of Retired Persons
ALB ................................................................................ American Legion Baseball
ALS ................................................................................... Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis
ALWS ................................................................................. American Legion World Series
ANC .................................................................................. Arlington National Cemetery

BSA ................................................................................ Boys Scouts of America

CEO .......................................................................................... chief executive officer
CFO .......................................................................................... chief financial officer
COYE .................................................................................. Committee on Youth Education
CPR ................................................................................... Consolidated Post Report
CWF .................................................................................. Child Welfare Foundation

DISC ........................................................... Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness
DMS .................................................................................. Direct Membership Solicitation
DNA ................................................................................................. deoxyribonucleic acid
DOD ............................................................................................... Department of Defense
DOL ........................................................................................... Department of Labor
DPAA .................................................................................. Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
DSO ......................................................................................... Department Service Officer

ERISA ........................................................... Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974

FODPAL .............. Foreign and Outlying Departments and Posts of The American Legion
FY ........................................................................................................... fiscal year

GAO .................................................................................. Government Accountability Office
GPD ........................................................................................ Grants and Per Diem

HAC-D .......................................................... House Appropriations Committee – Defense
HASC ................................................................................ House Armed Services Committee
HEP C ........................................................... Hepatitis C
HR ............................................................................................... House Resolution
HUD .................................................................................. Department of Housing and Urban Development

IED ................................................................................................. improvised explosive device
IHL ........................................................................................ institution of higher learning
IPO ........................................................................................ Interagency Program Office
IRS ................................................................................... Internal Revenue Service
IT .......................................................................................... Information Technology
IVMF .................................................................................. Institute for Veterans and Military Families

KIA .............................................................................................................. killed in action

LIT .......................................................................................... Legionnaires Insurance Trust
MACV.............................................................Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
MIA ...........................................................................................Missing in Action
MISSION.................. Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act
MMIS ........................................................ Membership Management Information System
MSO ...............................................................Military Service Organization
MST .......................................................................................Military Sexual Trauma

NALC ...........................................................National American Legion College
NALCAA .................................... National American Legion College Alumni Association
NALPA........................................................... National American Legion Press Association
NASA .......................................................... National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NASCAR ............................................................ National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing
NCA ............................................................................ National Cemetery Administration
NDAA ................................................................................ National Defense Authorization Act
NEC .................................................................National Executive Committee
NEF ............................................................................................National Emergency Fund
NIH ..................................................................................National Institutes of Health
NJA ...........................................................................................................National Judge Advocate

OCW ...............................................................Operation Comfort Warrior

PBR ............................................................. Presidential Budget Request
PHA ............................................................... Public Housing Agencies
PLA ............................................................................................People’s Liberation Army
PNC ...............................................................Past National Commander
POW ............................................................................................Prisoner of War
PRC ............................................................................................People’s Republic of China
PSA ....................................................................................... public service announcement
PTSD ............................................................................. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
PUFL ....................................................................................................... Paid-Up-For-Life

Q1 ................................................................................................................... first quarter
QLE ........................................................................................................ qualifying life event

RAMP ......................................................................................Rapid Appeals Modernization Program
ROAR .................................................................................... Regional Office Action Review
ROI ..............................................................................................return on investment
rTMS ............................................................................................. Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation

SAL ........................................................................................................... Sons of The American Legion
SASC ............................................................... Senate Armed Services Committee
SBA ............................................................... Small Business Administration
SDVOSB ..................................................... Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business

TAL ........................................................................................................... The American Legion
TAP ...............................................................Transition Assistance Program
TBD ................................................................................................................ to be decided
TBI ........................................................................................................ Traumatic Brain Injury
TFA ........................................................................................................ Temporary Financial Assistance
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