PROCEEDINGS

of the

National Executive Committee

of

THE AMERICAN LEGION
Pre-Convention Meeting and
Post-Convention Meeting

Indianapolis Convention Center
Indianapolis, Indiana
August 26 & August 29, 2019
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... At 9:00 a.m., Monday, August 26, 2019, the Pre-Convention Meeting of the National Executive Committee was called to order, National Commander Reistad presiding.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I will now call the pre-convention National Executive Committee meeting to order. Join me in a salute to the flag of our country. Hand salute.

...The National Executive Committee stood and rendered a salute to the colors.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Two. I call on National Chaplain Philip G. Salois of Massachusetts for the invocation followed by the POW/MIA remembrance ceremonies. Please uncover.

Invocation
Father Philip G. Salois, Massachusetts, National Chaplain

Good morning, everyone. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we give You thanks and praise for the grace of this day. We thank You for the rains that You've brought to us and that You withheld it yesterday for our parade and made it a beautiful day. And today will be a beautiful, sunny day inside our building as we go through the business of the NEC.

We ask You to bless each and every one of the NEC members here today. We ask for peace and harmony among ourselves and among The American Legion as we begin our convention tomorrow, we make it off to a good start.

Lord, we also remember all of our men and women in uniform who are serving our country in far, distant lands and places of great danger. People are still giving their lives every day for our country. And we ask You to watch over them, bring them safely home to their loved ones.

And now let's have our POW/MIA Empty Chair ceremony.

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

Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th Annual National Convention, requires the designation of a POW/MIA chair or flag at all official 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. We especially remember those who have recently come home from the Korean War. We give You thanks for those returnees. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor. And now a moment of silence. In Your holy name, oh Lord, we pray. Amen.
Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion
Willie D. Ransom, Virginia, National Sergeant-at-Arms

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I call on National Sergeant-At-Arms Willie E. Ransom from the Department of Virginia to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion. After the pledge, please cover for the Preamble.

...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 S. Wheeler of Virginia for the roll call.

Roll Call

National Officers

National Commander
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia

National Vice Commanders
Paul L. 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 E. Epling, West Virginia
Robert S. Turner, Georgia
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, Pennsylvania
Bruce Thiesen, California
Daniel A. Ludwig, Minnesota
Joseph J. Frank, Missouri (Excused)
Anthony G. Jordan, Maine
Butch L. Miller, Virginia
Hon. Alan G. Lance, Sr., Idaho
Richard J. Santos, Maryland
Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania
Hon. John A. Brieden, III, Texas

National Executive Committee Members

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<th>Department</th>
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<td>Willis Frazier</td>
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<td>Alaska</td>
<td>Steven L. Huisman</td>
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<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Judith S. Beischel</td>
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<td>Delaware</td>
<td>Robert L. Michael</td>
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**Department** | **Committee Member** | **Alternate**
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D.C. | George E. Roundtree (Excused) | Carlton T. Durham (Excused)
Florida | Dennis R. Boland | 
France | James M. Settle | 
Georgia | Charles F. Wessinger | 
Hawaii | David R. Carlson | 
Idaho | Robert L. Skinner | 
Illinois | Bernard A. Stegmueller | 
Indiana | Jerry L. Jordan | 
Iowa | Jerry D. Sebben | 
Kansas | David O. Warnken | 
Kentucky | Joseph M. Flynn (Excused) | William O. Moore, Jr.
Louisiana | Charles D. Aucoin | 
Maine | Lloyd Woods | 
Maryland | Patricia A. McCoy | 
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 | E. Michael Stelacio | 
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 | 
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 | 

**Proceedings of Monday, August 26, 2019**

**NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER:** That completes the roll call.

**Minutes of the Previous National Executive Committee Meeting**

**NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD:** I just want to make the statement that we have a quorum, and the next order of business is the reading of the minutes from our
previous meeting and approval of today's agenda.

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

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I have a motion and a second to approve the minutes as they've been printed in digest form. All in favor, signify by saying aye. Opposed by saying nay. The ayes have it.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that today's agenda be approved. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: A motion has been made and seconded to approve today's agenda. Any discussion? All in favor say aye. Opposed say nay. Motion is carried.

Disposal of Letters or Communications

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: The next item on the agenda is the disposal of letters or communications. And I want you to hear me very clearly on this statement: On or about July 8, 2019, members of the NEC received a letter from a former member. Thereafter, the national staff retained outside counsel to provide legal advice regarding that letter. On August 14, 2019, the national staff sent members of the National Executive Committee a letter responding to the former member's letter. Our outside legal counsel determined that it is in the best interest of The American Legion that no member of the NEC make any public statement about the former member's letter or the national staff's response to that letter. The national staff's August 14, 2019, letter will be The American Legion's only statement on this matter.

I recognize the fact that there is interest in this matter, but because of the recommendations made by our outside counsel, there will be no further discussion on this matter during this meeting. Now I'm going to make my opening remarks.

Opening Remarks

Brett P. Reistad, Virginia, National Commander

Members of the National Executive Committee, Legion Family members, staff and guests, where is the Department of Idaho and the Department of North Dakota? Okay. I've got them both present here. I want to congratulate you on a fantastic World Series. For those that were unaware, Idaho Falls Post 56 is the 2019 American Legion World Series champions. (Applause)

I think we're in for an exciting convention, but let's review what's happened recently. The American Legion achieved a monumental victory, pun intended, in the Bladensburg case before the highest court in the land. Freedom of religion is once again a protected right, and legal scholars will forever cite The American Legion v. American Humanist Association as one of the key reasons why.

I witnessed another piece of American Legion history last month when I was in the Oval Office and watched the president of the United States sign the LEGION Act. We must not ignore the fact that there are now 4.2 million wartime veterans that are eligible for the Legion who weren't eligible last year. You've heard me voice strong concern about our membership numbers in the past, but I'm not going to do that now. I'm actually seeing reason for great optimism.

On Wednesday we will be presenting our membership awards. Several departments not only exceeded their goals but they grew. This was before the LEGION Act. Now they've proven that, yes, we can grow. And if some departments can do it, all departments can get it done. Just remember to engage, check on our buddies, male and female, and give people a reason to join. And there are many reasons to join us.

Last year The American Legion volunteered more than $3.2 million of labor in natural disaster relief. Across the country and overseas, more than 700,000 benefits claims were
processed by The American Legion for veterans and their families, free of charge. We're one of only two organizations honored with a congressionally authorized coin this year. By the way, we really need to be selling and purchasing more of them because those funds are needed to support our great programs. So don't forget to go to legion.org/coins, or visit their booth in the convention center, and ask everybody in your departments to get behind this.

We still have a lot of unfinished work. Congress needs to pass the Pay Our Coast Guard Act so families don't have to go through the same ordeal that occurred during the last government shutdown. Congress needs to repeal the widows tax and the Gold Star "kiddies tax." These families have sacrificed more than enough and should not have to be taxed because of that loss. And, of course, we continue to fight for a constitutional amendment to protect the flag from desecration. We talk about the bond that all veterans share. Veterans of every generation are patriotic, and we're all taught to respect the flag from our first day of basic training, if not our first day of school.

We have a lot of business this morning, but I just want to thank all of you for your hard work in making this year a historic one. You have contributed to the legacy that we all celebrate. Thank you. (Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: Mr. Commander, can I ask you a question? Did I understand you to say that the official position of The American Legion regarding these exchanges of letters of August 14 is the Legion's position? Did I understand that correctly?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: As stated before, after consulting with our outside attorneys, we've determined that it's in the best interests of The American Legion that no member of the National Executive Committee makes any public statement about the former member's letter or the national staff's response to that letter. The national staff's August 14, 2019, letter will be The American Legion's only statement on this matter. There will be no further discussion on this matter at this time.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: In other words, no one can have any discussion on the previous letter or the letter from the former member or we cannot discuss in this meeting the August 14 letter, so it's over with? You know, it sounds to me, quite frankly, like this is a board of directors of The American Legion. We have some responsibility. And if you have a question about that August 14 letter, we ought to be able to ask it as a board of The American Legion with responsibility for the Legion's health and transparency.

Now, I don't know what the judge advocate might say, or the adjutant, but it seems to me like a gag order. I had intended to make a motion, and you put a gag order on me, so I can't. And I lay that motion on the desk with the adjutant and judge advocate and the recorder.\footnote{Background and motion regarding discussion provided by PNC Spanogle}

So what you're telling me, I've got to sit here, keep my mouth shut and all of us

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\footnote{Background and motion regarding discussion provided by PNC Spanogle}

National Executive Meeting
The American Legion
26 August 2019
Indianapolis Convention Center
Mr. Commander:
Throughout recent weeks and months, an increasing number of questions and discussions have occurred regarding the management of The American Legion and the availability of adequate resources to continue the funding of expenses, costs and liabilities of The American Legion.

As a result, a 5-page letter/memo was emailed from LTC John P. Spanogle, U. S. Army Special Forces (Ret) dated, 8 July 2019, addressed to the members of the NEC with copies to the National Commander and the National Adjutant raising a number of questions regarding management, availability of adequate resources to continue the funding of expenses, costs and liabilities of The American Legion. LTC Spanogle asked the NEC take action to employ an independent auditor.

This resulted in a memo, sent on 14 August 2019 addressed To: “Members of the National Executive Committee,” From: “American Legion Leadership,” Re: “Response to Allegations in John Spanogle’s Letter to NEC of July 8, 2019.”

This memo was not on Legion letterhead, nor was it signed. This memo was 18 pages in length, with an attachment from Edward M. Smid, Esq and another attachment titled “A Decade of Accomplishments 2009 – 2019” numbering
in a sense keep our mouth shut on this issue of the financial health of The American Legion. Is that correct?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I made the official statement. I'm going to ask the judge advocate to elaborate.

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: We have consulted with outside attorneys, and they told us that we're not allowed to discuss this. I would like to thank you for providing us with the information, and I will discuss this matter with you after we're done.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: Let me just ask one question for the record. That August 14 letter says, I believe, "To the National Executive Committee." I did not receive one, but I got one through honest channels. The point I'm trying to say is that it said "From the Leadership of The American Legion." There's no letterhead. There is no signature of any officer of The American Legion. And now you're telling me that the staff that's writing letters is stating the policy of The American Legion?

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: I will provide you with a copy of the letter.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: I've got a copy of it. What I'm saying is it's not on Legion letterhead. It's not signed by anybody except "From the Leadership." Now, if I wanted, as an NEC, the member of this NEC or any member of the NEC who received the letter want to come to you or the staff, you said the staff wrote it, of anybody on the staff. So tell me who wrote it on the staff. I'll know if I have a question to ask them. It wasn't signed by the commander. It wasn't signed by the adjutant. It wasn't signed by any national officer. So who do I go to? Which one on the staff do I go to if I have a question about that letter? I understand it's a policy of The American Legion. Is, now, my final question, as your outside legal counsel, is any document signed in any court in Marion County, in the state of Indiana or any other state?

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: Not that we're aware of regarding this issue.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: You don't know whether it's you or the American Legion who pays an attorney, whether that attorney has filed any legal action whatsoever? I mean, they're only six blocks down the street.

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: There are many, many reasons, and I'm sure everyone here is aware, of retaining legal counsel. When we received this, it was in our best interests to do the same, and that's what we did.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: Has your legal counsel found any actions against this former member?

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: Based on the conversations we've had with outside counsel, at this time we've already made our statement. We can't go on

17 pages for a total page count of 36 pages. This memo was sent by UPS. Being unsigned and no letterhead one might find it difficult or impossible to ask questions of the author or authors on the memo or attachments. This is the background, two memos, each raising a number of important and serious questions. There is however, one basic and unquestioned fact. It is incumbent on the NEC, and the responsibility of the National Executive Committee, The American Legion’s Board of Directors to ensure that the appropriate fiscal controls and processes are in place to guarantee the financial integrity of The American Legion, so that this organization can continue to carry out its mission and adherence to its four pillars with integrity and honor as it has for 100 years and into the next 100 years.

Therefore, Mr. Commander I will make a motion as follows,

“The National Executive Committee at this meeting, 26 August, 2019, Indianapolis Convention Center, ‘I hereby move, as a member of the National Executive Committee that, the National Executive committee at this meeting instruct the 2019 – 20 National Commander to retain the services of an independent auditor to review and audit the books and records of The American Legion for the years 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 to assure the availability of adequate resources to fund and or satisfy the Legion’s expenses, costs and liabilities, to include the pension liabilities and report to the NEC at its meeting May 6 – 7, 2020, Indianapolis, IN. ’”

Given my motion, I believe, it would require one of the following actions to be taken:
1. I understand this motion requires a 2nd for any further discussion on this motion;
2. Or you can deny my motion out of order for any reason you deem convenient;
3. Or take my motion under advisement, although if you select to take such action, I request you respond to me in writing by 1 October 2019, regarding your final decision and the reasons therefore.
from there.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: I'm going to end this right now. It's not a sore subject. We ought to have transparency so the board can discuss it, the board can't ask anything about the August 14 letter because we don't know who wrote it. There's no signature. There's no heading. No letterhead on it. I don't know who wrote it.

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: The information that went into the letter is available.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: But you certify, Mr. Judge Advocate or national officer, my God, if you added up all the pages, it was like 86 pages. In fact, let me tell you how many. It's on that thing. I'll tell you how many pages it was. Thirty-six pages, two sections, plus a letter from Mr. Schmidt, your attorney at Barnes & Thornburg, to the former member, sent UPS, by the way, and it got there on the day that he wanted some information from this former employee. Now leaving it at that, do you certify today, certify to this board, that everything in that August 14 letter is true and verified?

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE BARTLETT: Everything that was in the letter was provided by staff to be put in the letter and sent out to them.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: I'm asking you. Staff are employees; they're not officers of The American Legion. Are they making that policy as the commander said; that August 14 letter is policy and has staff made policy? I'm asking you as a national officer, as a national officer of this organization, if it's true and certified, I'd like to know, and I have no axe to grind with it. I would just like to know, you told me I can't discuss it, but in my own responsibility as a past national commander of The American Legion, past national adjutant, I'd like to have one person up there, either the adjutant or the commander, who are in charge of the policies of The American Legion verify to me that everything in that 36-page document by the staff is true and accurate.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I so certify as well.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: Okay, I want that in the record. Thank you very much. And now I will gag my mouth, not to discuss anything connected with the financial integrity and the future obligations of this great organization. So that's what you've told me. That's the way I understand it. So, hey, no problem.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Now we'll go on to the report of the Resolutions Subcommittee, Chairman David Warnken from Kansas.

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

Commander, we'll have one Resolution coming before the NEC this morning. I ask if Past National Commander Jake Comer will please join me for the presentation of this resolution.

Resolution No. 1: Gratitude and Recognition for 40 years of American Legion Service by National Adjutant Daniel S. Wheeler

Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions
Submitted by: Subcommittee on Resolutions

WHEREAS, Daniel S. Wheeler is a U. S. Navy veteran of the Vietnam War era; and


WHEREAS, Mr. Wheeler also served The American Legion national organization as executive director of the National Headquarters in Indianapolis (1995 – 2008); and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wheeler continues to serve The American Legion national organization as national adjutant since 2008; and
WHEREAS, Throughout his whole American Legion career Mr. Wheeler has shown outstanding leadership to all of the staff and countless volunteers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on August 26, 2019, That The American Legion national organization completely appreciates the forty (40) years of outstanding leadership and service Mr. Wheeler has dedicated to The American Legion; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee recognizes Mr. Wheeler’s leadership in the advancement of The American Legion’s digital media program, including the reinvention of www.legion.org, the introduction of national American Legion social media presence and the use of online transactions; and in leadership of difficult and complicated issues involving American Legion stakeholder oversight for the Department of Veterans Affairs; and in the development of a dedicated marketing arm of the organization; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee recognizes Mr. Wheeler’s compassion, generosity and fairness he has shown staff and volunteers at every level of the organization, regardless of job title, office or responsibility, throughout his entire career.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I would ask Mr. Wheeler, if you would approach the podium. Dan, congratulations, well-deserved. (Standing Applause) I move the acceptance of Resolution No. 1. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: There's a motion and a second to accept the resolution. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Opposed? The ayes have it. (Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I wish to thank each and every one of you for this recognition. I could not have possibly had a better life's career than what I've had here. I can tell you, despite all the things that PNC Comer mentioned in regard to my name, that I didn't get these done at all by myself. I have a wonderful staff of 254 people, and I have a fantastic board of directors, and I have great counselors who have guided me every step of the way. I just want you to know I sincerely appreciate the recognition. No matter how much undeserved, I'm glad that you've given it to me. I thank you very much. (Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I would ask the National Executive Committee to recognize two individuals that are here with Dan here today. Would his wife, Kathy, please rise. (Standing Applause) And the one I refer to as the assistant adjutant of The American Legion, Mary Rooney. (Standing Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I would ask the National Executive Committee to recognize two individuals that are here with Dan here today. Would his wife, Kathy, please rise. (Standing Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I would ask the National Executive Committee to recognize two individuals that are here with Dan here today. Would his wife, Kathy, please rise. (Standing Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I would ask the National Executive Committee to recognize two individuals that are here with Dan here today. Would his wife, Kathy, please rise. (Standing Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I would ask the National Executive Committee to recognize two individuals that are here with Dan here today. Would his wife, Kathy, please rise. (Standing Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Please rise and uncover.

Memorial Resolution
John D. Morris, Texas

WHEREAS, It has pleased almighty God, the Great Commander, to summon to His immortal legions our beloved comrade, John D. Morris, Department Vice Commander - 1982 to 1983; Department Commander - 1984 to 1985; National Executive Committee Member - 1988 to 1992; National Vice Commander - 1998 to 1999; National Convention Commission Vice Chairman - 2008 to 2019; 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 26th Day of August in the year of our Lord 2019, does
mourn the passing of our distinguished Legionnaire, John D. Morris, 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 copy of this resolution be presented to his family.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Similar resolutions will be presented to the families of the following: Andrew Barylski Jr., Connecticut; James E. Beardsley Jr., Connecticut; Charles T. Ambruster Jr., Delaware; Richard S. Flahavan, District of Columbia; James M. Holmes, Indiana; Henry E. Robards, Illinois; Michael E. Cassidy, Massachusetts; Ronald Gregory Abbe, Mexico; Michael L. Williams, Michigan; Donald W. Cabrol, Mississippi; John E. Konkol, New York; Harold Wilson, Pennsylvania; James E. McDaniel, South Carolina; William P. Dolan, South Dakota; Harvey H. Klee, Texas; Raymond R. Wildman, Texas.

"Be Still My Soul"
Be still, my soul: the hour is hast'n'ing on
When we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still my soul: when change and tears are past,
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.
-Katharina von Schlegel

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, would you please recognize Past National Commander John H. Brieden for the purpose of a eulogy.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Past National Commander Brieden, please come forward.

Eulogy for John D. Morris
Past National Commander John A. Brieden, Texas

Thank you, commander. Please be seated through this; you can stay uncovered. But the task before me is how do you properly eulogize a humble man? And I've struggled with that. I'm going to tell a story to open this that I think is kind of indicative of John D. Morris. There was a time where The American Legion Auxiliary said we don't want a president and a commander from the same family. So therefore the gentleman is moving up, the Auxiliary member gets shoved to the side so that won't happen. Katherine Morris was moving up in the Auxiliary. And you heard the résumé on John D. You heard how he had progressed, how he was a national vice commander and was, in fact, moving up in the organization. He did not want to do anything that would jeopardize his wife. And so he stepped back to allow her to move forward, to enter that glory of being national president. He did not want to be an impediment to that at all. And he sacrificed his Legion career for her.

It was interesting also as she was coming up and had the appointments that automatically move up that there was a past national president that sent a letter to the Legion leadership that said it looks like it might be possible that John Brieden might be commander that year, and we feel it's a major mistake to have from the same department the commander and the president. We feel that he will overshadow her, and that's not what we want in The American Legion Auxiliary.

When I was made aware, in fact, given a copy of that letter, we talked to John D. and Katherine. They conferred a little bit, and the response was: We want you. We have worked with you and the Department of Texas. We understand that you understand the Auxiliary and work with the Auxiliary, and we'd rather have that relationship and that friendship be what it's all about rather than worry about what somebody else thinks it might be.
So we served together as commander and president on purpose, because John D. and Katherine chose for that to happen. We held a joint homecoming. It had never been done before. We emphasized The American Legion Family during that year in a way that it had not been done before, and it was because of Katherine and John D.

As I look at his legacy back in the Department of Texas, he was a mentor. He didn't necessarily step into the limelight that much, but he was a mentor behind the scenes. He was working, developing young folks coming up. I was a beneficiary of John D. Morris and many others, but he was an important mentor to me.

On the national level, you heard some of the things, and particularly with the Convention Commission. He served as vice chairman. I was talking to Mike Walton, and I said, "What do you say about John D. Morris? I mean, how can I say it?" He said, "Not only mentor, what you say is he's the guy that came forward with the advice at the right time, the right advice at the right time, that helped everything move forward from there."

Yeah, he was a humble man. He was a common man. He owned a roofing company. In fact, he was the guy that got up on the roof in the hot Texas sun, and until his later years when he had a foreman that basically ran that crew, that he would still, at that point, order and supervise and whatever. But he was just a plain, ordinary guy that lent his knowledge, lent his efforts to The American Legion. The American Legion and The American Legion Auxiliary, through his wife, were their life, and that's what they put forward. That's what we remember today. I thought I might make it through this, but I don't know that I will, but I thank God that I had him in my life. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Past National Commander Brieden. I now call on our Finance Commission chairman, Gaither M. Keener, Jr. of North Carolina, for the purposes of a report.

**Oral Report: Finance Commission**

*Gaither M. Kenner, Jr., North Carolina, Chairman*

Good morning. Mr. Commander, members of the NEC, it's been my pleasure and honor serving this year on the Finance Commission. The report you have was a draft report and is incomplete. I apologize. I will read the full report to you and forward the full report for your October minutes.

The Finance Commission convened at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 24, 2019, Room 204-205 of the JW Marriott in Indianapolis. Present were: Gaither Keener, North Carolina; Carl E. Levi, Tennessee; Al Lennox, California; John Monahan, Connecticut; Myron Kirby, Illinois; and Denis J. McEneaney, New York. George C. Lussier of Virginia was excused due to health issues. All members of the NEC Liaison Committee, all five of them, were there and present, as were guests from numerous departments.

The following reported to the commission: The national adjutant, the national treasurer, finance director, our national headquarters executive directors, the national judge advocate, and the working committee on IT.

We received an update on fundraising efforts; written reports received from Media & Communications, Marketing, Convention, Internal Affairs Commissions and the Membership & Post Activities Committee. I will not go into details since they will report here today.

The commission approved $165,315.16 in equipment replacement and emergency purchases. $2,850 in obsolete manuscript write-offs was also approved. The current authorized head count for National Headquarters is at 257.

In addition to that, your Finance Commission received a report on our anticipated surplus. I'm happy to say, that as of today, we anticipate a $4.1 million surplus. That is less than what I anticipated, and the reason is because thus far we have made only $1.18 million in profit from coin sales. We're $2.3 million behind on anticipated sales. But still, a surplus at $4.1 million is a good number.

We've also looked at 2020. In 2020, we believe the projected budget would have a
surplus of $3.9 million to $4.1 million. I want to thank the staff and my commission for working hard on this process.

The Finance Commission also made a decision in May to sell short on some bond, come back into the market and buy other bonds. By doing that, we have a six percent increase in our investment bonds of over $5 million in three months.

I want to thank Mr. Buskirk for leading us and guiding us, along with our outside experts at Fifth Third and Hoosier Trust.

Your audit is on page 46 and 64 of the green book. Please read it. A lot of department officers do. As you can tell from Crowe LLP, our auditing firm, we have a clear opinion from our audit. And it’s very important for you to understand audits. Most people know I was the general counsel of a Fortune 40 company. I was chief legal officer, a financial officer per SEC rules, and chief compliance officer.

Our American Legion audit costs us about $120,000 a year, including our tax preparation. Our audit meets the requirement as set out by federal law. It meets the requirements of U.S. GAAP. It meets the requirements of FASB and GAAS.

You accountants in here, and we have some accountants, you know exactly what I’m discussing. Along with those requirements we certify to the IRS in our end-of-year tax certifications.

You should know that Resolution 12 from Colorado was discussed at the Finance Commission, and your Finance Commission made a unanimous recommendation for it to be rejected.

I was elected as chair of the Finance Convention Committee. The motion was made to reject Resolution 12. A second was made and the motion to reject Resolution 12 was unanimously approved by all delegates to the Finance Convention Committee.

In addition, we had a motion and second to maintain the dues at $18.50. It also passed unanimously. So everybody should be happy about that outcome!

As you know, the NEC gave the Marketing Commission Chair and the Finance Commission chair the authority to make recommendations to the national commander and the national adjutant to consider certain grants from nonprofits that meets the requirements of our organization. We were able to sign a grant with the Arnold Foundation for $500,000 over a period of time. And this week we received our first amount of over $125,000.

This week, I finally had a chance to read the Lumina Foundation documentation, and we have recommended that the national commander sign said agreement. It will bring in an additional $325,000 over a period of time.

Commander, that is my report. Again, I thank you for letting me serve.

Report: Finance Commission
August 24, 2019
Gaither M. Keener, Jr. North Carolina, Chairman

Mr. Commander and members of the NEC - It has been my honor and pleasure to serve you this year on the Finance Commission.

The Finance Commission convened at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 24, 2019, in Rooms 204/205 of the JW Marriott in Indianapolis. Present were Gaither M. Keener, Jr. (NC), Carl E. Levi (TN), Al Lennox (CA), John Monahan (CT), Myron D. Kirby (IL), and Denis J. McEneaney (NY). George C. Lussier, Jr. (VA) was excused. David O. Warnken (KS), Lawrence Van Kuran (CA), Edward Bertrand (NY), Robert L. Krause (ND,) and Michael F. Mitrione (VA), NEC Liaison Committee members, were also present, as were guests from several departments.

The following reported to the commission: The national adjutant, national treasurer, finance director, our national headquarters’ executive directors and the national judge advocate. We received an update on fundraising efforts. Written reports were received from the Media & Communications, Marketing, Convention and Internal Affairs Commissions, and the Membership & Post Activities Committee.

The commission approved $165,315.16 in equipment replacement and emergency
purchases. $2,850 in obsolete manuscript write-offs was also approved.

The current authorized head count for national headquarters is 257.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to approve the report of the Finance Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to approve the report of the Finance Commission. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion carried.

Next we have Michael Walton from Illinois with the Convention Commission report.

Oral Report: Convention Commission
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman

Thank you, commander. Good morning, everyone. Although my report is in your packet, I want to touch on some of the highlights so far of this outstanding convention here in Indianapolis.

Our color guard competition was well attended with 18 performances by 11 color guards in four categories, with Harrisburg Post 472 from Houston, Texas, being crowned again. They're really good. Also, five bands competed, and the Band of the Tonawandas was again crowned national champions.

Our Patriotic Memorial Service was well attended, and everyone seemed to enjoy the musical talents that were presented.

Yesterday, as you know, we ordered perfect weather. It showed up, and we want to thank this wonderful city. It was really a great day for everyone. We cleaned up all the trash, like we were required to do after the parade was over, and everybody was happy about that.

Our Department of Indiana volunteers have done a tremendous job in all facets. And I want to thank Convention Corporation President and Past National Commander Koutz and all his volunteers. They were really doing a great job for us.

We're really looking forward to wonderful, great general session the next couple of days. As you know, Secretary Pompeo will be here tomorrow and Vice President Pence will be here on Wednesday.

We're looking forward to a great banquet also tomorrow night. As you know, it's sold out, and everything's really going well for the convention. Commander, that concludes my report, and I would like to thank you for allowing me to serve.

Report: Convention Commission
August 24, 2019
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael E. Walton (IL) at 8:00 A.M., August 24, 2019. Roll call was taken and all members were present.

Chairman Walton reviewed the convention assignments for each commission member and reminded them that a detailed convention report should be provided to the commission at the 2019 Fall Meeting. The Color Guard contests were well attended by contestants and observers. Eleven color guards competed in four categories with Harrisburg Post 472 from Houston, Texas, being crowned again as National Champions. Additionally, five bands participated in the Competitive Concert Band Contest with Band of the Tonawandas being crowned National Champions.

There were no items, which require action by the National Executive Committee during National Convention, discussed at the meeting.

Dates for future Conventions are:

Louisville, Kentucky Aug. 28 - Sept. 3, 2020
Phoenix, Arizona Aug. 27 - Sept. 2, 2021
Milwaukee, Wisconsin Aug. 26 - Sept. 1, 2022
Charlotte, NC    August 25 - 31, 2023
New Orleans, Louisiana  August 23 - 29, 2024

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

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the convention. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed, nay. Motion is carried.

Next, James 'Mike' Rohan of Wisconsin, chairman of the Marketing Commission.

Oral Report: Marketing Commission
James M. Rohan, Wisconsin, Chairman

National Commander Reistad, National Adjutant Wheeler, members of the National Executive Committee, good morning. Commander, I'm honored to serve as your chairman. You have my written report so I'll just hit a few high points.

The United States Mint presented designs for the 2019 American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin program at the 2018 National Convention. Surcharges are authorized to be paid to The American Legion programs. Sales began in March with a strong start and promotional efforts through our own channels and paid media, will continue through this December to promote ongoing sales. As of August 11, accrued revenue from coin surcharges stood at $1.18 million. If you've not purchased your coins yet, you may visit the U.S. Mint in the expo hall at booth 445 adjacent to Emblem Sales. They will also be selling coins in the back of the general session halls A and B.

Finally, David Ryder, the director of the United States Mint, will be at the U.S. Mint booth on Tuesday during the general session to personally sign your certificates of authenticity. If you're a coin collector, that is a huge deal. If you're not a coin collector and want to sell a coin on eBay, that is a huge deal. Consider purchasing the coin as a gift for your incoming and outgoing commanders or other officers as they have continued to serve the organization in our 100th year. What a wonderful gift it will be for your officers.

Following the creation of the We Believe broadcast PSA in 2018, four billboard and bus shelter designs were developed. Each design highlights an aspect of The American Legion: patriotism, advocacy, support for veterans and the centennial. The legion.org/webelieve URL was included in each billboard as a call to action to drive traffic online to learn more about The American Legion, and the landing pages featured articles and information specific to the benefits of membership.

Since The American Legion began utilizing donated advertising space, the organization has received 1,180 total placements in 27 states. Some locations are more heavily trafficked than others; though, combined with the metrics, are substantial. Since inception the campaign has generated more than 915 million impressions and 6.15 million in advertising value. The results exceed original estimates and reflect the importance of developing creative messaging that resonates with a broad audience.

I also want to let you know a couple other things. The national fundraising program has raised gross revenue of nearly $61 million through 2018 and is expected to finish at 2019 at nearly $73 million. Before the department revenue shares subtracted from the net income, national fundraising program has raised a net income through 2018 of about $11.5 million.

In 2016, we began testing membership mailings to nonmember donors and nondonation survey responders who self-declare themselves as veterans. To date we have successfully recruited nearly 36,000 new members from the national nonmember donor file.

The fundraising cycle for the various American Legion charities concludes at this convention. To date, 2018-2019 cycle has raised approximately $2,580,000, and this is before proceeds from the Legacy Run are tabulated and entered into the Legacy Scholarship.
The 2019 DMS cycle finished on June 30 by recruiting 118,900 DMS members. The net cost to acquire will finish the 2019 cycle below budget once all costs are distributed through the remainder of 2019. Our direct marketing systems are showing the net cost to acquire at approximately $25 per member, which is about $5 below the estimates.

Mr. Commander, on behalf of the national Marketing Commission, I thank the National Executive Committee for its support as we continue to work hard to raise awareness and revenue for The American Legion.

Mr. Commander, that concludes my report.

Report: Marketing Commission
August 24, 2019
James “Mike” Rohan, Wisconsin, Chairman

The Marketing commission met on Saturday, August 24, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. in the JW Indianapolis, Indiana Grand Ballroom, Section 1, Third Floor in Indianapolis, Indiana.

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. In addition, a report from the National Emblem Committee to the Marketing Commission has been included.

FUNDRAISING

National Fundraising
The National Fundraising Program has raised gross revenue of nearly 61 million dollars through 2018 and is expected to finish 2019 at nearly 73 million dollars. Before the department revenue share is subtracted from net income, the National Fundraising program has raised net income through 2018 of about 11.5 million dollars.

Year-to-date National Fundraising is tracking behind pace by about $131,000, which is directly related to the first quarter special fundraising effort supporting the Veterans and Children Foundation. This effort was focused on the government shutdown and how it affected the Coast Guard and the appeal raised about in net revenue.

To date, the Department revenue share program has paid a cumulative total earned through 2018 of $2,625,000. Through this initiative, net proceeds earned from members on the national fundraising file are paid a pro rata share into each of the respective departments.

National Fundraising (Non-member) – Value Added
In 2016, we began testing membership mailings to non-member donors and $0 survey responders who self-declared themselves as veterans. To-date we have successfully recruited nearly 36,000 new members from the national non-member fundraising file. After completing the 2019 membership cycle we are very encouraged by the renewal results of these members as these new donor members are about 16% more likely to renew than the average DMS members in the first year and about 2% more likely to renew than their average counterpart in their second year.

DMS Fundraising - Encumbered
The DMS Fundraising effort to encumbered members has operated since the beginning of 2018 on a breakeven budget. This was done because we pulled the first year DMS members out of this effort in exchange for the adding them to the new DMS communications plan. Last year net income from this audience was more than $60,000 and this year-to-date it is already nearly $75,000. We have achieved these results even with this ever-changing donor file.
American Legion Charities

The fundraising cycle for the various American Legion Charities concludes after this convention. To-date the 2018/2019 cycle has raised approximately $2,580,000. This is before proceeds from the Legacy Run are tabulated and entered into the Legacy Scholarship Fund.

Planned Giving

Visibility has been increased in our print and digital media giving the planned giving program more real estate that reminds members of this giving option. It is difficult to tie these efforts directly to returns seen in this area. Usually, marketing efforts happening now will not pay off until sometime in the future.

Vehicle Donation Program

We are midway through the fourth year of the vehicle donation program managed through Insurance Auto Auctions. To-date the program has raised $294,000. The Marketing Commission is evaluating this relationship and may be bringing a request forward for a possible change by the Fall Meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

Direct Membership Solicitation (DMS)

The 2019 DMS cycle finish on June 30th by recruiting 118,900 DMS members. The net cost to acquire will finish the 2019 cycle below budget once all costs are distributed through the remainder of 2019. Our direct marketing systems are showing the net cost to acquire at approximately $25 per member, which is about 5 dollars below the budgeted cost.

The 2020 DMS membership cycle began by mailing approximately 2.1 million pieces of mail throughout July and August with additional reach through email and digital efforts. In only 6 weeks, we have enlisted nearly 18,000 members toward our 115,000 budgeted goal.

We began our digital marketing efforts in 2016 where we re-enlisted approximately 4,500 expired members through targeted email efforts. In 2019, the targeting email remained steady while we have successfully grown through other digital marketing techniques, growing to approximately 7,100 joins or re-enlistments. We continue to expand these efforts and will be testing into some prospecting techniques later this year that if successful will increase our digital reach to new never before members.

The new communications plan we began with the DMS class of 2019 continues into the 2020 cycle with the same welcome series used for 2019. The communications plan continues into 2020 for the class of 2019 with a new renewal series that is on the same cycle as our traditional renewal series but unique to these new members.

Direct Renewal

On line renewals continue to grow as a percentage of total renewals. 2019 finished with 256,700 on line renewals which represents about 16% of the total renewal membership. Currently, 2020 on line renewals are more than 18% of the total. Contributing to this growth is the concerted digital marketing efforts both through email and other digital channels such as remarketing, search engine optimization and digital targeting through paid ads and social media. In 2019 we renewed approximately 62,000 members through these efforts.

Paid Up For Life (PUFL)

Year-to-date, we have exceeded expectations with our PUFL direct marketing efforts, converting approximately 7,500 members into Paid Up For Life. This was done through monthly targeted email campaigns as well as a multi-channel campaign that included direct mail, email and other digital advertising.
Email efforts will continue throughout the year and we are planning a second direct mail campaign for October. The October effort will include a test offer of the Minted Centennial Silver Dollar as a back-end premium against the $100 discount offer.

**U.S. Mint Commemorative Coin Update**

The United States Mint presented designs for the 2019 American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin program last fall at National Convention. 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.

Sales began with a strong start and promotional efforts through owned channels and paid media will continue through this December to prompt ongoing sales. As of August 11, accrued revenue from coin surcharges stood at $1.18 million.

**National Poppy Day® – May 24, 2019**

This year, The American Legion again worked in tandem with the American Legion Auxiliary to raise awareness about this special day and the historical significance of the red poppy. A number of efforts were made to promote The American Legion Family through internal channels to membership of both organizations.

For broad, general awareness and reach, a mat release was distributed to media and poppy patches were sent to television stations in select markets across the country. News broadcasters and staff were encouraged to wear a poppy on National Poppy Day® and interviews with members of The American Legion Family were pitched in the following media markets: Atlanta, Ga., Buffalo, N.Y., Chicago, Ill., Houston, Texas, Indianapolis, Ind., Jackson, Miss., Pittsburgh, Pa., Sacramento, Calif., St. Louis, Mo. And Tampa, Fla.

In addition, a letter about National Poppy Day® and poppy stickers for staff to wear were sent to members of the House and Senate through a Congressional mailing to encourage the Hill to participate in recognizing the day.

**Broadcast PSA**

Utilizing existing imagery and video content from The American Legion media library, a new broadcast PSA was created in 2018 that highlights the mission, programs and services of The American Legion. The PSAs have been well received by regional and national outlets. As of July 31, the campaign has received 48,873 airings since inception and generated 486.4 million impressions and an advertising value of $13.7 million. Though the PSAs have been successful, the number of monthly airings started to decline in Q1 of 2019 and new, additional PSA creative is planned to launch this fall to generate additional airtime, impressions and ad value.

**Billboards and Bus Shelters**

Following the creation of the We Believe broadcast PSA in 2018, four new billboard and bus shelter designs were developed. 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.

Since The American Legion began utilizing donated advertising space, the organization has received 1,180 total placements in 27 states. (Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming) Some locations are more heavily trafficked than others, though when combined, the metrics are substantial. Since inception, the campaign has generated more than 915 million impressions and $6.15 million in advertising value. The results exceed original estimates and reflect the importance of developing creative and messaging...
that resonates with a broad audience.

**Corporate Alliances**

As part of a $75,000 gift, volunteers and employees from *The Hawthorne Gardening Company* joined The American Legion to host an Operation Comfort Warriors respite event for approximately 500 veterans and their families. The event was focused around the camaraderie of attending a Tacoma Rainiers Minor League Baseball game, but the evening was about more than just sports. Attendees each received a t-shirt and hat, early access to the ballpark, and a catered meal in advance of the first pitch. It was an opportunity to spread the message of The American Legion’s ongoing mission of veterans serving veterans, even if they are not a member of the organization.

The *Boisset Collection Wine Company* made a donation to The American Legion to express special appreciation to the organization for its 100 years of contributions supporting veterans and their families. The French owned company released a limited-edition wine called “6.6.44” to recognize the 75th Anniversary of D-Day. The vineyard, along with its United States distributor, BevMO!, gave a total donation of $20,000. The American Legion is linked closely to the Boisset family’s history, as it supported Jean-Charles’ Boisset, orphaned great-grandmother and her siblings after World War II.

The American Legion solidified a strategic alliance with *DeVry Works*, a program of DeVry University, to educate veterans about the recently launched VSO Advance 500 Scholarship, which provides 500 scholarships to members of select veterans service organizations and their families to pursue their education at DeVry University. The scholarship provides an award that is equal to the amount of tuition charges for the session in which the scholarship applies. Recipients must meet eligibility requirements to qualify.

In an effort to take the first step in forming a long-term alliance with *Booz Allen Hamilton*, a global firm focused on consulting, analytics, digital solutions, engineering, and cyber, with industries ranging from defense to health to energy to international development, The American Legion offered opportunities outside of our standard National Corporate Alliance structure, inviting them to certain activities of The National Convention.

**Report: Emblem Committee**

*Sally Nay, Massachusetts, Chairman*

As of the June 2019 profit and loss statement, The American Legion Emblem Sales Division had year-to-date revenue of $8.25 million vs. $8.0 million in 2018. Net year-to-date profit was $1.02 vs. $1.37 in 2018. A large portion of the profit difference ($274K) was due to express shipping costs incurred to get all customer packages out prior to Memorial Day.

As of June 30, Emblem Sales had sold $1,637,000 in flags, which is on pace to be our third best year. Currently, 2,047 posts are registered in the “Flag Rewards” program, and 22,000 schools, businesses, churches and individuals have signed up to sponsor a post. This represents an increase of 172 registered American Legion posts, as well as 2,000 new sponsors since National Convention 2018.

Flag sales have also been positively impacted by a cover-wrap advertisement in the April issue of The American Legion Magazine. 1,791,000 magazines with the cover-wrap were mailed to members. As of June 30, 2019, an estimated sales total of $233,000 has been generated from the cover-wrap, which resulted in gross profit of $24,000. In addition, over 65% of the cover-wrap orders have come from new customers.

Emblem Sales continues to market items strategically to members and patriotic Americans, both electronically and in print. In 2019, 602,000 marketing emails have been sent at a cost of only $1,800. These marketing emails have resulted in $149,000 in revenue.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Chairman Rohan.
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Marketing Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Marketing Commission. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. Motion carried. I now call on Richard Anderson from Connecticut, the chairman of Americanism.

**Oral Report: Americanism Commission**

**Richard W. Anderson, Connecticut, Chairman**

Thank you, Mr. Commander. Members of the National Executive Committee, past national commanders and all, the Americanism Commission met on Saturday, August 24th, in the Grand Ballroom of JW Marriott Hotel. There were 123 commission, council, and committee members in attendance. The commission was honored to be joined by the youth champion delegation with their parents and several other distinguished guests.

You have been provided copies of the report of the Americanism Commission before you. There are currently no matters of an emergency nature from the Americanism Commission to be presented to the National Executive Committee. Our challenges have been great this year, but I have the confidence that your commission, the Americanism Commission, is up to the task.

On behalf of the Americanism Commission, I extend our deepest gratitude to you, Mr. Commander, and to all the members of the National Executive Committee for its advocacy and support it extended to us throughout the year. Commander, it's been an honor to serve you this year. I thank you for that opportunity. To the members of the National Executive Committee, thank you for your support that you have given to this commission this year. Thank you, Mr. Commander.

**Report: Americanism Commission**

**August 24, 2019**

**Richard W. Anderson, Connecticut, Chairman**

The Americanism Commission met on Saturday, August 24, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. in the JW Marriott Hotel, Grand Ballroom, Section 5, Third Floor, in Indianapolis, Indiana. One hundred twenty-three members of the Americanism Commission, Americanism Council, Committee on Children & Youth, Committee on Youth Education and Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee were in attendance. In honor of the centennial celebration of The American Legion, Scout BSA Troop 171 of St. Luke's Catholic School in Indianapolis performed as Color Guard and 11-year old vocalist Anthony Meek of Plainfield, Indiana, performed the National Anthem.

The Commission was privileged to have Fr. Philip Salois (MA), National Chaplain of The American Legion, provide the invocation and benediction for the meeting. Dennis Boland (FL), President, American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) and Chairman of the NEC Liaison Committee to the Americanism Commission, brought greetings. He emphasized the impact that CWF and the Legion Family has, citing that CWF provided $750,000 to the American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program during the Coast Guard pay crisis earlier this year.

The Americanism Commission welcomed the 2019 American Legion Youth Champion Delegation and heard remarks from each of the young champions. In attendance were: Lou Acevedo, 2019 Boys Nation President of Gardner, Massachusetts; Jaden-Ann Frazier, 2019 Sporter Junior Shooting Sports Champion of Surgioinsville, Tennessee; Makenzie Sheffield, 2019 Precision Junior Shooting Sports Champion of Granbury, Texas; Patrick Junker, 2019 National Oratorical Contest Champion of Waukee, Iowa; and Jaden Anderson, 2019 American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year of Provo, Utah. Braiden Ruffin, 2018 American Legion Baseball All-Academic Team Captain of North Platte, Nebraska, was unable to attend due to school commitments.
Proceedings of Monday, August 26, 2019

Jason Vanderhaden, Master Chief Petty Officer of the United States Coast Guard (MCPOCG), next extended profound appreciation to The American Legion on behalf of the United States Coast Guard. When the longest federal government shutdown in U.S. history began four days before Christmas 2018, the MCPOCG sent word to his senior enlisted not to worry, telling them that Congress would take care of them. The shutdown ensued and on the January 15th payday of 2019, Coast Guard personnel did not receive their pay. Unlike the other four branches of the uniformed Armed Services which are budgeted through the Department of Defense, the Coast Guard is budgeted under the Department of Homeland Security. Citing the Coast Guard's motto of “Semper Paratus”, National Commander Brett Reistad stated The American Legion is “Always Ready” to support those in uniform, and directed staff to swiftly administer TFA requests made by those Coast Guard families needing financial assistance for the minor children in their households. Because of the collective herculean efforts of Legionnaires and Legion Family from many Legion departments throughout the nation and staff at National Headquarters, TFA awarded over $1 million to aid 3,120 children of 1,713 Coast Guard families before the crisis abated with reopening of the government a month after it shut down.

MCPO Vanderhaden emphasized that the American Legion's TFA grants primarily helped junior enlisted Coast Guardsmen with families, with those being the ones who faced the most anxiety during the shutdown. He stated support from The American Legion allowed junior enlisted to focus on their mission at hand, knowing that there was someone helping take care of their families back home. And MCPO Vanderhaden reminded the Americanism Commission that it was not just TFA grants that helped Coast Guard families; American Legion posts delivered food, gift cards and more, directly to Coast Guard units. MCPO Vanderhaden thanked The American Legion on behalf of all the men and women in the Coast Guard, and on behalf of the Commandant, stating that the Coast Guard couldn't have continued to perform their operations without the support of The American Legion and that “we are in your debt for your generosity. That's what you do.” He also expressed appreciation for The American Legion's legislative support.

Dennis Boland (FL), President of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (CWF), and leadership of The American Legion Department of Indiana Past National Commander James Koutz and Department Commander Allen Connelly - formally presented a 2019 CWF grant to Peyton Manning Children's Hospital (PMCH) located in Indianapolis, Indiana, to help fund their project titled Peyton Manning Children's Hospital Healing Arts Program. The grant was presented to Dr. Hossain Marandi, President of PMCH, who then provided the Commission with an informational presentation about their Healing Arts Program. The Healing Arts Program is comprised of art, music/dance and pet therapy services offered to any child hospitalized at PMCH. Art therapy is based on the principle that artistic self-expression helps young patients resolve problems, develop interpersonal skills, increase self-esteem, relieve stress and achieve insight. Music and dance therapy is a practice that uses musical interventions - as children create, sing, dance and listen to music, therapists are able to assess physical, social, cognitive, and emotional well-being. And pet therapy gives a child comfort by easing anxiety and stress.

Larry Price, Chairman, Youth Cadet Law Enforcement (YCLE), provided remarks to the Commission, encouraging departments who currently do not have a YCLE program to give strong consideration to establishing one and offered the direct support and guidance of the YCLE Committee in helping do so.

Attendees received information about the Patriotic Memorial Service to be conducted on Sunday, August 25, 2019, from Deputy Director Jeff Hendricks (IN). Father Philip Salois, National Chaplain, will be presiding over the service.

Attendees also received information about the Naturalization Ceremony that the Americanism Commission is sponsoring in celebration of The American Legion's centennial year. It is expected that 100 individuals will become naturalized citizens with over 200 family, friends and Legion Family members looking on. After the ceremony the new citizens will be offered an opportunity to register to vote.

I concluded the meeting by extending some special recognitions and expressing
Thank you, Commander. Good morning. Commander, head table, NEC, past national commanders, staff and guests, it's been a pleasure to serve this year as your chairman of the national Legislative Commission. I have no emergency reports to come before the National Executive Committee at this time. You have been provided copies of our complete report. So I'll refrain from reading that to you.

As required by resolution, the annual report of the National Legislative Council is attached to that report. On behalf of all members of the Legislative Commission, I would like to extend to all members of this body my appreciation for your support and encouragement during the past year.

A special thanks to National Commander Brett Reistad for his active support and positive approach to our Commission. Thank you, Commander. That's my report.

Report: Legislative Commission
August 24, 2019
Randall A. Fisher, Kentucky, Chairman

The National Legislative Commission met on Saturday, August 24, 2019 in the Indianapolis Convention Center, Room 212, Level Two, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Sixteen (16) members of the Commission, three (3) members of the NEC Liaison, and twelve (12) visitors were present, bringing it to a total of thirty three (31). The meeting was devoted primarily to a detailed discussion of recent congressional activities involving legislative mandates of The American Legion.

National Legislative Commission Chairman Randall A. Fisher (KY) offered opening remarks before calling upon Legislative Council Chairman, Dewey Moss of Georgia to present the Annual Legislative Council Report. Chairman Moss discussed the grassroots lobbying activities and gave a brief summary of the Annual Consolidated Activities Report.

Jeff Steele, Acting National Legislative Director, along with Legislative Associates Lawrence Montreuil, John Medin, and Ernest Robinson provided the commission a discussion of the 116th Congressional activities as they relate to veterans issues and concerns.

Finally, selected members of the Legislative Commission spoke of their legislative experiences and of the importance and great work of both the Legislative Commission and the Legislative Council.

The following report provides an abbreviated account of congressional developments in the 116th Congress and since this Commission last met in February 2019.

Recent Congressional Developments

The First Session of the 116th Congress was seated on January 3, 2019. The Congress began their business in the midst of the longest government shutdown in American history. Major issues on the agenda for both chambers revolved mainly around ending the government shutdown, working with President Trump to address the border wall, and...
passage of FY 2020 appropriations. The American Legion has participated in seven (7) congressional hearings thus far.

On January 25, 2019 President Trump signed Public Law (PL) 116-5, ending the 2018-2019 Shutdown and appropriating funding for FY19 for federal government operations for operations of all federal departments and agencies until February 15, 2019. Consolidated appropriations for the remainder of FY19 were enacted on February 15, 2019 under Public Law (PL) 116-6.

The budget has been a key point of contention between Republicans and Democrats in Washington D.C. which led to a government shutdown in early 2019. However, the Budget deal which reopened the government was only a temporary measure and further negotiations were needed for a long-term solution. Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and Speaker of the House Pelosi began talks to reach a budget agreement which would be agreed upon by the Administration and both chambers of Congress.

The eventual budget deal reached was passed by Congress with a vote of 284-189 in the House and 67-28 in the Senate. President Trump signed the budget deal on August 2nd. The two-year, $2.7 trillion budget agreement signed by President Trump on August 2nd wards off $126 billion in automatic spending cuts and suspends the debt ceiling through July 2021. The deal does not remove the possibility of a government shutdown at the conclusion of the fiscal year ending Sept. 30. It only sets spending levels for House and Senate appropriators and Congress must still pass an appropriations package to avoid another government shutdown.

AMERICANISM

In February 2019 Representative Steve Womack (AR) began work on a House Joint Resolution (HJ Res), as a constitutional amendment to protect the flag. The legislation will be assigned to the House Judiciary Committee. The measure currently boasts 12 cosponsors. A Senate companion measure was will be introduced on June 14, 2019 (Flag Day) as a Senate Joint Resolution (SJ Res), and currently has 3 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.

As stated above, the President on March 15 enacted the final continuing appropriations measure for FY19, PL 11-6. Under the provisions of the new law.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Upon the passing of Past National Commander William Detweiler, Senator Cassidy (LA) and Senator Kennedy (LA) offered a statement for the congressional record. Further, Congressman Scalise (LA) as a member of leadership also offered to speak on the House floor for the record to commemorate the life and service of Commander Detweiler. Congressman Richmond (LA) flew a flag over the Capitol and gave a floor speech to commemorate the life and service of Commander Detweiler,

On February 14th, Senator Kyrsten Sinema (AZ) and Senator Tom Tillis (NC) introduced S. 504: The Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service Act (LEGION Act), extending the membership periods of The American Legion to allow for servicemembers who did not serve during official periods of war to sign up for membership in The American Legion. Congressman Correa (CA), Congressman Cisneros (CA), and Congressman Kline (VA) introduced the companion legislation, H.R. 1641, in the House of Representatives on March 8th.

The Senate passed S. 504 on June 11th and sent the bill to the House of Representatives where the House passed the LEGION Act on July 23rd. The LEGION act was signed into law by President Trump on July 30th 2019 and became Public Law (PL) 116-35.

Sens. Mike Braun, R-Ind., Jon Tester, D-Mont., Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, and Todd Young, R-Ind., introduced the resolution designating Aug. 23-29 as "American Legion Week” to coincide with the Legion's national convention in its home city of Indianapolis. The resolution was passed on July 31st in the Senate by unanimous consent. Representative
Andre Carson, D-Ind., introduced a companion resolution in the House on August 20th which has yet to receive a vote.

**NATIONAL SECURITY**

Since January 2019, the National Security Division has submitted four (4) letters of support.

On January 7th, staff submitted a letter of support to Senator John Thune (SD) to express support for S.21 - A bill making continuing appropriations for Coast Guard pay in the event an appropriations act expires prior to the enactment of a new appropriations act. The U.S. Coast Guard is the only military branch working without pay during the government shutdown.

On December 3rd, staff submitted a letter of support to Senator Richard Burr (NC) for “Gold Star Wives Day”, which would recognize the work of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. And their dedication to service, support and friendship to the spouses of fallen servicemembers and veterans. The service and sacrifice of servicemembers and their families should not be forgotten, and through this proposed legislation it will not.

On March 19th, the staff wrote a letter of support to Senator Tammy Duckworth (IL) and on March 26th to Representative Raul Grijalva (AZ) to draft legislation “Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2019”. The legislation enables the return of eligible veterans removed from the United States, protect veterans and servicemembers residing in the United States from removal, and facilitate naturalization through service in the Armed Forces.

On March 26th the Legislative Division in partnership with National Security and the Japanese Embassy held an event on Capitol Hill to forge a continued partnership between the Japanese government and The American Legion.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) has seen intense debate among the Republican led Senate and the Democratic held House. The Department of Defense, Administration, and the Senate asked for a DoD budget of $750 Billion while the House would eventually vote to appropriate only $733 Billion. The budget deal struck by Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi which, was recently signed by President Trump on August 2nd, would keep the defense budget at $738 Billion. However, the NDAA must head to a Conference Committee to reconcile the House and Senate versions of the bill and there are several key sticking points between Senate Republicans and House Democrats including:

- **Low Yield Tactical Nuclear Weapons:** The DoD is fighting for increased capabilities in the use and employment of low yield tactical nukes by modernizing the nuclear arsenal and placing tactical nuclear devices in Nuclear Ballistic Submarines (SSBN). The DoD and Republicans view this as a way to threaten a “flexible response” should an adversary, such as Russia, from employing a tactical nuclear device. Democrats view this as a waste of resources and prefer deterrence through mutual assured destruction (MAD) even if an adversary only employs a low yield tactical nuke.

- **Use of DoD funds for construction of a border wall:** Democrats want to prohibit the use of DoD funds to build a border wall because they view it as a misallocation of defense funds. Republicans view that these are an appropriate use of DoD funds.

- **Guantanamo Bay facilities:** Democrats want to continue to push for efforts which draw down activity at the Guantanamo Bay detention facilities while Republicans want to keep captured terrorist detainees out of the United States.

- **Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF):** Democrats are concerned that President Trump could use the 2001 AUMF to start a war with Iran and are looking to prohibit such actions. Republicans view this as a partisan attempt to tie the Presidents hands to react to changing national security issues.

- **Missile Defense Systems:** The DoD and Republicans want to continue development, testing, and deployment of missile defense systems, both theater and strategic systems, to protect the U.S. and military forces. Democrats see this as destabilizing for relations with
nations such as Russia and China who oppose the development of Missile Defense Systems.

The members of the Conference committee have yet to be announced but congressional staff has been having ongoing discussions over the August recess to try and hammer out an agreement before the members of Congress return in September.

The American Legion was proud to support extensive legislative efforts to end the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset, better known as the Widows Tax. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate introduced stand-alone bills to end the Widows Tax during the 116th Congress (H.R. 553 & S.622). Such language was also present in the House version of the NDAA which passed on July 12th, however, it was not included in the Senate version. Presently, The American Legion is continuing advocacy efforts to ensure language to end the Widows Tax is included in the final version of the NDAA.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

The American Legion was happy to support the Retired Pay Restoration Act addressing concurrent receipt. The American Legion offered letters of support to the two bipartisan cosponsors, Representatives Tulsi Gabbard and Gus Bilirakis. The legislation would remove the tax on veterans who receive retirement pay from their federal service as well as their service in the military.

The American Legion also support to Representative Hartzler on the VA Hiring Enhancement Act. The legislation would expedite hiring processes at VA and ensure individuals who wish to work at VA are not waiting extended periods. The legislation asks VA to focus on critical positons that provide direct and immediate healthcare to veterans and VA healthcare recipients.

Last year, the House unanimously passed a bill, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, to provide benefits to affected service members. But Wilkie objected, saying the science does not prove that they were exposed to Agent Orange. Veterans and their advocates had argued that the ships' distilling systems used Agent Orange-tainted seawater, exposing sailors on board to concentrated levels of dioxin. However, the bill failed in the Senate when two Republicans, Sen. Michael Enzi of Wyoming and Mike Lee of Utah, said they wanted to wait for a vote pending the outcome of a current study on Agent Orange exposure.

The calculus changed after the Supreme Court's decision in Procopio. The Department of Veterans Affairs stated it would not appeal a January court ruling that ordered it to provide health care and disability benefits for 90,000 veterans who served on Navy ships during the Vietnam War. This action will likely pave the way for "Blue Water Navy" sailors and Marines to receive Agent Orange-related compensation and VA-paid health care benefits. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie told members of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on March 26, 2019 that he would recommend the Justice Department not fight the decision, handing a victory to former servicemembers who fought for years to have their diseases recognized as related to exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange.

During the 116th Congress, the House again voted unanimously to approve H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, and sent the bill to the Senate for approval. This time, the Senate did not block the bill and voted unanimously to approve the H.R 299. On Tuesday, June 25, President Trump signed into law H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

The American Legion has worked with Representative Brownley to introduce legislation that would address homeless veterans. Our letter extended support to the Homeless Veterans Family Act, which would reimburse payments to organizations providing housing for not only homeless veterans but also their dependents. Often times veterans will forego assistance rather than leave their family behind. Representative Stivers also introduced similar legislation, The HOMeS Act, which would also provide housing for
veterans their dependents experiencing homelessness. The American Legion has worked with both members to advance our priority of ending veteran homelessness.

Legislation was introduced to revamp the TAPS Program and move towards a digital friendly program. Currently, servicemembers and those eligible receive a stack of documentation that often ends up disposed. As the newer generation of servicemembers are geared towards media presented on electronic devices, Congressman Smith's office has led the charge by working with VA, DOL, and DOD to provide more information in digital format.

The new Congress has also shifted towards addressing predatory lenders, the 90/10 rule, and ensuring for-profit private universities are not targeting servicemembers and veterans for their GI Bill benefits.

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

Annual National Legislative Council Activities Report 2018-2019

In 1975, The National Executive Committee created the National Legislative Council to assist the work of the Legislative Commission. The Legislative Council is composed of a chairman that leads the council, vice-chairs for each department and the member Legionnaires assigned to each Member of Congress. The purpose of the National Legislative Council is to have Legionnaires that forge relationships with their assigned Member of Congress therefore offering sound judgment and advice on issues of importance to The American Legion, veterans, servicemembers, and their families.

In accordance with NEC Resolution No. 28 (October 1994), I am pleased to submit the following Annual Consolidated National Legislative Council Activities Report for 2018-2019.

1. Legislative Alerts sent out in the past year
   1. LEGION ACT 05/16/2019
   2. S.21 and H.R. 367, the Pay Our Coast Guard Act 05/17/2019
   3. Contact your representative to pass S. 504 06/14/2019
   4. Contact your representative to pass S. 504 (Copy) 06/27/2019
   5. Contact your representative to put the LEGION Act on the suspension calendar 07/08/2019

2. Grassroots Lobbying Activities in Washington, DC
   Washington Conference – February 21 – February 25, 2019
   National Commander's Testimony – February 27, 2019

3. National Legislative Council Meetings Held
   The National Legislative Council does not hold national meetings. Rather, meetings are held by the individual departments at the vice-chairman of the respective state deems necessary. Most department meetings are held in conjunction with existing department conferences and conventions. Most departments hold between two and four meetings of the Legislative Council throughout the year along with many other informal meetings at a more local level.

   Thank you and Good morning Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Legionnaires, and friends… I am honored and humbled to stand and speak before you this morning and report on some of our accomplishments. None of us including me do great things, but collectively our individual efforts makes great happen every time.
   Every year the Council Chairman must prepare a report on the activities of the
National Legislative Council for the past year and submit it to the National Executive Committee at their Pre-Convention meeting. This report details the legislative alerts sent out, and any other activities of a grassroots nature. I am pleased to announce the report is completed and will be submitted in a timely manner.

I can honestly say we have an excellent cadre of Legionnaires willing to dedicate their time, knowledge and passion to work on issues of importance to the Legion and our nation’s veterans at the local, state, and national levels lead by our National Commander.

The sheer number of reports my staff received following office visits to members of Congress during this year’s Washington Conference demonstrate the quality of work of the Legion Family in communicating the needs and values of this nation’s veterans to Capitol Hill.

We began the year supporting our brothers and sisters effected by the Government Shutdown. We rallied to their cries and although legislation was not passed I would like to think we applied our collective influence for the Government to re-open and reconsider the shutdown effected.

In this reporting period, five action alerts sent out using the Legion’s mailing list which includes our Council members. We now reach over 20,000 individuals directly, and untold more through forwarding of such messages. This year our activists have sent thousands of emails to Members of Congress through this outreach method. This is a tremendous number of advocacy messages and demonstrates that users swift response to “The Call to Action Alerts” are paramount to our success.

One of the most notable alerts was in concern of the Bluewater Navy Act. On Tuesday, June 25, President Trump signed into law H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019. We supported this legislation that will extend disability benefits covering medical conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure to those who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam, known as “Blue Water” Navy veterans. This campaign has demonstrated why we need to have a strong Council. And as Chairman of the National Legislative Council I will work diligently to ensure we have the strongest Council possible so that we are at the forefront of legislative efforts of importance.

Finally, with the steadfast determination of our National Commander we forged forward to present the LEGION ACT with bill H.R. 1641 and S. 504. Through the guidance of Commander Reistad, and everyone under the sound of my voice, the tremendous efforts of our Legislative Council and Legionnaires around the country S. 504 passed with unanimous consent in June. The work was not over. The persistence of reaching out to members of Congress got it through the House and signed by the President on July 30. The LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act) opens the door for approximately 6 million veterans to access American Legion programs and benefits for which they previously had not been eligible. Now that the legislation has been signed, The American Legion’s eligibility criteria immediately changes from seven war eras to two: April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to a time later determined by the federal government. No other restrictions to American Legion membership are changed.

Although we have accomplished much there is so much left to do. We have not passed legislation for the Coast Guard and we can do more to improve the health for women veterans. Our veterans cannot get what it is they need and deserve without each and every one of you. I ask you as members of the National Legislative Commission to stay in the fight and assist me in this endeavor by getting our messages out to your departments immediately. Please assist our Council-members in their efforts.

The Legion Family is here in bulk for our 101st National Convention. Take this opportunity to spread the call to action far and wide while you’re here. And when you return home, please continue to do so. I know I will. And I know I can count on you to do so also. You will hear more about this effort shortly, so I’ll leave it there for now. I thank you in advance for your efforts.

Turning to another matter, our Legislative Division has gone through some changes in the past few months. Acting Legislative Director is Jeff Steele flanked by his Legislative
staff Ernest Robinson, Lawrence Montreuil and John Medin. In addition to being a Legislative Associate Ernest Robinson also serves as the Grassroots Coordinator in which I am certain you all have received e-mails from him this year. Please seek him our during convention for a brief introduction as he has assured me he will do. Ernest and the entire legislative staff serves as the eyes and ears in D.C. as you are in the various districts around the country.

As Chairman of the National Legislative Council I will work diligently to ensure we have the strongest council possible so that we are at the forefront of efforts to protect the benefits military veterans have earned.

Finally, I want to thank the entire National Legislative Council for their dedication and hard work during the past year. I also would like to extend a special thanks to those vice chairs who submitted their department annual reports. These reports keep us informed of the great work they and the Department councils are doing to advance our legislative priorities. I found them to be very helpful.

We owe it to veterans, current service-members, and their families to make absolutely certain that we are heard. Therefore, I ask you to help me amplify our voice, by keeping the Council as a vibrant grassroots organization.

I thank you all for listening to my report and I look forward to working with everyone in advancing The American Legion’s legislative agenda.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my remarks and I move for adoption of this report.

5. The American Legion Auxiliary

The American Legion Auxiliary continues to be an invaluable asset to The American Legion Family and its grassroots lobbying ability. The prolific letter and email writing, countless phone calls and numerous office visits by Auxiliary members never cease to amaze me. Only through a united effort of Legionnaires, Sons and the Auxiliary can our legislative goals be realized.

6. National Legislative Council Award

I am pleased to announce that one National Legislative Council member was selected for his outstanding contributions in advancing the legislative portfolio of The American Legion during this past reporting period: Arthur Schwabe (FL). The award was presented during the 2019 Washington Conference.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Chairman Fisher.

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

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It’s been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Legislative Commission. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Opposed? The motion is carried. I now call Walter W. Ivie of Texas for the Media & Communications report.

Oral Report: Media & Communications Commission
Walter W. Ivie, Texas, Chairman

Mr. Commander, the Media & Communications Commission has no urgent matters nor resolutions to come before the NEC. You have my written report, so I'll just outline two highlights from the Media & Communications Commission.

New digital media projects are in the mill and will soon get to the market to better reach and satisfy the post-9/11 veteran audience. Meanwhile, the national website, legion.org, hit an all-time record of visitation in July 2019 when more than 619,000 individuals clicked into our biggest digital platform. These developments are not unconnected as media and media consumption continue to evolve. We see it as our responsibility to get on top of these changes heading into our second century.

Commander Reistad, on behalf of The American Legion Media & Communications
Commission, I want to thank you for your continued support of the media program, and that concludes my report.

Report: Media & Communications Commission
August 26, 2019
Walter W. Ivie, Texas, Chairman

The Media and Communications Division is currently ahead on advertising revenue and over budget in total expenses through the end of June. Overall, we are trailing the budget by $551,926.

That deficit is largely due to the production and distribution costs, which as of the close of the September issue of the magazine, were roughly $548,000 over budget. However, thanks to the contracts with LSC and Lindenmeyr Central that were approved during the Spring Meetings, our printing and paper costs, respectively, will be significantly lower going forward.

On the paper side, right now we are $290,000 over budget. In the third quarter of this year, the price of the paper we use for body stock will decrease our cost per issue by about $10,000. Additionally, the new contract calls for lower paper costs and gives us a $50,000 credit for paper purchased since March.

On the printing side, we are roughly $50,000 over budget. That will be wiped away due to the negotiated reductions in manufacturing ($63,751 annually), ink ($47,206 annually) and freight rate ($51,492). That amounts to a total savings of more than $162,000 each year.

We stand $208,130 over budget on our postage costs. That is due to being 24 pages over budget through the first six issues of the year. (Marketing pages account for 23.2 pages, editorial accounts for .8 and we are 10 pages behind in advertising.) Right now the magazine is 50-50 on editorial-advertising breakdown, the tightest ratio in history. Meanwhile, overall advertising revenue is more than $225,000 ahead of budget.

Magazine ad sales have been cyclical throughout this year but now stand at $5,287,362, which is $312,532 ahead of budget. Advertising revenue for the national website, however, is down significantly. Only $100 has been sold against a goal of $77,000. The American Legion Online Update (ALOU) has sold approximately $10,000 in advertising and is $20,000 behind budget.

Relationships coordinated by our Marketing Division have softened some of the blow against that deficit. Additionally, revenue from AdSense totaling $23,586 is helping to recoup some of those digital losses.

The division will continue to look for opportunities to convert a growing digital audience into additional advertising revenue and membership. In July, the national website had its most successful month ever in terms of audience. Consider:

- In July 2019, there were 612,000 unique visitors to legion.org, over 100,000 more than the previous record set in July 2018.
- The number of sessions (or total visits) during July 2019 was 719,453, beating the previous record of 670,807 set one year ago.
- For the entire year, through July, we are 11 percent ahead of last year in both unique visitors and sessions.

Understanding the continued growth of our digital audience and the habits of the post 9/11 generation, we are working on developing a digital platform called Tango Alpha Lima to engage them. Over the past year, we have conceived the concept for this website, based on a focus group and a subsequent survey of 500 younger veterans, and begun to develop the website as well as a twice-monthly podcast. Right now, we are working with internal and external focus groups to receive their feedback and adopt their recommendations.

Beyond the digital content that we are developing, we believe this broadens our pool of potential advertisers whose target audience closely aligns with this demographic.

Tango Alpha Lima is an extension of our longstanding commitment to showcase what young American Legion members are doing in their communities. Take for example,
younger veterans who have been profiled in the magazine, including Derric Grimes, Jordan Houghton, Desiree Guerra and Matt Jabaut all in the past year.

We're also demonstrating the activities that younger American Legion members are doing. For example, the August magazine features Legionnaire Billy Richards, a Marine and Army veteran. Richards is trying to break the world record for most 100-mile running races in a single year.

The main driver of our audience and revenue remains the magazine. And, once again, The American Legion Magazine has been named the best-read magazine by an independent auditor. The percentage of readers who say they read at least three of the previous four issues of the magazine is 77 percent, highest among 180 publications surveyed. Also notable in the annual survey:

- The audience fell slightly from 3,308,000 to 3,237,000, a decline of 2 percent.
- The Legion audience is affluent. The American Legion's median household net worth is 26 percent higher than the U.S. adult population and it increased about 4 percent from a year ago.

We are also working on other initiatives to support the organization's goals and objectives of other divisions. For example, we are producing regular media to promote the sales of the American Legion centennial coins.

Additionally, we worked with the Membership Division to distribute information immediately after the president signed the LEGION Act into law. Membership materials were updated immediately on the website and have been worked for print distribution as well.

Following the resolution at Spring Meetings calling for Legion Family Play Days, we worked with Internal Affairs/Membership to launch pilot tests of the concept at American Legion posts. The Media & Communications team developed promotional materials for the posts and documented the Play Days with web stories, photos and videos, then reported the results to the Membership Workshops in early August.

Moving forward, The American Legion Media & Communications Commission looks to support and advance the organization's initiatives in marketing, corporate relationships, brand awareness, transactional media, data storage and content delivery.

The entire commission deeply appreciates the confidence and support shown from the National Commander and the National Executive Committee.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Chairman Ivie.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Media & Communications Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Media & Communications Commission. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion is carried.

I now call on Reverend Daniel J. Seehafer of Wisconsin, Membership and Post Activities chairman, for the purposes of a report.

Oral Report of Membership & Post Activities Committee
Rev. Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin, Chairman

Good morning. National Commander, past national commanders, fellow NEC and guests, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to brief you on the Membership & Post Activities Committee meeting.

You do have a copy of my written report, and there are no emergency matters to come before this body. I would like to update you, however, on a few things that are currently taking place during this convention.

We held subject matter expert training on Saturday, and we are currently conducting classes in the expo hall. There's also training being held right now for the newly elected district commanders as we speak. As you can see, training is a vital component in engaging
our leaders at the post and district levels, and the key is passing that information learned on to those who could not attend.

Additionally, with the passing of the LEGION Act, as of today we have 1,196 new members that are now a part of The American Legion.

Commander, thank you for your continued support and guidance. This does, then, conclude my report.

Report: Membership & Post Activities Committee
August 24, 2019
Rev. Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin, Chairman

The Membership and Post Activities Committee met at 10:30 a.m. on August 24, 2019, in the JW Marriott, Rooms 103 & 104, First Floor. There were 44 individuals in attendance.

Those in attendance received updates on the LEGION Act, the DMS program, membership workshop, district revitalizations, post to national dues processing through myLegion, the 2020 membership goal and the M&PA Committee meetings held this past January and in August prior to the membership workshop.

The LEGION Act was signed into law on July 30, 2019. As of August 24, 1,161 veterans have joined The American Legion under the Other Conflicts listing. Members are encouraged to review the “Eleven things you need to know about the LEGION Act” and utilize the Membership Impact Report when engaging veterans who now qualify for membership.

During the recent membership workshop in Indianapolis held on August 8-10, 2019, there were 360 volunteers registered to attend. It was one of the best sessions we have had in recent years. The majority of the time was spent on training for department membership chairmen, district commanders and long-term membership planning. The discussions were interactive and very enthusiastic.

National Staff, working in conjunction with local volunteers, were directly involved in 2,500 posts being started or revitalized through the efforts of district revitalization teams in 2018 (staff efforts run from Jan 1 – Dec 31). We expect that number to meet or exceed 2,500 in 2019 based on the 2020 membership goal incorporating encumbered DMS members.

The online renewal program continues to perform well, adding great value to the renewal process. The 2019 campaign yielded 256,659 members who have renewed online – 4,981 less than 2018. We expect 2020 results to be similar. Online renewal has been a great addition to the renewal campaign as well as the post and department online transmittal process.

The 2020 membership goal is 1,746,497. This goal was derived from the departments total traditional membership as of July 1, 2019, which includes DMS transferred members, traditionally acquired members and renewals plus 75% of the encumbered DMS members within each department for 2019. To assist in obtaining the goal, there is a $5 incentive for the department for transferring 2019 DMS encumbered members and renewing them into the local post for 2020. This is a change from the 2019 incentive. By placing it at the department level, it stands a higher level of success in working the lists and transferring the encumbered members.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our parent Commission, Internal Affairs, and this Committee for your support, vision and involvement concerning the 2020 membership campaign.

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Chairman Seehafer.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Membership & Post Activities Committee. ...Second.
NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It has been moved and seconded 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? The ayes have it. Motion is carried. I now call on Chairman Robert E. Newman of Indiana for the report on Internal Affairs.

**Oral Report: Internal Affairs Commission**

Robert E. Newman, Indiana, Chairman

Thank you, Commander Reistad, NEC and guests. Good morning. You have my report from Internal Affairs Commission. We do not have any other business to come before this body.

That concludes my report. Commander, thank you for allowing me to serve as your commission chairman, and I thank the NEC for all its support of the Internal Affairs Commission this year.

**Report: Internal Affairs Commission**

August 24, 2019

Robert E. Newman, Indiana, Chairman

The Internal Affairs Commission and guests totaling 35 attendees met in the JW Marriott, Rooms 101 & 102, First Floor, on Saturday, August 24, 2019. We reviewed 15 resolutions that went before the Convention Committee on Internal Affairs. We have no resolutions to go before the National Executive Committee during this pre-convention meeting.

The American Legion Riders have continued the tradition of service to America's veterans and their families with their unwavering support of The American Legion Legacy Scholarship for the children of fallen warriors. This year we averaged 200 bikes with 40 passengers for this year's run to Indianapolis from Lady Lake, Florida. Over 160 people registered as non-riding supporters. At this point, they have raised almost $293,000 and we expect more donations Tuesday August 27, 2019 on the convention floor.

Since January 1, December 31, 2018 we granted $256,870 to 82 members and 22 posts in emergency assistance. Since Jan. 1, 2019 we have granted $66,845 in emergency assistance to 31 members and four posts. During the same time period our members, posts, and departments have donated $192,698.62 in return. The NEF remains healthy with over $6.2M available (the market value as of August 1, 2019).

For the past 21 years, the Sons of The American Legion membership has grown approximately 1% annually. The Sons of American Legion 2019 membership is currently at 371,020 and projected to be above 372,500 by the end of the year (December 2019). At the current annual per capita rate of two dollars ($2.00), this will generate close to $750K for the national organization at the end of December 2019.

The $2.00 Sons of The American Legion per capita rate has not changed since 1982 and is not a true reflection of the operating costs to support the Sons of The American Legion national organization.

At this convention, the Sons of The American Legion approved a dues increase of $3.00 which makes their per capita $5.00 for membership year 2021. This will result in at least $350,000 for the Sons of The American Legion program to cover expenses that had been funded from the National American Legion budget. Any additional revenue will assist in funding a capability for on-line renewal and other services not currently available for the Sons of The American Legion.

As Chairman of the National Internal Affairs Commission, on behalf of all our members, I wish to extend to all members of this body my appreciation for your support and encouragement during the past year. A special thanks to our National Commander Brett Reistad for active support and his positive approach to our programs.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Chairman Newman.
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Internal Affairs Committee. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Internal Affairs Commission. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. Motion is carried.

Next we will hear from Chairman Vincent James Troiola of New York for the Veterans Employment & Education Commission report.

Oral Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Vincent J. Troiola, New York, Chairman

Thank you, Mr. Commander, members of the National Executive Committee, past national commanders and guests all, members of the committees on Employment and Veterans Preference and Veterans Education, Other Benefits & Homelessness met at 8:30am on Saturday, August 24, 2019 in the Indianapolis, Indiana, JW Marriott to listen to presentations from a variety of subject matter experts in the area of veteran employment, education, credentialing, homelessness, and small business development.

In attendance there were approximately 70 members of the commission, NEC liaison, and many other guests. We had a variety of speakers, to include our past national commanders, providing leadership and guidance to the committees.

Lastly, the commission handed out the national Employer and Homeless Veterans Awards.

You've been provided copies of the report of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission before you. There are currently no matters of an emergency nature from the Veterans Employment & Education Commission to be presented to the National Executive Committee.

On behalf of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission, I extend our deepest gratitude to you, Mr. Commander, and to all the members of the NEC for its advocacy and support extended to us throughout this year.

Commander, it's been an honor to serve you this year. I thank you for that opportunity. To the members of the NEC, thank you for your support that you have given to this commission. That concludes my report, commander.

Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
August 24, 2019
Vincent J. Troiola, New York, Chairman

On Wednesday, August 21, 2019, 25 members of the Employment Innovation Task Force participated in the 2019 Innovation Task Force Convention meeting. Ms. Linda Brooks- Rix, Leader, Employment Innovation Task Force and Ariel De Jesus, Chair, Employment Innovation Task Force moderated the task force meeting. Representatives and leaders from the private sector, Departments of Labor, Defense, Agriculture, Small Business Administration, and Veterans Affairs provided updates on their organization's veteran employment initiatives. In addition, the task force members discussed ways in which the American Legion can continue to lead the discussion on transforming the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). The task force discussed grass-roots initiatives that will assist in increasing The American Legion's profile with the current and next generation of active duty servicemembers and veterans. Moving forward, the task force chair will develop a white-paper to guide the understanding of veteran employment opportunities and inform future initiatives aimed at prioritizing veteran recruitment, improving the Transition Assistance Program, and developing digital-delivery solutions for transitioning servicemembers.

On Thursday, August 22, 2019, veterans and job seekers from around the greater Indianapolis area attended the 2019 Veterans Employment & Education Division's Hiring Our Heroes Transition and Benefits Career Fair, sponsored by The American Legion at the
Indiana Convention Center. The event began promptly at 9:00 am with opening remarks from Vincent J. Troiola, Chairman, Veterans Employment & Education Commission. Ariel De Jesus, Assistant Director, Veterans Employment & Education Division provided a brief introduction and welcomed those in attendance. Following the opening remarks, employer representatives from 20 private sector businesses provided an overview of their company's mission and communicated their interest in hiring veterans. In addition, The American Legion's Human Resources Staff provided additional resources and support by hosting an employment skills booth covering civilian and federal employment resume writing and financial literacy. Veterans and job seekers in attendance participated in an Employer Networking Luncheon that provided a venue to interact and engage employers while increasing their professional network and building social etiquette skills in a relaxed environment.

On Saturday, August 24, 2019, members of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission met at 9:00am at the Indianapolis, Indiana, JW Marriott, Grand Ballroom, Sections 7 & 8, to attend presentations from subject matter experts in the areas of veterans employment, education, training, credentialing, housing, homelessness and small business development. In attendance were 60 members of the Commission, the NEC Liaison, and many other guests. The Commission was called to order by Chairman Vincent J. Troiola. The invocation was given by Mr. Eric Measles. Mr. James Fratolillo led the Commission in the Pledge Allegiance and Chairman Troiola honored and recognized the POW/MIA chair by presenting Resolution No. 288 and leading the Commission in a moment of silence. Chairman Troiola provided the welcome and announcements and introduced the Master of Ceremony, Mr. Charles Fowler, member of The American Legion Small Business Taskforce.

Speakers for the Commission meeting included: Past National Commanders Daniel M. Dellinger, Denise H. Rohan, James E. Koutz, Harold Dale Barnett, and Fang A. Wong, Dr. Paul R. Lawrence, Undersecretary of Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Kedron Burnett, VA, Leslie Roose, VA, Bill Aston, United States Department of Agriculture, Small Business Loans for Agriculture, Jason Latona, Program Manager, Specially Adapted Housing, Veterans Benefits Administration, Michael DeLaRosa, Director, Veterans Build Habitat for Humanity International, Larry Stubblefield, Associate Administrator, Small Business Administration, Alex Shebanow, Policy Fellow, National Student Legal Defense Network, Raymond Curtis, State Policy Manager, Veterans Education Success, and Greg Pace, National Director Military Affairs, DeVry University.

In addition, the Commission presented the National Veterans Employment & Education Commission's National Employer and Homeless Veteran Service provider awards to community service organizations and employers that made a difference in their communities through their commitment to veterans. The Commission adjourned at 4:30 pm.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, chairman.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Nay? The ayes have it. The motion is carried. It's now time for the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission report, and I call upon Chairman Ralph P. Bozella of Colorado.

**Oral Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission**

Ralph P. Bozella, Colorado, Chairman

Thank you, commander. NEC, past national commanders, national officers and guests, good morning. We have no urgent matters to report on this day, but this day I would
like to highlight what's going on with VA&R Commission.

Our commission met on Saturday morning at the JW Marriott hotel, White River Ballroom, along with our Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits, and National Cemetery committees. And the theme of the day was American Legion VA&R and the Communities. We heard from VA Undersecretary for Benefits Dr. Paul Lawrence, who addressed the appeals modernization, and he talked about how the Modernization Act, which was rolled out in its entirety February 2019, has cut back on the claims backlog, which is something we're all happy about, that the number is finally dropping.

He also addressed the issue of the Blue Water Navy. The Blue Water Navy Act went into effect. The VA secretary put a stay on the Blue Water Navy Act. However, they are taking the claims, and they're working on them. They will not be adjudicated until January 1st of 2020.

We also heard from VA National Cemetery Administration Undersecretary Randy Reeves. And within that theme, VA&R and the Community, he asked The American Legion to get involved on Patriot Day, September 11, with the cleaning of headstones across all the national veteran cemeteries across this country. Our staff will be sending information out to invite them to become part of that.

He also talked about the VA Carry The Load program. It's an effort to never forget, to always remember those who gave their lives in defense of this country. And it's like Memorial Day becomes memorial month and eventually memorial year. So we were very pleased to hear that effort.

Also heard from Principal Deputy Undersecretary for Health Administration, Dr. Steve Lieberman, he talked about the MISSION Act, which is certainly our concern. It has replaced the Choice Act, the big piece of that being the Care in the Community program and how important that is to The American Legion, and we are vigilantly on top of the Care in the Community to ensure it is not a back door to privatization. He was thoroughly questioned about that issue at the meeting. So we were pleased to have that discussion. He also addressed another topic, which is very close to all of our hearts, and that is veteran suicide and the VA Save Act. VA will come into our Legion posts and provide suicide prevention training. We're doing that in Colorado. They're doing that in a lot of states. So I would encourage you to get involved. We will send you information on that.

We heard about Project ATLAS, and that is bringing VA telehealth to American Legion posts. The American Legion is working with VA on that. There are three pilots that are going to take place, and I believe that the Marketing Division is working on that with VA. Remember, it's pilot programs. We will hear more about that in the future.

Our TBI/PTSD Committee met, and we have a survey that's out there with 13,356 respondents to date. We've had four surveys before this, and the most we've ever had was 2,400. This is an amazing number of people responding to our mental health survey for veterans. That survey is open until the end of this convention. Find out. Get online. Just Google it, and you can take that survey. We encourage you to do so.

The annual VA&R report, as mandated by Congress, has been filed. You have a System Worth Saving book on your seat. We have five more visits to do in 2019, that’s all reported for you.

Commander, I want to thank the volunteers and the staff of the VA&R Commission and Division for the work that we continue to do for veterans in this country. Commander, it's been an honor and privilege to serve.

And one personal note, for Father Philip Salois, part of our head table here, of course, our national chaplain: Welcome home, brother. Thank you, commander. That concludes my report.
Proceedings of Monday, August 26, 2019

Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
August 24, 2019
Ralph P. Bozella, Colorado, Chairman

The National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission held its meeting at the JW Marriott Indianapolis Hotel, White River Ballroom, Section F, First Floor, on Saturday, August 24, 2019. The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission had a total of 86 call-ins. There were 27 members of the Commission, 8 members of the Health Administration Committee, 12 members of the Veterans Benefits Committee, 12 members of the National Cemetery Committee, 36 VA&R Council members, and one NEC Liaison.

The following officials addressed the Commission's morning session: Dr. Paul R. Lawrence, Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Steven L. Lieberman, Principle Deputy Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Kay Burnett and Lesly Roose, Project ATLAS, Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Lawrence provided a high level review of current efforts within the Veterans Benefits Administration to include: Appeals Modernization, Blue Water Navy, Forever GI Bill, and Home Loan Guarantee. Dr. Lieberman discussed the implementation of the VA Mission Act, VA's focus on women's health priority, the elimination of sexual assault and harassment at VA facilities, and VA's ongoing work to end veteran suicide. Kay Burnett and Lesly Roose discussed Project ATLAS. It is a joint project between VA and community partners to leverage telehealth technologies to enhance the accessibility, capacity, and quality of VA healthcare for Veterans, their families, and their caregivers anywhere in the country. VA is working with The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars to offer telehealth care at selected locations around the country with telehealth equipment.

At 10:30 a.m. the Commission divided into three break-out sessions.

The Veterans Benefits Committee remained in the White River Ballroom, Section F, 1st Floor, and heard from Michael Stephens, Director, Indianapolis Regional Office, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Cheryl L. Mason, Chairman of the Board of Veterans Appeals, Department of Veterans Affairs. Chairman Mason discussed current efforts within the Board of Veterans appeals to include: BVA 2.0 Priorities, AMA Decision Review Process, VA Prioritization, and Appeals Inventory. Director Stephens discussed similar efforts specific to the Indianapolis Regional Office and their efforts to prepare for Blue Water Navy while still working through changes brought about by AMA.

The National Cemetery Committee met in the White River Ballroom, Section E, 1st Floor, and heard from Steve Ecker, Division Chief, and Jerry Sowers, Eligibility Division Chief, National Cemetery Scheduling Office, Department of Veterans Affairs. They highlighted the scheduling office's ongoing initiatives to improve customer service and provide timely assistance at the time of need, when a veteran passes. They highly encourage all veterans to apply for pre-need burial eligibility determination to ease the process for their next of kin.

The Health Administration Committee met in the White River Ballroom, Section G-1, 1st Floor, and heard from Dr. Kevin Galpin, Executive Director, Telehealth Services, Department of Veteran Affairs, and Christian Dimercurio, Field Implementation Team (FIT) Lead, Region 3, Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Galpin discussed the expansion and power of telehealth within VA medical centers to provide healthcare services to veterans across the United States. He briefly touched on Project ATLAS Initiative, which was presented in an earlier session, but he also spoke about the digital divide. Telehealth can be a powerful tool to provide healthcare services to veterans, but the digital divide needs to be addressed first and foremost. He explained that the VA has an effort to understand the current digital capacity of veterans in rural areas to connect with telehealth and then working with larger commercial partners like Microsoft, Verizon, and T-Mobile to improve telehealth services to veterans. Mr. DiMercurio was a very upbeat inspirational presentation about the VHA Whole Health Initiative. He addressed the committee, and the other attendees, with a power concept that “YOU” the individual is the most important
element of your healthcare. He explained that if “YOU” as the individual are not doing, living, or feeling well, then you can't be well or truly provide for the others around you or in your life. He explained that Whole Health is a VHA system wide initiative to address health through the alternative treatments like acupuncture, Tai-Chi, yoga, and meditation. Mr. DiMercurio also brought assistants with him who had first-hand experience via Whole Health programs.

The full commission reconvened at 12:35 PM in the White River Ballroom, Section F, 1st Floor, and the commission heard from the following individuals: Lee Becker, Chief of Staff, Veteran Experience Office, Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Jennifer MacDonald, VA Mission Act Lead, Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Kameron Matthews, Deputy Under Secretary for Health & Community Care, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Randy C. Reeves, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Administration. Lee Becker highlighted the Veterans Experience Office mission is to provide world class customer service in the delivery of care, benefits, and services to veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors. The Veterans Experience office will accomplish this by leveraging data, tools, technology, and engagements to meets its mission so that veterans and their dependents trust and choose VA. Dr. McDonald stated that providing an excellent experience of care for veterans, families, and caregivers is at the core of VA's approach to the implementation of the Mission Act. She stated that the Mission Act will strengthen VA's ability to recruit and retain clinicians, empower veterans with increase access to community care, authorize anywhere to anywhere telehealth provisions across state lines, combine multiple community care programs into a unified integrated experience, and establish access to urgent care in the community. Dr. Matthews explained key changes for veterans, providers, and VA under the Mission Act. New changes for veterans include access to urgent care, expanded eligibility for community care, and new technology to streamline communication. Changes for providers and VA include undergoing an independent credentialing process, complete mandatory periodic training, submit claims within 180 days from date of treatment, and an increase in an automated process to increase productivity. Randy Reeves discussed the recent partnership with Carry the Load, a nonprofit organization that provides active ways to connect Americans to the sacrifices made daily by the U.S. military, Veterans, first responders and their families. Participants will march or ride bicycles in an 11,500-mile national relay along three routes East Coast, West Coast and Midwest handing off an American flag every few miles. He also asked for The American Legions support in new legislation to assist with the Veterans Legacy Program and a new initiative to allow VA to pay for the training of state veteran's cemetery employees on how to properly maintain the grounds and render final honors for veterans.

At the conclusion of the presentations, a panel discussion was led by Ralph P. Bozella (CO), Chairman, VA&R Commission. The panel consisted of Phil Youngblood (GA), Chairman, Health Administration Committee; Richard W. Neville (NC), Chairman, National Cemetery Committee; William J. Smith (PA), Chairman, Veterans Benefits Committee; and Ronald Conley (PA), Chairman, TBI/PTSD Committee. The Chairmen provided a brief update on the actions and presentations during their breakout sessions and any new relevant topics with in their committees. The meeting concluded with a business session for the good of The American Legion.

The minutes for the subcommittee meetings are available upon request from the National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Staff offices.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Chairman Bozella.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion to receive and file the report of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It has been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission. Is there any discussion?
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Comrade commander, through you to the chairman. I'm hearing things through rumors, but I'd like to get it right from you. We know we appoint the individuals to come in and review your resolutions, right? And there are four or five that we appoint each year. I understand only one showed up?

CHAIRMAN BOZELLA: That's correct.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I'd like a report of who showed up and who didn't.

CHAIRMAN BOZELLA: I'll answer Commander Comer's concern with a report. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Any further discussion? Hearing none, all in favor say aye. Any opposed? The motion is carried. It's now time for the National Security report, Chairman E.C. Toppin, from North Carolina.

**Oral Report: National Security**

E.C. Toppin, North Carolina, Chairman

Thank you, Mr. Commander. Members of the National Executive Committee, past national commanders and guests all, the National Security Commission met on Saturday, August 24, in the Saginaw Ballroom located in the Indiana Convention Center.

The commission was honored to be joined by the United States Global Leadership Coalition, also Major General Pace, the director of the Defense Health Agency, and Chantel Dooley, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, all of whom presented dynamic and thought-provoking words of support and encouragement and acknowledgment to the committee members.

You have been provided copies of the report of the National Security Commission before you. There are currently no matters of an emergency nature. The dynamic nature of the world is ever-changing, yet our focus and concern with the national security strategy and the national defense strategy is to compete, deter, and win. Your committee strives each day to be relevant and diligent. I continue to have confidence in our commission and Legionnaires.

As a matter of personal privilege, on the TAPS Program, I encourage all of you to take this back to your departments. To get more information, contact the National Security staff in Washington. They can give you more information. But it's something that we need to get involved in on the state level.

On behalf of the National Security Commission, I extend our deepest gratitude to you, Mr. Commander, and to all the members of the NEC for its advocacy and support extended to us throughout this year. Commander, it's been an honor to serve you, our veterans, families, and Legionnaires this year. I thank you for that opportunity. To the members of the NEC, thank you for your support you've given to this commission.

**Report: National Security Commission**

August 24, 2019

E.C. Toppin, North Carolina, Chairman

On Friday, August 23rd, 35 members of the National Security Commission travelled to Camp Atterbury and the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC) located approximately one hour from Indianapolis, IN. The Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex (MUTC) offers users a globally unique, urban, rural, and multi-domain operating environment that is recognized as the Department of Defense's (DOD's) largest urban training facility serving those who work to defend the homeland and win the peace. The overarching theme of professionalism, gratitude and thankfulness was on display.

The visit began with a greeting from LTC Wimp the incoming MUTC Commander; he welcomed the entire team. First the Commission was invited to tour the Military Museum which is designed to capture the experiences of military men and women and interpreted for the public. This is by far one of the most impressive collections of history.
and uniforms. From WWI to the famous Ernie Pile (Indiana native) who captured with such vivid language the events of D-Day. Col Brokaw; Camp Atterbury Commander welcomed the team and echoed her gratitude for The American Legions support and advocacy of Service Members and families.

The command overview briefing by presented LTC Wimp and he highlighted the many training exercises performed on the installation's 52,000 acres; this is the premier pre-deployment training facility for Guard and Reserve Forces. LTC Wimp further defined the mission of power projection and the need to be lethal and ready to fight as Service Components. Their mission and success is grounded in the foundations of the National Security Strategy of: Compete, Deter and Win. The unique audience of DoD, Civilian Agencies, and Total Force Components allow for synergy of operations. The mission is to train in the full spectrum operations: Air, Land, Sea, Space and Cyber platforms.

One highlight was a live fire of 155 mm artillery; the team loved it! It really brings home the mission of lethal and ready to fight tonight. After lunch at Camp Atterbury Dining Facility the team transitions to Muscatatuck.

Muscatatuck is a real city that includes a built physical infrastructure, a well-integrated cyber-physical environment, an electromagnetic effects system and human elements. Muscatatuck offers realistic, flexible and affordable training and testing scenarios. The site supports customized live/virtual/constructive-gaming (LVC-G) training, developmental testing and evaluation. The ability to immerse the full range of operations is key to preparation for operations; where else can you meet a camel in a training environment? Their Cyber Operations Center highlight how the Guard is able to provide the use non-kinetic operational concepts as a portion of instruments of power projection. The visit was well worth the time and strong reminder of we still have service members and families affected and effected by deployments each day.

On Saturday, August 24th, the National Security Commission convened in the Indianapolis Convention Center, Sagamore Ballroom, section one and two, level two. National Security Commission Chairman EC Toppin opened the meeting and thanked the Commission for their continued support and advocacy.

The meeting was comprised of three guest presentations. The first speaker was from the US Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC), Sean Sorbie, Director of Outreach provide a brief overview of USGLC and their role as advocates. The panel was mediated by Derek Gianino, Director of National Engagement. Our guest speaker was Lt. Gen. Dennis McCarthy, USMC, Ret. His vast knowledge in Service, and as once Assistant Secretary for Reserve Affairs provide a key insight in the roles of whole of government approach as defined by 3Ds: Diplomacy, Development and Defense. He further explained there does not always have to be a military response (Defense). Lt Gen McCarthy also spoke to near peer threat of China, as the policy of opportunities; the long game. When China sees the United States mired, or not fully focused they spread influence in terms of transactional engagement throughout the world. He further presented the need for The American Legion to be the voice to educate, communicate and be the an advocate to the US population and elected leaders, that warfare is not always the solution. This was a strong foundational setter for the remaining speakers.

The second speaker was Major General (MG) Ronald Place, Director, Defense Health Agency (DHA). MG Place spoke of the need to evolve the Defense Health Agency to support the needs of Service Members to be mission ready and mission capable. The Health care system; Tricare is rated #1 for US Healthcare and is a model that must continue to evolve but always grounded in a standardized model of care. MG Place spoke of the interlock of electronic Medical Records from Military Treatment Facilities to Civilian Care to VA care. He further explained the quality mechanisms which would be applied to families and retirees who would transition off installation. The standard, secure method of record saves time in medical consultations while strengthening Quality of Care. MG Place asked for patience as the Defense Health Agency champions the evolution of Military Health Care both on installation and off installation knowing health care is a retention tool for Service Members and their families.
The introduction of the third and final speaker was presented by Akosua Osei. Akosua informed the Commission as The American Legion Gold Star Family Coordinator her role is a voice of advocacy for the families of our fallen loved ones; as a veteran her passion is evident in her credibility. She ground her words in the 100 years the American Legion has been the voice of Veterans and their families. Chantel Dooley, Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors (TAPS). Is a Gold Star Fiancée of a fallen Air Force Officer spoke of the need, and care required for the survivors. She reminded the need that: “love lives on” and the partnership of The American Legion has become a lynchpin of success. Providing the social, emotional, and economical assistance allows the continued dignity of the families and loves ones to rise and honor.

At conclusion of the final speakers’ remarks the Commission Chairman directed the seven National Security Committees to conduct a non-binding courtesy review of the resolutions assigned to their Committees, which will subsequently be acted upon by the Convention Committees on August 25th. Then the National Security Commission Committee held a brief business meeting and no matters were discussed for consideration by the National Executive Committee.

The National Security Commission Chairman thanked all members for their steadfast support and commitment to serve in the roles to strengthen our Nations National Security while remaining relevant.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the National Security Commission. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The motion is carried.

Receive Additional Resolutions, Motions, and Petitions

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: At this time, do we have any unfinished business or resolutions to consider?

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, we have no additional resolutions, motions, or petitions at this time.

Confirmation of Interim Committee Appointments

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Do we have any interim appointments?

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, may I address the National Adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: You may do so.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify that the list of Interim Appointments is a true and correct list?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the list of the Interim Appointments be approved without being read. ....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: We have a motion and second to approve the list of interim appointments. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. The ayes have it. Motion is carried.

Interim Appointments
Indiana, August 26, 2019

Jinny L. Cash (Idaho), Committee on Children & Youth, 2020 Member (Replaces Eugene D. Brown – resigned)
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John B. Reece, Jr. (Illinois), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces William J. Flanagan – resigned)

Patrick Guibao (Maryland), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Kevin M. Mook – resigned)

James F. Army (Massachusetts), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Robert K. Burke – resigned)

Nikki S. Randolph (Maryland), Convention Commission, 2020 Member (Replaces Patricia A. McCoy – resigned)

Charles E. Schmidt (Oregon), American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation, 2020 Director (Replaces William M. Detweiler [Louisiana] – deceased)

Robert K. Burke (Massachusetts), Internal Affairs Commission, 2020 Member (Replaces James F. Army – resigned)

Steven C. Sperl (Arizona), Internal Affairs Commission, 2021 Member (Replaces Keith A. Brown – resigned)

James C. Mayhew (North Carolina), Membership & Post Activities Committee, 2021 Member (Replaces Michael A. Reott – resigned)

Eugene G. Hellickson (Oregon), National Convention Resolutions Assignment Committee, 2020 Member (Replaces Sid Carter – resigned)

Patricia A. McCoy (Maryland), Marketing Commission Liaison Committee, Member (Replaces Lewis E. Trott, Jr. – resigned)

Michael D. Leon (Kentucky), Conventional Armed Forces Committee, 2020 Member (Replaces Sgt. Jon I. Beach – resigned)

James P. Jerome (Oregon), Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee, 2021 Member (Replaces Stephen Flynn Phillips – resigned)

William J. Flanagan (Illinois), Military Benefits & Quality of Life Committee, Vice Chairman (Replaces Robbie Walker – resigned)

William J. Flanagan (Illinois), Military Benefits & Quality of Life Committee, 2021 Member (Replaces Robbie Walker – resigned)

Charles R. Ringling (Pennsylvania), National Security Council, Member (Replaces Michael J. Kelley – resigned)

Dr. Frances Murphy (Maryland), Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, Consultant (Replaces Dr. Omega C. Logan Silva – resigned)

Kate Hahn (Montana), Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, 2021 Member (Replaces Timothy Ingraham – resigned)

Richard W. Neville (North Carolina), Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission Executive Committee, Member (Replaces Kelly L. Ackerman [Montana] – resigned)

Sgt. Jon I. Beach (Kentucky), Veterans Employment and Education Commission, 2020 Member (Replaces Randall Coffman – deceased)

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, are you ready for the Post Charters at this time?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I am.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, may I address the National Adjutant again?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: You may.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify the list of cancellations of posts and squadron charters is a true and correct list and that everything has been done to try to revitalize these posts and squadrons?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the list be approved without being read....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded to approve the list of cancellations of posts and/or squadron charters without being read. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Opposed, say nay. Motion is carried.
On May 9, 2019, at the Spring Meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana the National Executive Committee approved the cancellation of seventy-four (74) 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

Fifty-three (53) Posts have been submitted and recommended for cancellation consideration during the 2019 National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

*See Merging Post Information Below*

### Department

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On May 9, 2019, at the Spring Meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana the National Executive Committee approved the cancellation of twenty-two (22) Squadrons.

Twenty-four (24) Squadrons have been submitted and recommended for cancellation consideration during the 2019 National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

* See Merging Squadron Information Below

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Unfinished Business and Technical Motions

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I'd like to make a technical motion and move 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 and edit and distribute these minutes. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: It's been moved and seconded for the adjutant to be instructed to review the minutes of the NEC meeting and make any necessary corrections without changing intent and to proceed and distribute those minutes. Is there any discussion?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: Mr. Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Past National Commander Spanogle.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: Resolution No. 1 commending Dan Wheeler for his 40 years with The American Legion, I spent 36 years, 26 of which were adjutant. Way back when, in the last century, The American Legion Magazine was one-third of the budget of The American Legion. We're having trouble getting advertisements and the like. Dan moved up, took that job, and I commend him because I always said he's the father of the modern American Legion Magazine. It's in the top five in the nation. So, Dan, I thank you. We worked together for 36 years almost. We've had some disagreements, but that doesn't make our friendship any weaker because it's all for the good of The American Legion.

And I have one other request, Dan. It takes a while to print the minutes through the court reporter who has to prepare the minutes of this meeting. It takes a lot of time for that to be put into digest form. I would request, as a member of the NEC in good standing, that once you have edited the court report of this meeting, I would like a copy before the digest is printed.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: That's up to you, Mr. Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I have no issues with it.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: Yes, sir, will do.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: I appreciate it. You see me with this cane. I had some major surgery, and I had to resign from the 100th anniversary because they opened me up twice to look at me inside. And I know many of you have gone through that. So I'm not looking for sympathy, but I had to resign.

This cane was used by a World War I veteran when they marched in the first parade in the 1920s. His name was John Gray. He was a judge advocate of the American Legion. John, he marched with this cane to show sympathy of disabled comrades. They did that in the early part of the 1920s.

It was given to Burt Davis, a judge advocate in World War II. He gave it to me, and I'm carrying this thing for the legacy of those two great men that served The American Legion. And I do think, however, that if we don't carry these canes anymore because sometimes our disagreements get kind of high tension. (Laughter)

If you knew any of the World War I guys and girls like I did, they were kind of feisty. And I imagine they used this cane on each other after they had a few social cocktails. And they were disabled veterans as a result so they didn't use them anymore. So I'm carrying it. Thank you very much.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, Past National Commander Spanogle. Is there any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. Opposed, say nay. The ayes have it. The motion is carried.

Closing Remarks
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia, National Commander

This has been a good meeting. A lot of excellent reports. I would be remiss if I didn't thank each and every one of your departments for being such great hosts and showing me
some amazing hospitality this year. We almost did it. We almost visited all 55 departments. I was scheduled about a month ago to spend three days in the Department of Oklahoma, and we were summoned to the White House for the signing of the LEGION Act. So my apologies to the Department of Oklahoma, but I'm satisfied with the fact that we were able to visit 54 departments.

And I'll tell you, with the travel that we have had over the last year, I've got no idea what time zone I'm in half the time. But the good thing is that every time I felt jet lag, it was time to change time zones again and go someplace else. So much easier when you're going west and you can catch up on your sleep. You can ask my aide, Kenny, about that. (Laughter)

I also want to thank our national staff who work hard day in and day out, but their work isn't over. We have a great few days ahead with some fantastic speakers and presentations. I now call on Father Salois for the benediction. Please stand and uncover.

**Benediction**

Father Philip G. Salois, Massachusetts, National Chaplain

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we go our separate ways today to continue the Legion business, we especially want to give You thanks for the over 1,000 new members that have joined our Legion since the LEGION Act has been signed. And we're confident that more will come and You will bless their hearts and open the Legion doors for all of those to come and to become a member of our family.

It's a wonderful family. We continue to work hard for the veterans and the veterans benefits. And we ask You to continue to bless us with good health and good energy to continue that, and bless the rest of this day. We make this prayer in Your holy name, amen.

**Salute to Colors and Adjournment**

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Please cover. With the colors of our country in place, hand salute.

...The National Executive Committee stood and rendered a salute to the colors

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Two. I now declare this Pre-Convention NEC adjourned. Thank you. ...At 10:23 a.m., Monday, August 26, 2019, the Pre-National Executive Committee Meeting of The American Legion was adjourned.
Call to Order and Salute to Colors
James W. Oxford, North Carolina, National Commander

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: This meeting of the National Executive Committee will come to order. The colors of our nation being in place, hand salute. One. The National Executive Committee rendered a salute to the Colors.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Two. For the invocation I call on Edward Harris of Indiana.

Invocation
Edward L. Harris, Indiana, National Chaplain

Dear God, as this petitioner continues to plea, thank You for this day and thank You for allowing us to be a part of this day. We are here, dear God, celebrating the gift of life that You have given our organization. May it continue with the leaders that we have today. All this we ask in Your name. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: I call on Dan Wheeler for the POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony.

POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony
Daniel S. Wheeler, Virginia, National Adjutant

At this time we pause to remember those who are listed as prisoners of war or missing in action from wars in which we have been engaged. Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th Annual National Convention, requires the designation of a POW/MIA chair or flag at all official 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 chair 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.

Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion.
Proceedings of Thursday, August 29, 2019

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Please be seated. I call on the national adjutant for roll call.

Roll Call

National Officers

National Commander
James W. Oxford, North Carolina

National Vice Commanders
Bruce C. Feuerbach, Iowa
David L. King, Kentucky
Francis J. MacDonald, Jr., Massachusetts
Richard A. Heigert, Missouri
Robert D. Liebenow, Oregon

Past National Commanders
Clarence M. Bacon, Maryland (Excused)
John P. 'Jake' Comer, Massachusetts
Miles S. Epling, West Virginia
Robert S. Turner, Georgia (Excused)
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, Pennsylvania (Excused)
Bruce Thiesen, California
Daniel A. Ludwig, Minnesota
Joseph J. Frank, Missouri (Excused)
Anthony G. Jordan, Maine (Excused)
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 (Excused)
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 (Excused)
Harold D. Barnett, Georgia
Charles E. Schmidt, Oregon
Denise H. Rohan, Wisconsin
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia

National Executive Committee Members

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<td>California</td>
<td>Lawrence Van Kuran</td>
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<td>Thomas J. Florez</td>
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<td>D. Joseph Jackson</td>
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<td>Delaware</td>
<td>Robert L. Michael</td>
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<td>D.C.</td>
<td>George E. Roundtree (Excused)</td>
<td>Carlton T. Durham (Excused)</td>
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<td>Florida</td>
<td>Dennis R. Boland</td>
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<td>France</td>
<td>James M. Settle</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Charles F. Wessinger</td>
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<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>David R. Carlson (Excused)</td>
<td>Marvin R. Siegfried (Excused)</td>
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<td>Idaho</td>
<td>Robert L. Skinner</td>
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<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Jerry L. Jordan</td>
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<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Jerry D. Sebben</td>
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<td>Kansas</td>
<td>David O. Warnken</td>
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NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: That completes the roll call.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Thank you, Dan. I'd like to call on Past National Commander John P. 'Jake' Comer to the floor for a special order of business.

**Special Order of Business**

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Thank you, commander. Past National Commander Brett Reistad, join me here at the podium. As the senior PNC present, may we have you join the club of past national commanders. You have done one outstanding job with the 100-year service. So I'm very proud to present you and place on your head the great honor of cap of past national commander. (Applause). Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Now that I don't have a script, and I'm in a whole new role, I'm not quite sure what to say other than to say thank you for the support you've given me this last year. It's been a wonderful, wonderful experience. Everyone one of you that has greeted me during my travels through your state, has taken great care of me, and even Kenny, for that matter. (Laughter)
But I appreciate it. It's been an honor to serve you, and we had a very successful year. I am looking forward to continuing to serve you in this organization in a whole new capacity. Have a great meeting, Mr. Commander. Thank you so much. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Thank you, commander. And thank you, Commander Comer.

Acceptance of Minutes of Previous Meeting and Agenda

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: I'd like to now call on the national adjutant for the reading of the minutes of the preceding meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move, since the minutes have not been assembled from our previous meeting, that they be deferred for approval until the October meeting. ...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: We have a motion and a second. Any further discussion? All in favor say aye. Opposed, nay.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that today's agenda be approved....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Any discussion? All in favor say aye. Any opposed, nay. Carried.

Disposition of Letters or Communications

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Now calling the national adjutant for disposition of letters and communications.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: Mr. Commander, there are no letters of communication.

Receive Resolutions, Motions and Petitions

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: I call on the NEC Subcommittee Chairman for receipt of resolutions, motions and petitions.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, at this time we have no resolutions, motions, or petitions to consider.

Appointments to National Offices, Commissions, Committees or Subcommittees

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: I'd like to now call on the national adjutant for reading of recommended appointments.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: The commander recommends the following appointments to the National Executive Committee:

- Resolutions Subcommittee: Chairman: David O. Warnken, Kansas; Vice Chairman: William W. Kile, West Virginia; Members: Thomas J. Florez, Colorado; Dennis R. Boland, Florida; Robert Skinner, Idaho; Lloyd H. Woods, Maine; William C. Barbknecht, Minnesota.
- Subcommittee on Committees: Chairman: Charles D. Aucoin, Louisiana; Vice Chairman: D. Joseph Jackson, Connecticut; Members: Mary V. Erdman, Arkansas; James Huls, South Dakota; Terry D. Schow, Utah.; Michael F. Mitrione, Virginia.
- The American Legion Department Advisory Committee: Chairman: Thomas L. Bock, Colorado; Vice Chairman: David O. Warnken, Kansas; Members: Clarence E. Hill, Florida; Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania; Brett P. Reistad, Virginia.
- The Advisory Committee to the National Commander: Chairman: Paul A. Morin, Massachusetts; Vice Chairman: Brett P. Reistad, Virginia; Members: Thomas L. Bock, Colorado; David K. Rehbine, Iowa; John P. ’Jake’ Comer, Massachusetts; Paul A. Morin, Massachusetts; Daniel A. Ludwig, Minnesota; Robert L. Morrill, New York; Gaither M.
Keener, Jr., North Carolina; Charles E. Schmidt, Oregon; Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania; Daniel M. Dellinger, Virginia; Denise H. Rohan, Wisconsin.

The Overseas Graves Decoration Trust: Chairman: James W. Oxford, North Carolina; Vice Chairman: Brett P. Reistad, Virginia; Members: George A. Buskirk, Jr., Indiana; Gaither M. Keener, Jr., North Carolina; Daniel S. Wheeler, Virginia; Denise H. Rohan, Wisconsin; Brett P. Reistad, Virginia; James W. Oxford, North Carolina.

That completes the commander's recommendations for special committees.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the appointments be approved by the National Executive Committee....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. Motion carried.

Appointment of the Following National Officers by National Executive Committee

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: I recommend the following appointments of national officers for the following year: Daniel S. Wheeler from Virginia for national adjutant; George A. Buskirk, Jr., of Indiana for national treasurer; Kevin Bartlett, Esquire, of Michigan for national judge advocate; Edward L. Harris of Indiana for national chaplain; and James Mariner of New Mexico for national historian.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the appointments be approved by the National Executive Committee....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor say aye. Any opposed, nay. Motion passes.

Appointment of National Sergeant-At-Arms

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: As national commander, I recommend the appointment of David S. Shore of Post 336, East Bend, North Carolina, as national sergeant-at-arms. I'll entertain a motion.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the appointment be approved by the National Executive Committee....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor say aye. Any opposed, nay. Congratulations. At this point I'd like to ask National Vice Commander David L. King to assume the podium while I conduct the next order of business. ...National Vice Commander King assumed the Chair.

Installation of Officers

James W. Oxford, North Carolina, National Commander

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: At this time I call forth three distinguished Legionnaires for validation of their new appointments. Sergeant-at-Arms David S. Shore, James A. Mariner of New Mexico, and Edward L. Harris of Indiana, would you three please come forward. As you face the audience, each of you will assist the National Executive Committee and others in carrying out our objectives over the next 12 months. You are entrusted with important duties, and each of you shall perform essential functions throughout the year to preserve the integrity of The American Legion. As you stand before this executive body, I will remind each of you of your duties and obligations.

First, I want to present Edward L. Harris, Jr., of Indiana, who is selected to serve as national chaplain. Chaplain Harris, to you is given the spiritual leadership of this great veterans organization. You will, I know, lend dignity and respect to your office. You should remain in close confidence with the commander and the other national officers of The American Legion. You should be ready upon occasion to take your part in performing such divine and nonsectarian services as may be necessary, adhering to such ceremonial rituals as may be recommended by national headquarters from time to time. Into your keeping we place the spirit of comradeship of this organization. May harmony and unity prevail.
James A. Mariner of New Mexico, appointed to the office of national historian. Mr. Mariner, I remind you that your office is an important one. To you is given the responsibility of preserving and compiling the records of this organization. The future can only be judged by the past. Your duties include collecting all records and data of value and interest for the national headquarters of The American Legion, and you shall compile during your term of office a complete history of the year’s activities. Further, you shall assist department and post historians so as to coordinate and unify the work of these officials. Be mindful that the lamp of recorded history may do much in guiding the footsteps of those who follow. Ever remember that without the recorded history of this organization, Legionnaires who serve after we are gone will not know of our organization's great accomplishments and policies.

The final office is that of national sergeant-at-arms. I’d like to introduce David S. Shore of North Carolina who will serve in that capacity over the next year. Mr. Shore, you are the sentinel or tiler, the outer guard of this organization. You will guard especially against the loss of one of The American Legion's greater possessions: Our deep and abiding spirit of comradeship. You will learn the identity and introduce to the commander all visiting comrades and guests. You are responsible that no one shall remain a stranger in our midst. Be ready at all times to assist your commander. Into your hands is given charge of the stand of colors which you will properly display at all national meetings and on ceremonial occasions.

Gentlemen, now after hearing all these obligations, will all three raise your right hand and repeat after me stating your name when I state mine: I, Bill Oxford, do solemnly pledge myself to perform faithfully and impartially the duties of the office in The American Legion which I am about to assume. And I further pledge to uphold the principles outlined in the National Constitution and Preamble of The American Legion in service to our veterans, their families, their communities, state and nation. Staff directors, will you please adorn the newly appointed officers with their new colors. (Applause)

Congratulations, my fellow Legionnaires. I know that each of you will justify the trust that is reposed in each of your offices. I look forward to working and sharing with you many experiences over the next twelve months as each of us continue to serve America's veterans.

To the National Executive Committee, I commend you on the selections you have approved. You have chosen them to guide the destiny of this organization and it is our duty to aid and assist them in every way. This is the legacy we have inherited, and we will not fail in this mission to keep The American Legion an organization of free men and women veterans that has been faithful to its principles and ideals for more than 100 years.

...National Commander Oxford resumed the Chair.

Introduction of National Commander's Aide

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: And now, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to introduce you to the man who will be my aide, Larry D. Cline, Post 30, Lincolnton, North Carolina. Larry, please stand and be recognized. (Applause)

Thank you, Larry. Looking forward to a good year.

Ratification of Legislative Portfolio

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: I'd like to now call on the chairman of the Subcommittee on Resolutions for the ratification of the legislative portfolio. Mr. Warnken.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, Pursuant to Rule 8-b of the National Executive Committee, I move that the thirteen resolutions with legislative intent adopted by the 101st National Convention be ratified for distribution as part of the legislative program through the 116th Congress. ....Second.
NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: There's a motion and second. Is there any discussion? All in favor, say aye. Any opposed, nay. Good work. Motion carried. The recommendations are approved.

RESOLUTIONS 101st NATIONAL CONVENTION
AUGUST 27-29, 2019

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 101st National Convention In Indianapolis, Indiana, August 27-29, 2019

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<td>Res. No. 57</td>
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<tr>
<th>NATIONAL SECURITY</th>
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<td>Res. No. 40</td>
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<td>Res. No. 41</td>
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<tr>
<th>VETERANS AFFAIRS &amp; REHABILITATION</th>
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<td>Res. No. 11</td>
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<td>Res. No. 17</td>
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<td>Res. No. 18</td>
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<td>Res. No. 32</td>
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<td>Res. No. 52</td>
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<td>Res. No. 59</td>
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<th>VETERANS EMPLOYMENT &amp; EDUCATION</th>
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<td>Res. No. 54</td>
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The Following Resolutions Were Adopted At The Spring Meetings Of The National Executive Committee, May 8-9, 2019

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<th>NATIONAL SECURITY</th>
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<td>Res. No. 9</td>
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<th>VETERANS AFFAIRS &amp; REHABILITATION</th>
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<td>Res. No. 10</td>
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<td>Res. No.</td>
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**VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION**

Res. No. 13 Support Robust Enforcement of the Military Lending Act

The Following Resolutions Were Adopted At The Fall Meetings Of The National Executive Committee, October 17-18, 2018

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Res. No.</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Recognition</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Unrecognized Armed Hostiles Membership Date Change</td>
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**NATIONAL SECURITY**

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<tr>
<th>Res. No.</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Survivor Benefit Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Expedited Citizenship through Military Service</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Recognition for Afghan and Iraqi Combat Translators</td>
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**VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION**

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<tr>
<th>Res. No.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Support Reasonable Set-Aside of Federal Procurements and Contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Expanding Post-9/11 GI Bill for Student Loan Repayments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Close the GI Bill Flight School Loophole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Support Funding and Changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs Grant and Per Diem Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Eliminate GI Bill Transferability Maximum Year Caps</td>
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The Following Resolutions Were Adopted At The 100th National Convention In Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 28-30, 2018

**AMERICANISM**

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<tr>
<th>Res. No.</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>English Language Be Declared as the Official United States Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Funding for Drug Trafficking Prevention Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Locate Missing Children and Prevent Child Victimization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Support for the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention</td>
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**INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

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

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<th>Res. No.</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Publicize and Promote the Armed Services Retirement Homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Support for Department of Defense Stabilization activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>National Defense Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Taiwan Defense Arms Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Taiwan Straights Dialogue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 & 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 orLess
- 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

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

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

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 & 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
VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

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

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

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. 20 Oppose Efforts to Downgrade Low-Level Wage Positions within the Department of Veterans Affairs

The Following Resolutions Were Adopted At The Fall Meetings Of The National Executive Committee

October 12-13, 2016

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
**AMERICANISM**

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<tr>
<th>Res. No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>278</td>
<td>Financially Assist Families Faced by Catastrophic Illness of Their Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>279</td>
<td>Support Funding Comprehensive Health Care for Children &amp; Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
<td>Prevention of Child Sexual Exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>282</td>
<td>Oppose any Attempt to Weaken Present Laws Governing Penalties for the Production, Sale and Distribution of Pornographic or Obscene Materials to Minors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>283</td>
<td>Establish “National Family Week”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>285</td>
<td>National School Lunch Program</td>
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<td>286</td>
<td>Prevent Child Maltreatment</td>
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<td>287</td>
<td>Programs and Organizations that Promote Child Safety</td>
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<td>288</td>
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<td>Return Patriotic Holidays to Traditional Dates</td>
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<td>293</td>
<td>Oppose Importation of Foreign Manufactured American Flags</td>
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<td>294</td>
<td>Boy Scouts of America and The Department Of Defense</td>
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<td>295</td>
<td>Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance</td>
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<td>296</td>
<td>Support Fairness for Immigrant Spouses</td>
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**Dates of Future Meetings**

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: I’d now like to call on the national adjutant to read the dates of the meetings that occur over the next two years.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: National Commander, these dates have previously been confirmed and are read for informational purposes.

**Fall Meetings**
- **Training for Newer Department Adjutants**: October 12-13, 2019
- **Commanders and Adjutants Conference**: October 14-15, 2019
- **Commissions and Committees**: October 14-15, 2019
- **National Executive Committee**: October 16-17, 2019

**Washington Conference**: March 8-11, 2020
Homecoming Information

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: At this time I don't have the specific times, but the commander's homecoming will be at the Fall NEC meeting on Saturday afternoon. Business dress casual. More information will follow.

Introductions

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: At this time I would like to introduce two special Legionnaires who will campaign for the office of national commander in future years. The new leading candidate, Paul Dillard, from Texas. (Applause)

And the new trailing candidate, from Kentucky, Randy Fisher, would you please stand up. (Applause)

Introductions of new National Executive Committee Members and Alternates

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: We will entertain the introduction of new NEC members or people attending in a voting capacity for the first time. In the interests of time, please hold your introduction to only one. And remember, be brief, quick and, again, only new members. Some people have flights to catch. Please speak loud; we don't have a microphone. Past National Commander Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I'd like to recognize my new National Executive Committeeman, Jimmie Brehio, and new alternate National Executive Committeeman Mike Davis. We're very proud of the fact that the second woman, the first woman since World War II, to serve as department commander, Jodie Pajak, and her adjutant, Milt Lashus. Thank you. (Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SCHMIDT: Mr. Commander, Charles Schmidt, Department of Oregon. It's my pleasure on behalf of Department Oregon to introduce our new National Executive Committeeman Andy Millar and our Alternate Jim Willis.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER SMITH (OK): Commander, I introduce John Bloxom, our new alternate NEC from Oklahoma.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER KRAUSE (ND): Robert Krause, North Dakota, would like to introduce our new alternate NEC, Dean Overby.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER MAYNARD (NH): Commander, I'm the new NEC, Ken Maynard, and my alternate, Bob Dionne, from New Hampshire.

PAST NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER LEE (WA): Mr. Commander, Past NEC Ken Lee from Washington. Our new NEC, Mr. Dale Davis. Our new alternate, Dave Hodgeboom.


PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLLE: Thank you Mr. Commander, I'd like to introduce our new National Executive Committee Member, John Knox, and our alternate, Jerry Lynch, from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER WONG: I'd like to introduce our new NEC, William Kearsing, Jr.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER MARCICIAK (IL): Mr. Commander, I'm the new NEC from Illinois, Tom Marciciak, and I'd like to introduce our new NEC alternate, Willard Erickson.

PAST NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER LEMNAH (VT): Marlys Lemnah, Department of Vermont. I'd like to introduce to you Fred Latour, our new
NEC from Vermont, and Dave Woodward from the Department of Vermont as the alternate NEC.

PAST NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER BATES (RI): Cory Bates from the Department of Rhode Island. I’d like to introduce our new NEC Dave Williams.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ESPINOZA (NM): Paul Espinoza, Department of New Mexico, new NEC. With me is NEC alternate Mr. Ed Cheatham.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER KILE (WV): I’d like to introduce the newest alternate NEC from West Virginia, Frank Cooley.

PAST NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING (MN): I’d like to introduce our new NEC from Minnesota, William "Bill" Barbknecht, and the alternate is Peggy Moon.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER MICHALSKI (NV): I’d like to introduce Yvette Weigold, new alternate NEC, Department of Nevada; new Department Finance Officer Jim Stewart.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER DRIVER (MT): David Driver, NEC, Montana, would like to introduce our new alternate NEC Peter Hal Rice.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER MCCOY (MD): Patricia McCoy, NEC Maryland, and new alternate, Dave Johnson.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: Mr. Commander, moment of personal privilege. While she's not one of our new NECs, she is new to our office, National President Nicole Clapp.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Any others? I'd like to say welcome to these new officers. I'd like to call on the national adjutant for any announcements.

Announcements

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: All newly appointed and elected national officers are to remain in this room at the conclusion of the Post-NEC Meeting for photographs. We also need PNC Brett Reistad to remain for a photograph in his new cap. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: If you can see the flag waving, that's where photographs are going to take place. We'd like to remind everybody about the that commander's reception at 2:30 this afternoon in Sections One and Two in the Sagamore Ballroom.

Unfinished Business and Technical Motions

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Is there any more unfinished business to come before this committee at this time?

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, we have no unfinished business at this time, but I would like to make a technical motion and move 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 and edit and distribute these minutes....Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor say aye. Any nays? Carried. I'd like to call on Chaplain Edward L. Harris, Jr., for the benediction.

Benediction

Edward L. Harris, Jr., Indiana, National Chaplain

Dear God, once again, thank You for bringing us to this glorious 100th anniversary. Bless the triad that You formed shortly after we began, officers who said "I will serve" and
served and became advisors, officers who worked that year and those who left and became advisors. This triad is the secret, I'm sure, dear God, of our success. Please continue this in the life of our organization. The safety that You've given our officers as they travel around the world, thank you. And now for those that are here who have taken their very time to be here and said "I will serve again," thank you. And all of these things that we petition for now, dear God, it's in Your name. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Legionnaires, the flag of our nation in place, hand salute. One.

...The National Executive Committee rendered a salute to the Colors.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Two. Is there a motion to adjourn?

FROM THE FLOOR: So moved.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Do I hear a second?...Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER OXFORD: Done. I call this meeting adjourned.

...At 1:30 p.m., Thursday, August 29, 2019, the Post-National Executive Committee Meeting of The American Legion was adjourned.
Abbreviations

AMA ............................................................... American Medical Association
AUMF ...................................................... Authorization for the Use of Military Force
BVA ............................................................. Board of Veterans Appeals
CWF .......................................................... Child Welfare Foundation
DMS .......................................................... Direct Membership Solicitation
DOD ............................................................ Department of Defense
DOL ............................................................ Department of Labor
FASB ......................................................... Financial Accounting Standards Board
FY ............................................................... fiscal year
GAAP ........................................................ generally accepted accounting principles
Gen ............................................................... general
HOMeS ...................................................... Housing Our Military Servicemembers
HR .............................................................. House Resolution
IRS ............................................................ Internal Revenue Service
LEGION .................................................. Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service
LT .............................................................. lieutenant
MCPO ........................................................ Master Chief Petty Officer
MCPOCG .................................................. Master Chief Petty Officer of the United States Coast Guard
MG ............................................................. major general
MIA ............................................................ missing in action
MISSION .................................................... Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks
MUTC ........................................................ Muscatautck Urban Training Center
MWR ............................................................ Morale, Welfare, and Recreation
NASA ....................................................... National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NDAA ........................................................ National Defense Authorization Act
NEC .................................................................................... National Executive Committee
NEF .................................................................................... National Emergency Fund
NIH ..................................................................................... National Institutes of Health

PL ....................................................................................... public law
PMCH ........................................................................ Peyton Manning Children’s Hospital
PNC ...................................................................................... past national commander
POW ................................................................................... prisoner of war
PSA ....................................................................................... public service announcement
PTSD .................................................................................. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
PUFL .................................................................................... Paid Up For Life

SAL ...................................................................................... Sons of The American Legion
SEC ...................................................................................... Securities and Exchange Commission

TAPS ................................................................................... Transition Assistance Program
TBI ....................................................................................... Traumatic Brain Injury
TFA ..................................................................................... Temporary Financial Assistance

UPS ....................................................................................... United Parcel Service
URL ...................................................................................... uniform resource locator
USAID .............................................. United States Agency for International Development
USGLC ............................................................. United States Global Leadership Coalition
USMC ...................................................................................... United States Marine Corps

VA ................................................................. Department of Veterans Affairs
VA&R ................................................................. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
VHA .................................................................................. Veterans Health Administration
VSO ..................................................................................... Veterans Service Organization

WWI ........................................................................................... World War I
WWII ........................................................................................ World War II

YCLE .................................................................................... Youth Cadet Law Enforcement
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