

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
October 14-15, 2020  
Virtual**

**Resolution No. 11: Mare Island Naval Cemetery  
Origin: Register Resolution No. 2773 (CA) Department Convention  
Submitted by: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission**

WHEREAS, The Mare Island Naval Cemetery is the oldest naval cemetery on the West Coast and it is the final resting place for over 860 of our country's heroes who served between the War of 1812 and World War I and it is designated as a National Historic Landmark with three Congressional Medal of Honor recipients buried there, namely James Cooney-USMC, William Halford-USN and Alexander Parker-USN; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 93043 dated June 18, 1973, mandated that jurisdiction over naval cemeteries, including The Mare Island Naval Cemetery should have been transferred from the Navy to the Veterans Administration, however that law was somehow ignored by the Navy and the Veterans Administration in 1973, and during the Base Realignment and Closure Process in 1993, the federal government left the Mare Island Naval Cemetery behind and did not provide any funding to restore it to honorable conditions nor any support for its immense ongoing maintenance; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Mike Thompson (CA-05) and Senator Dianne Feinstein introduced legislation in 2018, and these bills directed the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to seek an agreement with the city of Vallejo to transfer control of The Mare Island Naval Cemetery to the VA, but neither bill was voted on in 2018; and

WHEREAS, On June 13, 2018, the Honorable Denise Rohan, the American Legion's National Commander for 2017-2018, stated, "Showing respect for the dead that served our country is one of the most important things we can do, and the Mare Island Naval Cemetery holds the graves of many veterans to include three Medal of Honor recipients, and two million members of The American Legion wholeheartedly support moving this facility to the care of the National Cemetery Administration and thank Representative Thompson for his leadership"; and

WHEREAS, California State Resolution #26, authored by State Senator Bill Dodd and chaptered on June 26, 2018, urged "the Congress of the United States to act favorably in regard to legislation to have the Mare Island Naval Cemetery transferred to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs"; and

WHEREAS, On January 15, 2019, Congressman Thompson and Senator Feinstein re-introduced similar bills, "To direct the Secretary of Veteran Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with the city of Vallejo, California, for the transfer of The Mare Island Naval Cemetery in Vallejo, California, for other purposes," and "the National Cemetery Administration shall maintain the cemetery as a national shrine"; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled virtually on October 14-15, 2020, That The American Legion supports legislation that transfers the Mare Island Naval Cemetery in Vallejo, California to the Department of Veterans Affairs; and, be it finally**

**RESOLVED, That The American Legion recommends that the National Cemetery Administration maintain the Mare Island Cemetery as a national shrine.**