

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

**Resolution No. 3: Accuracy in Reporting Survivor Benefits and COVID-19  
Origin: Register Resolution No. 2788 (NY) Department Executive Committee  
Submitted by: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission**

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has infected millions across the globe and has resulted in more than 166,000 deaths in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Many of those U.S. citizens who have died were veterans who had underlying service-connected health issues; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 hastens the veteran's death by accelerating the progression of their service-connected health issues, which potentially contribute to the veteran's death; and

WHEREAS, It is feared that the death certificates of these veterans will only list the COVID-19 as the cause of death, causing delays or denial of survivors' benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, 38 USC 5109 requires the secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs to seek independent medical opinions when such claims demonstrate medical complexities or controversies; 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 support legislation requiring the Department of Veterans Affairs to seek independent medical opinions and veterans military medical history that are chronic and are factors in the veterans demise when claims for survivors' benefits are compromised by medical complexities and controversies, i.e. COVID-19, pandemic disease, etc., that may influence or alter cause of death as recorded on a veterans death certificate.**