

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
May 5-6, 2021
Virtual**

**Resolution No. 9: Expanded Use of Virtual Hearings by the Board of Veterans Appeals
Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Submitted by: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission**

WHEREAS, The Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA), in Washington, D.C., reports that more than 182,000 claims appeals are currently pending, and more than 88,000 appellants have requested hearings before veterans law judges; and

WHEREAS, The goal for BVA for 2021 is to conduct at least 50,000 hearings by making extensive use of the virtual option; and

WHEREAS, BVA's chairman has asked veterans service organizations for assistance in scheduling more virtual hearings for veterans; and

WHEREAS, A large number of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regional offices remain closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic and are currently not available to conduct in-person and video teleconference BVA hearings; and

WHEREAS, Increasing the number of BVA virtual hearings has been beneficial to the veteran community, as they can be scheduled at a much earlier date, travel costs are basically eliminated, and they are a much safer option during the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, BVA's annual report for 2020 shows that veterans who opted for virtual hearings received favorable decisions 57 percent of the time which is substantially higher than the other grant rates: 41 percent for video teleconference hearings and 36 percent for in-person hearings at the Central Office; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled virtually on May 5-6, 2021, That The American Legion supports the expanded use of virtual Board of Veterans Appeals hearings as an effective tool that will help to reduce the number of appeals and hearings pending before the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington, D.C.