

**NINETY-SIXTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
Charlotte, North Carolina
August 26, 27, 28, 2014**

Resolution No. 201: Service Officers Participation in the Transition Goals, Plans and Success Program

Origin: New York

Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

WHEREAS, The American Legion accredited representatives (service officers) support the National Guard, Reserves, U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Coast Guard by presenting information for eligible transitioning and retiring military members and their spouses; and

WHEREAS, These service officers participated in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops conducted throughout the United States since 1990 when the first TAP workshops were conducted; and

WHEREAS, These service officers provided valuable and timely information and assistance to inform TAP workshop participants with benefits and entitlements to prepare them for returning to civilian status following honorable service in the U.S. Military; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Labor (DOL) initiated a new TAP program titled the Transition Assistance Program Goals, Plans and Success (GPS), effective January 1, 2013; and

WHEREAS, The new Transition GPS Program is conducted by hiring local subcontractors to conduct the TAP workshops; and

WHEREAS, In some locations, Transition GPS prevents veteran service organizations (VSOs) from participating or providing assistance to transitioning servicemembers, guard and reserve, which has resulted in a lack of uniform or consistent policy on the level of VSO participation in Transition GPS nationwide; and

WHEREAS, In the past, the service officers participated voluntarily, at no cost to the government, as presenters during TAP Workshops; and

WHEREAS, Transitioning servicemembers could benefit from receiving information directly from The American Legion accredited representatives (service officers) and other major VSOs who have over 98 years of experience in assisting veterans in obtaining their VA benefits, especially when benefits have been denied by VA; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Charlotte, North Carolina, August 26, 27, 28, 2014, That the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Labor (DOL) work together to establish a nationwide policy to permit American Legion accredited representatives (service officers) as well as other major veterans service organizations (VSOs), that choose to participate in the Transition Goals, Plans and Success Program; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the VA, DoD, DOL, and The American Legion and other major VSOs co-author and sign a memorandum of agreement outlining all policy, procedures and level of expectations of all parties involved to better improve the awareness and filing of veterans' earned benefit.