

**EIGHTY-SIXTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
August 31, September 1, 2, 2004**

**Resolution No. 176: The American Legion's Position On The Department Of
Defense's Force Health Protection Program**

Origin: Maryland

Submitted by: Convention Committee on National Security

WHEREAS, After the 1991 Gulf War, returning military personnel began to report suffering from unexplained multi-symptom illnesses, commonly referred to as Gulf War veterans' illnesses; and

WHEREAS, Although thirteen years have passed and over 200 hundred government-funded research projects are in various stages of completion, costing more than \$200 million; many questions regarding the possible causes of Gulf War veterans' illnesses remain unanswered; and

WHEREAS, Numerous examples of lost or destroyed medical records have been identified, vaccination records were often unclear or incomplete, pre and post deployment examinations were not comprehensive and information regarding troop movements/locations and possible environmental hazard exposures was severely lacking; and

WHEREAS, The lack of such baseline data and other information is commonly recognized as a major limitation in the evaluation and understanding of potential causes of Gulf War veterans' illnesses; and

WHEREAS, To avoid the procedural problems encountered both during and after the 1991 Gulf War, "lessons learned" precipitated the enactment of legislation and policies designed to create a concept of Force Health Protection; and

WHEREAS, Although these policies appeared to correct previously identified problems in theory, reports by the Institute of Medicine and the United States General Accounting Office identified several deficiencies in the implementation of Force Health Protection laws and policies; and

WHEREAS, Controversial vaccines and pre-treatment drugs, such as smallpox, anthrax, and the anti-malaria tablet Lariam, are part of the Department of Defense's overall Force Health Protection plan; and

WHEREAS, Despite the fact that pyridostigmine bromide, an investigational new drug used as a pre-treatment for the nerve agent soman during the 1991 Gulf War, has not been definitively ruled out as a possible cause of Gulf War veterans' illnesses, the Food and Drug Administration granted full approval just prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom, clearing the way for the Department of Defense to use the drug without restriction under the umbrella of its Force Health Protection program; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Nashville, Tennessee on August 31, September 1, 2, 2004, That The American Legion continue to actively monitor the Department of Defense's implementation of

Force Health Protection policies and urge continual congressional oversight to ensure that all Force Health Protection laws and policies, including thorough pre and post deployment physical examinations, are being properly implemented in a consistent manner by all military branches; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge the Department of Defense to actively track and follow-up, with proper medical care, adverse reactions to vaccinations as well as any and all health-related complaints associated with the ingestion of controversial drugs such as pyridostigmine bromide and Lariam.