

**NINETY-EIGHTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
Cincinnati, Ohio
August 30, 31, September 1, 2016**

Resolution No. 170: Oppose the Department of Labor's Restructuring of Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist and Local Veterans' Employment Representative Roles

Origin: Iowa

Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Employment & Education

(Consolidated with Resolution No. 61 (UT) and Resolution No. 67 (TX))

WHEREAS, Congress has long recognized that America has a special obligation to help veterans find employment, and that "veterans bring a unique combination of skill, discipline, character, and talent to the marketplace," and accordingly, Congress has created special resources for veterans; and

WHEREAS, In April 2014, the Department of Labor issued a directive that deprives many veterans of valuable job-search and worker training assistance that Congress intended by the enactment of Title 38 Ch. 4103 and 4104; and

WHEREAS, The original GI Bill of 1944 created a system of grants for states to hire Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs), "persons who would become expert in the placement of veterans needing jobs," and from the start, LVERs reached out to "employers with jobs suitable for... veterans" and "assisted veterans looking for work"; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, in response to the high unemployment rate among Vietnam veterans, especially disabled veterans, the Department of Labor created the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist, which provided special employment services for disabled veterans, and in 1980, Congress made the program permanent; and

WHEREAS, From the start, DVOPs were instructed to provide services to any veteran, "with the following priority in the provision of services: (1) special disabled veterans, (2) other disabled veterans, and (3) other eligible veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary"; and

WHEREAS, On April 10, 2014, the Department of Labor issued a guidance letter that limited what functions LVERs could perform and whom DVOPs could assist, contrary to decades of practice and the text of the statutes Congress passed; the result is that some veterans will no longer be allowed to see a veteran specialist for assistance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Cincinnati, Ohio, August 30, 31, September 1, 2016, That The American Legion seek legislation that will preserve the integrity, intent and purpose of Title 38, Chapters 41, 42, and 43 by prohibiting the Department of Labor efforts in implementing Training and Guidance Letter 19-13 or other directives that restricts or forbids services to veterans by Local Veterans' Employment Representatives or Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists.