

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

Resolution No. 36: Copayment and Enrollment Fees for Priority Groups 7 & 8
Origin: Michigan
Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

WHEREAS, Since the enactment of Public Law (PL) 104-262, that authorized eligibility reform and open enrollment process, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA), has experienced a dramatic growth from 2.5 million veterans to over 7 million veterans enrolled in VA health care; and

WHEREAS, Fiscal Year 2002 saw the astronomical growth of Priority Group 7 veterans seeking health care at their local VA medical facility and the creation of a new Priority Group 8; and

WHEREAS, VA, upon creating the new Priority Group 8, placed an immediate suspension on all new Priority Group 8 enrollments; and

WHEREAS, VHA is authorized to bill, collect, and retain copayments and the third party insurance payment of Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans; and

WHEREAS, During the past several years, VA has proposed to increase the outpatient copayment from \$15 to \$20 and the prescription copayment from \$8 to \$15 per 30 day supply, as well as, levy a \$250 enrollment fee on Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, VA proposed to eliminate the copayment offset (reduction in payment) to Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans who have third party insurance; and

WHEREAS, The copayment increases and enrollment fees could suppress the demand for VA services at the expense of Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans who may not be able to afford the copayment increases and out-of-pocket enrollment fee; and

WHEREAS, VA believes these initiatives will ultimately drive 1.2 million veterans away from the VA health care system; 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 adamantly oppose any effort to increase copayments or impose an enrollment fee for Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans to receive Department of Veterans Affairs health care.