

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA  
OCTOBER 12-13, 2016**

**Resolution No. 11: Support and Defend Veteran and Military Memorials**  
**Origin: Internal Affairs Commission**  
**Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission**

WHEREAS, The American Legion has since its founding in 1919 dedicated itself to the defense of veterans and American values pursuant to its founding creed of "For God and Country" and the precepts of the Preamble of its Constitution; and

WHEREAS, One of the reasons The American Legion exists is "...To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars..."; and

WHEREAS, Many communities across America, and the United States government itself, have established veterans monuments to honor the service and sacrifice of veterans, and The American Legion has traditionally assisted in the establishment, maintenance, care, or defense of those veterans monuments; and

WHEREAS, Many of those veterans monuments include symbols of America's history and heritage, or expressions, in tribute to veterans, including without limitation at America's National Cemeteries, and overseas at Normandy Beach and other cemeteries in theatres of war, and at such singular veterans monuments as the Mojave Desert WWI Veterans Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; and

WHEREAS, Many of these veterans and military memorials have come under attack by secular extremists thru litigation under the Establishment of Religion Clause who believe that the public square must be stripped of all symbolism and speech which could in any way be construed as containing religious content to include the public display of the Ten Commandments and other symbols of America's religious history and heritage; and

WHEREAS, The cross has been used by the military as a symbol of selfless sacrifice and service throughout our nation's history, from the Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, Army Cross, and Air Force Cross to the countless crosses placed as headstones for fallen Americans, including the unknown soldiers; and

WHEREAS, Americans overwhelmingly support veterans and military memorials and do not want them torn down or removed; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of memorials is not solely to remember the sacrifices of those who have gone before, but to give strength and encouragement to future generations; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 12-13, 2016, That The American Legion support and defend, by appropriate means, including lawsuits and legislation, veteran and military memorials bearing symbols and/or words which may be alleged to be historically associated with religious expression, including, but not limited to, crosses, stars of David, crescents, and the word "God"; and, be it finally**

**RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports such veterans' monuments, whether they be located on private land or land owned by federal, state or local governments.**