American Legion hails unanimous Supreme Court ruling

WASHINGTON (June 16, 2016) -- American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett praised a Supreme Court ruling today that sided with a lawsuit against the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) from a service-disabled veteran-owned small business for the VA’s failure to comply with Public Law 109-461, commonly referred to as “Veterans First.”

“The American Legion applauds this unanimous ruling by the Supreme Court which is a victory to all veteran-owned businesses that submit reasonable bids for VA contracts,” National Commander Dale Barnett said. “The justices wisely ruled that the Department of Veterans Affairs should continue to recognize these businesses even after its contracting goals are met. That was clearly the intent of the 2006 Veterans Act, which was intended to broaden opportunities for business owners who served their country by wearing our nation’s uniform. The Department of Veterans Affairs was created to serve veterans. Today’s ruling expands VA’s opportunity to do that.”

The ruling directs VA to give preference to veteran-owned businesses when procuring contracts for goods and services. The law gained exposure in 2012 when the plaintiff, Kingdomware Technologies Inc., protested a contract award, citing PL 109-461 as the basis. In support of the plaintiff, The American Legion filed an amicus curiae with the Supreme Court, submitting written statements addressing Kingdomware’s concerns.

With a current membership of 2.2 million wartime veterans, The American Legion, www.legion.org, was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through nearly 14,000 posts across the nation.

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