

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
October 12-13, 2011**

**Resolution No. 32: Family Support Outreach Program/Adopt a Unit
Origin: National Security Commission
Submitted by: National Security Commission**

WHEREAS, The American Legion by its pillar of National Security was conceived with the role of being a partner with the Department of Defense (DoD); and

WHEREAS, It is anticipated national security imperatives placed on the Department of Defense due to worldwide instability will increase the need for a larger and more deployed operational active duty and reserve component force; and

WHEREAS, This larger operational force will ultimately lead to an ever increasing need for assistance of servicemembers and their families; and

WHEREAS, America is currently in a fiscally challenging period where increased budget cuts and calls for reduced benefits may significantly and negatively impact servicemembers, transitioning members, retirees, veterans, and their families; and

WHEREAS, Former Secretary of Defense Gates has called on the civilian community to assist currently serving members of the military and their families because, "DoD cannot do it alone"; and

WHEREAS, The Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs published a thesis paper, Sea of Goodwill, outlining DoD's concept for "matching the donor to the need"; and

WHEREAS, Admiral Mullen, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, has identified a "chasm" between military and civilian societies that must be closed or dire consequences will result; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is recognized for its leadership role in advocating for military veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, In many cases, posts are currently adopting units, deployed to combat in order to assist servicemembers and family members; and

WHEREAS, Currently serving members of the military and those who are transitioning back to civilian life do not identify themselves as veterans and therefore do not avail themselves of needed assistance available at the post, department, and national level; and

WHEREAS, DoD readily acknowledges the efforts of Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) on behalf of veterans, however there is a significant lack of knowledge on the part of DoD, concerning the assistance being given to currently serving military members and their families; and

WHEREAS, That information gap has led to the establishment of DoD Ethics Regulation 5500.7R which restricts the ability of military commanders from working with VSOs; 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, 2011, That The American Legion in keeping with one of its founding principles, a strong national security,

reestablish a strong relationship with the Department of Defense (DoD) in order to enhance military readiness by increased support to currently serving personnel and their families; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion shall establish a proactive Family Support Outreach Program, designed to enhance participation, coordination, and public awareness on a national level; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a national staff member be assigned the responsibility of coordinating The American Legion, DoD, and community assistance for service members and their families; collect best practices from the departments; and coordinate and disseminate information to DoD leadership currently serving members and their families on The American Legion activities, resources and assistance available; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the assigned staff member will publish at a minimum on a monthly basis via internal and external media, National Convention meetings, and other forums, identified best practices and activities conducted to help service members and families; the target audience of this effort is the membership of The American Legion with the intent of increasing membership participation in programs to enhance the partnership with DoD; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That American Legion posts are encouraged to develop continual relationships with local military units, in effect adopting them for the purpose of offering assistance to servicemembers and their families.