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

Resolution No. 155: Support Verification Improvements for Veterans' Business
Origin: Maryland
Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Employment & Education

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense (DOD) is the nation's largest purchaser or goods and services; and

WHEREAS, DOD rarely meets their service-disabled veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB) contracting goal as set by the Small Business Administration; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized under the Veterans First program to enter into contracts first with SDVOSBs and then with veteran-owned small businesses (VOSBs); and

WHEREAS, Congress has made findings that VA has entered into contracts pursuant to the Veterans First Contracting Program with companies that were not legitimate SDVOSBs or VOSBs; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to recent legislation, VA has implemented a formal verification process which companies must undergo prior to being found eligible to participate in the Veterans First Contracting Program; and

WHEREAS, VA has not created a formal appeals process for those small business owners who have been denied VA verification; and

WHEREAS, The VA lacks expertise in determining control and ownership requirements in small businesses; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion applauds the VA's attempt to ensure every small business verified is in fact eligible to be a SDVOSB; however, the process has become too cumbersome to navigate for many legitimate veteran small business owners; 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 recommend the streamlining and improvement of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) verification of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses and Veteran-Owned Small Businesses interested in participating in the Agency's Veterans First Contracting Program; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion endorses VA's efforts to ensure that contracts awarded pursuant to the Veterans First Contracting Program are awarded to companies that truly are entitled to receive these contracting benefits; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion endorses efforts to create a formal appeals process for contesting an initial denial decision; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports legislation that calls for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Small Business Administration to share responsibilities for the verification of service-disabled veteran-owned businesses and veteran-owned small businesses, and this responsibility should be divided accordingly to each agency's expertise and record of past performance; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion endorses the implementation of a program comparable to Veterans First Contracting Program within the Department of Defense.