NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
October 9-10, 2024
Indianapolis, Indiana

Resolution No. 2: Allow Limited Exceptions for Federal Employees to Serve as Accredited Representatives Before the Department of Veterans Affairs
Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions
Submitted by: Subcommittee on Resolutions

WHEREAS, The American Legion is the largest veterans service organization with 1.6 million members working in many industries, including federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, Members of The American Legion are employed and engaged in all forms of industry, commerce and government, reflecting the disparate interests and expertise of Legionnaires; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion's members have advocated on behalf of fellow veterans before Congress and all levels of government since 1919; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is blessed with a nationwide network of professional and volunteer service officers providing unheralded and unmatched advocacy to an ever expanding clientele; and

WHEREAS, Passage of the PACT Act has contributed to an increase in veterans and dependents seeking to submit all nature of claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) tasking the American Legions network of service officers and

WHEREAS, Federal laws and regulations 18 U.S.C. § 205 and 38 C.F.R. § 14.629 prohibit federal employees from representing any individual seeking benefits before the Department of Veterans Affairs or acting as an agent of any other organization; and

WHEREAS, 38 C.F.R. § 14.629 further restricts employees of any civil or military department or agencies of the United States to serve as an accredited representative before the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, It is crucial to our mission to allow Legionnaires who are federal employees to provide pro bono services, as accredited representatives before the VA, to better support veterans and their families; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 9-10, 2024, That The American Legion urges Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs to review and consider statutory exceptions under 18 U.S.C § 205 and 38 C.F.R. § 14.629, allowing federal employees not employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs who are also members of The American Legion, or other like-minded veterans service organizations, to serve as accredited representatives on a voluntary basis, while adhering to their professional duties and ethical obligations; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That employees of the federal government, in full compliance with ethical and conflict of interest regulations, are granted a waiver to serve in a volunteer, pro bono capacity as an accredited representative for The American Legion or other like-minded veterans service organizations.