From: National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Exploitation of veterans should be illegal again
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 2:00:50 PM

Accreditation sets standards and limits on fees for claims representation.

AMERICAN LEGION

Dear American Legion Family Members and Friends,

Few insults are more egregious than to take advantage of disabled veterans or their families, under false pretenses. We know it's immoral to exploit any veteran filing for VA benefits. The American Legion wants the return of criminal penalties enforced against these non-accredited violators.

The American Legion or other accredited veterans service organizations (VSO) are the best first step for veterans seeking assistance because we successfully provide expert help free of charge for hundreds of thousands of veterans a year. We also understand and support a veteran's freedom to choose representation – whether it's a VSO, another claims agency, law firm or private company.

But we support that right on a key condition: that anyone who represents a veteran in the filing of a claim is accredited with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Accreditation means the representative has been vetted, is trained, and is accountable to VA's rules, which include the regulation of fees that can be charged.

These rules exist for good reasons. They prevent exploitation. As it now stands, nothing

stops or deters profiteers from overcharging and taking advantage of veterans. That has to end.

The American Legion continues to work with VA to share information and educate veterans about free services available through VSOs like accredited American Legion service officers who helped veterans receive $16.8 billion in disability compensation last year alone.

All accredited representatives who assist veterans must be held to the same level of accountability as our service officers, who have been successfully helping with claims since the birth of VA.

For God and Country,

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

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From: The American Legion
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Get Ready!
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 10:04:50 AM

Giving Tuesday looks a little different this year.

AMERICAN LEGION | #VETSGIVING

Hello Legion,

This year, on November 28th, we are excited to announce that, alongside our traditional Giving Tuesday initiatives, we are partnering with Chip Ganassi Racing to launch their #VETSGIVING event. This event features a 12-day online auction of remarkable motorsports-related items and experiences.

Our goal this year is to raise $140,000 to provide even more comprehensive support to veterans and their families. However, we can't achieve this without your generous contribution.

Your Giving Tuesday donation will play a crucial role in providing financial grants to veterans in dire need who have dependent children. Additionally, it will contribute to the training of American Legion

claims experts who offer free assistance to veterans and their families in their pursuit of disability benefits, survivor assistance, GI Bill opportunities, and more.

No matter the amount, your generous gift will directly impact the lives of countless veterans by supporting these life-changing programs and services!

As a dedicated supporter of The American Legion, you are well aware of the significant difference your donation can make. You understand the vital importance of standing by our nation's heroes.

This Giving Tuesday, show your proud support for disabled veterans and their families in crisis by joining our friends across the nation. Or you can make an early commitment today to make an immediate difference.

DONATE TODAY!

Legion, we invite you to be join us this Giving Tuesday and make a meaningful impact on the lives of veterans and their families.

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

P.S. Don’t forget to keep a lookout for the #VETSGIVING event coming soon!

Your Giving Tuesday donation supports The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

The American Legion

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From: National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - We oppose the PLUS Act because we stand for veterans
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 8:06:11 AM

The American Legion stands firmly against the PLUS Act, which looks to bypass VA's accreditation process, leaving veterans vulnerable.

AMERICAN LEGION

Dear American Legion Family Members and Friends,

Let me say this in the clearest terms possible: Veterans should feel safe and confident when filing for claims, knowing that no matter who they choose for representation, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has reviewed, approved and accredited that party.

That is why The American Legion opposes the PLUS (Preserving Lawful Utilization of Services for Veterans) Act. If enacted, the PLUS Act would transition our system of securing benefits for disabled veterans to an unregulated profit-driven industry.

Currently, there are unaccredited third parties that present themselves to veterans as legitimate claims service companies to assist veterans in obtaining their earned benefits. The PLUS Act aims to legalize these companies by allowing automatic accreditation after 90 days regardless of whether VA has completed its verification process. The VA-accreditation program exists to ensure that veterans and their family members receive appropriate representation on their VA benefits claims. The American Legion wants to hold bad actors accountable, not give them a free pass to prey on veterans.

Our team is working hard to protect all veterans from the PLUS Act. In September 2023, The American Legion sent a letter of opposition to the congressional representatives sponsoring the Plus Act and I personally voiced our opposition during my congressional visits just last month.

However, there is legislation that would help veterans elude the clutches of bad actors. In an effort to protect our nation's veterans, The American Legion supports the Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act. The legislation would reinstate criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with filing a claim for VA disability compensation benefits.

The American Legion continues to muster support to protect all veterans and their families from claims sharks. **Join us in telling Congress to support the GUARD Act**.

For God and Country,

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

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From: The American Legion
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - You Made a Difference. Thank You!
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:26:28 AM

Thank you for your incredible support on Giving Tuesday and #VETSGIVING.

AMERICAN LEGION CHIP GANASSI RACING #VETSGIVING

Dear Legion,

We want to express our heartfelt thanks for your invaluable contribution to the success of Giving Tuesday and #VETSGIVING. Your selfless generosity has left us genuinely moved and appreciative.

Thanks to your unwavering support, we're well on our way to achieving our $140,000 target! This significant milestone will have a profound impact on providing the essential services that veterans have rightfully earned and deserve. If you haven't had the opportunity to make your donation yet, rest assured that it's never too late to stand by America's heroes.

On behalf of the 12,000 American Legion posts across our great nation and the veterans we are committed to serving, we extend our deepest gratitude. It is your support that makes everything we

do possible. Thank you for being an integral part of our important mission.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

GIVE NOW

All proceeds from the #VETSGIVING event support The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

The American Legion

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From: Daniel Seehafer, National Commander
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Legion, make this a new year of hope for all veterans
Date: Thursday, December 28, 2023 10:37:28 AM

Help us be there for even more veterans next year.

AMERICAN LEGION

Dear Legion,

With your partnership, there's so much to look forward to in 2024.

GIVE NOW

At The American Legion, we are energized and looking forward to continuing the services that our nation's heroes have come to count on. And we're excited to implement new initiatives and programs that will make a life-changing difference in the lives of all veterans.

When you make a gift to The American Legion, you are supporting veterans in 2024 by:

- Providing a lifeline of help and hope to military families and veterans facing unexpected financial crisis through the Veterans & Children Foundation.
- Spearheading legislation for enhanced care for female veterans, medical care for rural veterans, Buddy Check Week and more.
- Reaching even more ill, injured, and wounded veterans through Operation Comfort Warriors with rehabilitation equipment, assistance, and other essentials for recovery.
- Implementing a wide range of programs and services to combat and prevent veteran suicide through our "Be The One" initiative.

These are just a few of the many programs and services that our brave service men and service women need and rely on.

GIVE NOW

The reality is: We can't do it without you! Thank you for your generous financial support!

Legion your gift today will help ensure that no veteran is left behind in 2024. They risked everything for our freedom. Now, they're counting on us — you and me — for help.

Please make a difference today. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Daniel Seehafer
National Commander
The American Legion

P.S. Your gift by midnight December 31 is tax-deductible for 2023. Please help now!

All proceeds from this campaign support The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

The American Legion

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From: Daniel Seehafer, National Commander
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - FW: The countdown has begun!
Date: Sunday, December 31, 2023 6:24:50 PM

There are only a few hours left to make your tax-deductible gift for 2023.

Dear Legion,

The men and women who have served our country need you in 2024. I hope you'll help us begin the new year strong with a gift to The American Legion by midnight tonight.

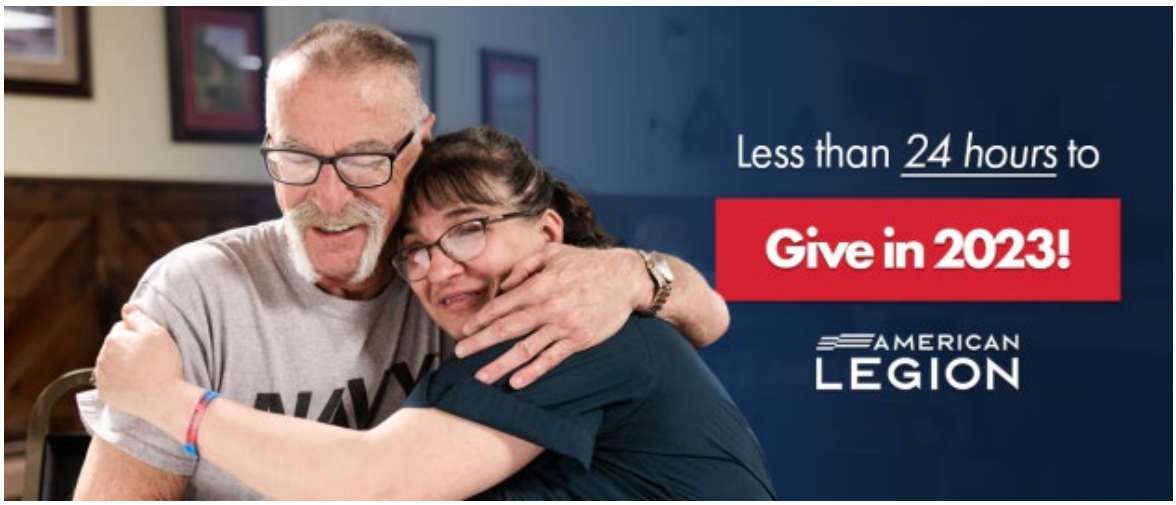
Any gift you make is fully tax deductible in 2023. But hurry, there are only a few hours left!

Thank you for the ways you show our nation's heroes they are not forgotten!

Sincerely,

Daniel Seehafer
National Commander
The American Legion

From: The American Legion
Sent: December 31, 2023; 9:00 AM
To: Daniel Seehafer
Subject: The countdown has begun!



Dear Daniel,

Thank you so much! Your steadfast support is playing a crucial role in meeting the critical essential needs of service men and service women.

Thanks to the generosity of friends like you, vital assistance is being provided to veterans in need of assistance with crucial matters like claims support and disaster recovery. You are the driving force behind our ability to be there for veterans during their most challenging times.

Kickstart 2024 by making a fully tax-deductible gift today! Be there for those who need you most in 2024. Please donate by midnight tonight!

Warm regards,

The American Legion

P.S. Act now to ensure your gift is fully tax-deductible for 2023! Time is running out! And your support is critical!

GIVE NOW

All proceeds from this campaign support The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

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From: Daniel Seehafer, National Commander
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - 2024 is off to a great start!
Date: Monday, January 1, 2024 11:00:46 AM

Through friends like you, the new year is looking bright for veterans.

AMERICAN LEGION

Dear Legion,

Thank you! Your partnership in 2023 will help make everything we do next year possible.

It is only through the generous financial support of friends like you that we can reach our nation's service men and service women with the care and services they have earned and deserve.

If you didn't get a chance to make a gift, it's never too late to support veterans. Please make a special donation today!

We look to this year with renewed strength for the ways to continue to support our nation's heroes. Your gift will help us assist even more veterans in need.

Thank you for your partnership! Your generous support is the backbone of everything we do.

Wishing you all the best in the new year,

Sincerely,

Daniel Seehafer
National Commander
The American Legion

GIVE NOW

All proceeds from this campaign support The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

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From: National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Congress must fully fund DoD
Date: Friday, January 19, 2024 9:02:20 AM

A continuing resolution threatens to compromise our national security and jettison quality of life improvements for servicemembers and their families.

AMERICAN LEGION

Dear American Legion Family members and friends,

Once again, the Department of Defense (DoD) may be faced with another continuing resolution (CR), which would compromise national defense strategy and undermine improving quality of life issues for servicemembers.

In essence, a CR would cap funding at the previous year's levels, providing none of the approved increases and preventing any new programs from beginning that were authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024.

This comes at a time when America is facing multiple national security threats such as China’s aggression, Russian provocation and the possibility of the Israel-Hamas war spreading.

It is not the time to be reducing our military capability. But that is exactly what the CR would do.

Consider this: Under a CR, our nation's defense programs would receive $26.6 billion (3%) less than the $886.3 billion authorized by the NDAA.

This stop-start-stop-start game also disrupts the hard-working employees of DoD, as well as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). They are the backbone to the services provided to our veterans and the defense of our nation. Their ability to carry out their critical work should not be subjected to the whims of a polarized Congress.

Speaking of Congress, I am scheduled to provide testimony on behalf of our great organization on March 13. If Congress does not sufficiently pass funding to support our military and VA, you better believe I will make our feelings known loud and clear.

After all, resolution after resolution opposes such inaction by Congress. Among them:

- Our steadfast support for improving quality of life for servicemembers and their families, Resolution 85, approved by the National Executive Committee (NEC) in August 2016.
- Our call for a DoD budget, based on the 2022 National Defense Strategy, Resolution 11, approved by the NEC last May.
- Our military commitments in the Indo-Pacific region, Resolution 118 approved by the NEC in August 2018.

Last but not least, the CR would present a devastating setback for operations by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). In order to fulfill ongoing missions, DPAA received a $40 million increase in budgeting for FY24. But that would be wiped out due to the CR. Another CR will only continue to hurt our national security.

There is no better time than right now to do the right thing for America, its military members and their families. Congress must pass an actual spending bill to ensure our military is properly funded throughout this year.

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

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From: National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Sprint to the finish
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 10:27:28 AM

Departments and posts have recruited and renewed about 15,000 more members than we had at this time last year.

Dear American Legion Family members and friends,

If the trend continues, the 2024 membership year can be a special one for The American Legion. Departments and posts have recruited and renewed about 15,000 more members than we had at this time last year. While our direct mail efforts have been less successful, this only demonstrates the proven success of personal contact, even if it's by phone.

A larger American Legion benefits all Americans. This means more Legionnaires to engage in Buddy Checks, as we commit to "Be the One" to stop veteran suicide. It means more Legionnaires to operate great programs such as Boys State, Junior Shooting Sports, oratorical contests and American Legion Baseball.

Trends can be deceiving, however. In the past, we have started the membership year strong only to lose momentum in the final stretch. "Wait till next year," has been the battle cry for many losing teams. I reject that mentality. There is no time like the present and our membership year runs through June 30.

"Rocky" fans of a certain age are familiar with the song "Eye of the Tiger." The chorus is meant to channel the passion and commitment it takes to win. Generations ago, it took Eye-of-the-Tiger dedication to make The American Legion the largest and greatest veterans organization in the country. We still are.

My predecessor set a goal to recruit 75,000 new members during the 2023 membership year. We surpassed that. The goal for 2024 is 78,000 new members and it is perfectly achievable.

Any Legionnaire who recruits two new members to our organization will receive a “Be the One” dog tag coin from me.

If you are not a current member, you can join simply by **clicking here**. You can **renew just as easily here**. If you want to beat inflationary dues increases, consider a **Paid Up for Life membership**. You could also join more than 10,000 other Legionnaires and try our **new three year membership option**.

As I said earlier, personal contact matters. Legionnaires who are welcomed by active and engaged posts in their communities are more likely to stay Legion. One of the highlights of my time in The American Legion was when my post, 157 in Horicon, Wis., was recognized for “100 percent” and “All Time High” membership awards during years that I served as its commander and adjutant. It was never about “me.” It was always about “we.”

As The American Legion observes its 105th birthday, I can think of no better manner of celebrating than to put our organization on the path for growth. With your help, I know that we can do just that.

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

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From: National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Sign up for suicide prevention training
Date: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 9:02:49 AM

Take a free, 90-minute class that will help save the life and change the life of a veteran at risk.

Dear American Legion Family members and friends,

The American Legion saves lives and changes lives.

You may have heard me say that during a visit to a post or department, during an interview with media or elsewhere.

Nothing — absolutely nothing — is more important to The American Legion, or me personally, than our mission to save veterans on the edge of suicide. **Be the One** has helped elevate this conversation to a national level. Now more people than ever before are receiving the mental health counseling they need.

It's working. But we can do more.

That is why The American Legion has partnered with Columbia University to host free training classes that provide the tools we need to safely intervene when a veteran is demonstrating troubling signs.

There are virtual classes scheduled, as well as opportunities for in-person training at Spring Meetings, National Convention, Fall Meetings and at other times. **Learn more and register for a session at this link**. The page will be regularly updated as more classes are scheduled.

This valuable, life-saving training takes less time than it does to watch a movie, take in a baseball game or wait in line at the DMV.

It's just 90 minutes. An hour and a half that can save a life and change a life. Join me

and sign up now.

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

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From: National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer
To: Library Division
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Let's celebrate!
Date: Friday, August 2, 2024 9:03:34 AM

Join me at national convention in New Orleans where we can count our blessings, celebrate our successes and build toward an even stronger future.

Dear Family,

We have a lot to be thankful for and much to celebrate, specifically a year's worth of successes, while looking ahead to a bright future for The American Legion.

As my year as national commander concludes, I am reflecting on our most important mission — **Be the One**. This past year, we've taken that concept, raised awareness across the nation and — most importantly — we've saved lives and we've changed lives.

That in itself is worth celebrating.

But there is so much more. Nearly $19 billion in veterans benefits compensation. Legislative achievements. Improvements in membership. Successful mentorship of youths. The list goes on. In fact, there is too much to list here.

Instead, Family, I want us all to gather, raise our glasses high and toast our achievements. I would love to see you at our national convention in New Orleans (**check out the convention details here**). Remember, you don't need to be a delegate to attend.

If you haven't registered, there is still time. Please contact your department adjutant to learn how to attend.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Daniel J. Seehafer
American Legion National Commander

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2024 NATIONAL CONVENTION

Your guide to the convention

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Be sure to check out the World War II museum

Tickets must be purchased in advance.
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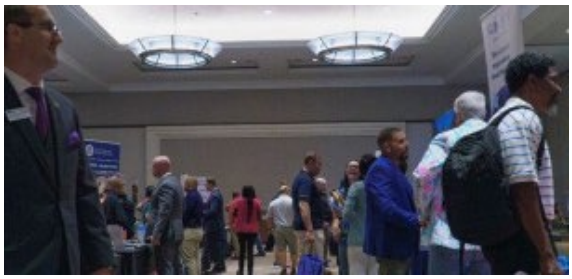

Sign up for the annual job fair

Registration is open for job seekers and employers for the event presented by The American Legion and Hiring Our Heroes. **LEARN MORE**

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