PROCEEDINGS

of the

National Executive Committee

of

THE AMERICAN LEGION

National Headquarters
Indianapolis, Indiana

May 7-8, 2025

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PROCEEDINGS

of the

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

...At 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 7, 2025, the National Executive Committee was called to order by National Commander LaCoursiere.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: I call this meeting of the National Executive Committee to order. Please join me in a salute to colors of our nation by the numbers. One, two. Due to a death in his family, National Chaplain Daniel DePozo is unable to be with us this week. I call on my friend, Past National Commander Daniel Seehafer for the invocation, followed by the POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony.

Invocation
Rev. Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin, Past National Commander

We pray. Heavenly Father, we thank You for the opportunity to gather once again for our spring meetings. This is not only a prestigious room with a lot of history, but a place where service to all veterans and their families is front and center. We humbly recognize that this organization, no, wait a minute, Lord, that this family exists because of great sacrifice. Yes, a sacrifice that's only empowered by Yours, but a sacrifice that truly changes lives and saves lives. And so, Lord, guide us through our deliberations as we work together and may the good of The American Legion and those we represent be our foremost consideration, always being the one as we honor Your name and benefit our communities. We pray this in Your lifesaving name and so it shall be. *...Chorus of "Amen."*

POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony
Rev. Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin, Past National Commander

Resolution 288 adopted at the 67th Annual National Convention encourages the designation of a POW/MIA chair or flag at all official meetings of The American Legion. This is a symbol of the many American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving our nation. With the POW/MIA flag positioned to my left, let it serve as a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners, the repatriation of the remains of those who have been killed in action and a full accounting of those who are still missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor.

Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: I call on National Sergeant-at-Arms Everett G. Shepard III from the Department of Connecticut to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS SHEPARD: Please join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to our country in unison.

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: At this time, I call on National Adjutant Rodney K. Rolland of Georgia for the roll call.

Roll Call
National Officers

National Adjutant
Rodney K. Rolland

National Commander
James "Jim" LaCoursiere, Connecticut

National Vice Commanders
James C. Kellog, Minnesota
Gary B. Leach, California
Joseph A. "Joe" Lysaght, South Carolina
Roger P. Mathison, Wisconsin
Charles K. "Chuck" Robbin, New Jersey

Past National Commanders

John P. "Jake" Comer	Massachusetts	
Robert S. Turner	Georgia	(Excused)
Bruce Thiesen	California	(Excused)
Daniel A. Ludwig	Minnesota	
Joseph J. Frank	Missouri	(Excused)
Anthony G. Jordan	Maine	(Excused)
Butch L. Miller	Virginia	(Excused)
Hon. Alan G. Lance, Sr.	Idaho	(Excused)

Richard J. Santos	Maryland	
Ronald F. Conley	Pennsylvania	(Excused)
Hon. John A. Brieden, III	Texas	(Excused)
Thomas L. Bock	Colorado	
Paul A. Morin	Massachusetts	
Martin F. Conatser	Illinois	
Robert W. Spanogle	Michigan	(Excused)
David K. Rehbein	Iowa	

Clarence E. Hill	Florida	
Jimmie L. Foster	Alaska	
Fang A. Wong	New York	
James E. Koutz	Indiana	
Daniel M. Dellinger	Virginia	
Michael D. Helm	Nebraska	
Harold D. Barnett	Georgia	(Excused)
Charles E. Schmidt	Oregon	

Denise H. Rohan	Wisconsin	
Brett P. Reistad	Virginia	
James W. "Bill" Oxford	North Carolina	
Paul E. Dillard	Texas	
Vincent J. Troiola	New York	
Daniel S. Wheeler	Virginia	
Daniel J. Seehafer	Wisconsin	

National Executive Committee Members

Department	Committee Member		Alternate	
Alabama	Hardwick O. Hall, Sr.			
Alaska	James E. Pisa			
Arizona	Andres Jaime, Jr.			
Arkansas	Mary V. Erdman			
California	Jere L. Ramano			
Connecticut	Robert S. Murray			
Delaware	Michael A. Havel			
D.C.	Christopher V. Herndon			
Florida	Jim V. Ramos			
France	Hans J. Stockenberger			
Georgia	Phil Youngblood			
Hawaii	Francis E. Riddell, Jr.			
Idaho	Robert L. Skinner			
Illinois	Roy Weber			
Indiana	Kenneth R. Cooper			
Iowa	Dennis J. Soppe			
Kansas	Dan K. Wiley			
Kentucky	William O. Moore, Jr.			
Latin America	Randall L. Butler			
Louisiana	Rudolph A. Bourg, Sr.			
Maine	Lloyd H. Woods			
Maryland	Melvin G. Smullen			
Massachusetts	Jodie L. Pajak			
Michigan	Larry C. Money			
Minnesota	William C. Barbknecht	(Excused)	Peggy Moon	
Mississippi	Murry Q. Toney, Jr.			
Missouri	George E. Scarborough			
Montana	Larry G. Dobb			
Nebraska	James A. Costello			
Nevada	L. James Stewart			
New Hampshire	Robert E. Dionne, Sr.			
New Jersey	Berley Hanna, Jr.			
New Mexico	Edward Cheatham, Jr.			
New York	Timothy S. Van Patten			
North Carolina	Davis S. Shore			
North Dakota	Steven D. Anderson			
Ohio	Ronald L. Chapman			
Oklahoma	Charles S. O'Leary			
Oregon	Kevin John Owens			
Pennsylvania	E. Michael Stelacio			
Philippines	Michael S. Napsey	(Excused)	Carl A. Nord	(Excused)
Puerto Rico	Ramon L. Rivera	(Excused)	Antonio Arroyo	
Rhode Island	James Weinreich			
South Carolina	Jimmy E. Hawk			
South Dakota	Frederick N. Nelson			
Tennessee	Robert W. Hensley			
Texas	John C. Hince			
Utah	Terry D. Schow			
Vermont	Thomas J. Scanlon			
Virginia	Linden B. Dixon, Jr.			
Washington	Robert A. Clark			
West Virginia	William W. Kile			
Wisconsin	Robert L. Shappell			
Wyoming	Keith R. Davidson			

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: That completes the roll call, commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, Mr. Adjutant. The next order of business is the acceptance of the meeting's agenda.

Acceptance of Agenda

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, I move that the agenda for this meeting be accepted. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Motion is made and seconded to accept today's agenda. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

Reading of Minutes of Previous Meeting

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: We'll now have the reading of the minutes from the previous meeting.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, I move that the minutes be approved without being read since they have been compiled in digest form and distributed. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: A motion has been made and seconded to approve the minutes without being read since they have been compiled in digest form and distributed. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Disposal of Letters or Communications

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: The next item on the agenda is the disposal of letters or communications. Mr. Adjutant, do we have any letters or communications?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: No.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: With no letters or communications, moving on to the next item.

...National Vice Commander Leach assumed the chair.

Opening Remarks
James A. LaCoursiere Jr., Connecticut, National Commander

Good morning, national officers, past national commanders, members of the NEC and all of our special guests. Last week marked the anniversary of a very sad chapter in history. 50 years ago, April 30, 1975, the South Vietnamese government fell. This was not the ending that many veterans, some of whom are in this room today, had hoped for when they spilled blood, sweat and tears in a country far from their homes. Make no mistake about it, this was a policy failure, not a military one. Our Vietnam veterans fought bravely and served honorably. They won the battles while politicians and opinion-makers lost the war. To all Vietnam veterans, The American Legion says, "Thank you and welcome home."

The despair that many Vietnam veterans still feel today is not unlike what our Afghanistan veterans have also experienced with the poorly planned withdrawal from that country just a few years ago. Whether psychological trauma was induced by war or any other circumstances, The American Legion is a friend to all veterans. We know that it is okay to not be okay as long as we are there with our brothers and sisters. You are why The American Legion exists and why we have Be the One.

Loss of a job can also be traumatic. Our Washington office is fully engaged with the administration and Congress in stressing the importance of veterans preference in hiring and also retention. In fact, we are engaged on all major issues regarding veterans. We have been repeatedly assured by the VA secretary and members of Congress that the reductions will not impact benefits and the health care.

Those who attended the Washington Conference heard Secretary Doug Collins publicly profess his commitment to veterans. We will continue to monitor the impact of these policies as we advocate for all veterans. The administration recently announced a 4% increase in the VA budget. This fits in well with our legislative agenda. I believe the most effective form of advocacy is through action. Last year, American Legion service officers helped more than 1.2 million veterans free of charge with their VA disability claims and health-care needs. Again, that's 1.2 million. *(Applause)*

The American Legion family also contributes billions of volunteer hours and donates millions of dollars annually to support VA facilities nationwide. Each year, The American Legion, at the community, department and national levels, is involved with more than 1,100 career events to help veterans and their families transition. And we continue to help those who are still serving in the military today.

When I visited Shaw Air Force Base in March, I heard from command officials and community members that airmen stationed there receive approximately $400 less in monthly housing allowances than those stationed at nearby Fort Jackson. It didn't seem right to most of the personnel there. There also isn't a single military dining facility available for use at Shaw. We have brought this to the attention of Congress. If we want to attract and retain the best volunteers to serve, we must insist that the quality of life for families is worthy of that service.

A survey by Blue Star Families found that only 32% of active-duty families would recommend military service to a young relative. Seventy-seven percent of the families surveyed said two incomes were vital to their well-being, and 72% said it took their spouses more than three months to find work after a PCS change. These statistics prove what our friends in the Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion have known all along; it isn't just the veteran who serves, but their families as well. That's why we so strongly advocated for the Elizabeth Dole Act, which was signed in January. That's why we are calling for VA Home Loan transferability for family members and why we want spouses of the fallen to be able to keep their benefits when they remarry.

Family is vitally important to The American Legion, not just those that include veterans. Our youth programs benefit entire communities and mold the leaders of tomorrow. This month, some remarkable young people will be arriving at Hillsdale College for our National Oratorical Contest finals. Not only will these high school students showcase their enormous talent, but they will be benefiting from a special relationship that The American Legion has developed with that historic campus. This is a college that cherishes the constitution and America's glorious history.

I began my remarks by reflecting on a tragic anniversary, the fall of Saigon, but we have much to celebrate. 250 years ago, the Army, Navy and Marine Corps were established. Next year marks the 250th birthday of the founding of this great nation. There are some resolutions for you to consider about the nature of these celebrations and the vital role that The American Legion can play in these events.

Another important milestone is the centennial of American Legion Baseball. In 1925, John Griffith introduced his vision of the program to the South Dakota Department Convention. "Intelligent courage, fighting instinct and cooperation are some things which I believe are visibly expressed in our athletic programs," Griffith told delegates 100 years ago. "American Legion posts, as a matter of citizenship training, could easily carry out such athletic activities throughout the United States."

Over the last century, it is conservatively estimated that 10 million young people have played American Legion Baseball. I can't tell you how many times since I've been commander that I've met with a public official, a military member or a community leader who has told me about their experience as a participant in one of our youth programs; Baseball, Oratorical, Boys and Girls State, Shooting Sports, you name it. Our programs touch many, and they do make a difference.

We may have 1.5 million members of The American Legion, but our outreach is at least 100 times that. Let's continue moving the American Legion Family forward. Let's continue moving the United States forward. God bless each and every one of you. I look forward to a productive meeting. Thank you. *(Standing applause) ...National Commander LaCoursiere resumed the chair.*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file your opening remarks. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: There's been a motion and second to receive and file the opening remarks of the national commander. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

...National Vice Commander Kellogg assumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Next, it truly is my great honor and privilege to introduce a woman who has a passion for serving veterans and their families. A member of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 250 in Kansas, she was elected last summer to lead the nation's largest veterans auxiliary. She is eligible through the military service of her father, John M. Brusati, and her grandfather, Edmund S. Lindburg, both of them World War II veterans. Ladies and gentlemen, the national president of the American Legion Auxiliary, Trish Ward.

Greetings: Trish Ward, Kansas
National President, American Legion Auxiliary

Good morning, Commander LaCoursiere, members of the NEC, members and guests. I can't believe it's been seven months since I stood here at the fall meetings and addressed you. Jim, Joseph and I started this journey together in August in New Orleans, and we've remained committed and aligned to the mission of this organization. Of course, serving veterans and our families, but our very special mission of Be the One. Tomorrow I leave for my 39th department visit, and through all those department visits, we talk so much about the things that are so important to us: The Be the One mission. So many stories out in the ranks. So many veterans who connect with us. And I have to tell you one story.

I was on my official visit to Nevada, and I was at Post 8 in Las Vegas, and we were just hanging out. There were just three of us: my two traveling companions and myself and the club room manager. And in the doors in a completely vacant post walks a young man who looks around and says, "Someone told me I should come here. I need a veteran service officer." I'm not from Nevada, but fortunately, that club room manager was right on it, had the information for him, gave it to him, and I felt calm.

And then he sat down next to me, and he proceeded to tell me how he'd been deployed more than five times, was teaching his 10-year-old son how to shoot, and that he was no longer with his son's mom. In a nanosecond, here's what I thought: Need a veteran service officer, has access to firearms, and has relationship issues. I calmly and patiently looked at him and said, "I have to ask this question: Are you considering self-harm?" And gratefully, he said, "No."

But if I hadn't been trained by the Columbia Protocol and all of our American Legion Family priorities, I'm not sure I would have been ready to help him, and I'm not sure that today I wouldn't be thinking about him. What could I have done differently? What should I have done differently? So, everyone needs to take that Columbia Protocol, because you never know when someone is going to cross your path, and you might be the one to save that individual. I am so grateful for the Columbia Protocol. I urge everyone to take it. *(Applause)*

Thank you. As I travel, I talk about four things that are incredibly important to the American Legion Family. Yes, I tell everyone, please don't stop doing what you're doing: supporting adaptive sports that Nicole Clapp rolled out, the caregivers under Kathy Daudistel, the Veterans Creative Arts Festival under Vickie Koutz and, of course, the Be the One mission under the administration last year, so important. But I talk about these four things because I think they're also important, and I call them truth statements.

Truth statement number one. Small-town America is struggling. When small-town America struggles, we struggle, because we were built on small-town America. We have to keep our small towns vibrant. We have to keep them energetic, and we have to bring enthusiasm. And we're the ones to do it because it's where we live and it's where our little posts are.

And I have to tell you because it's important and because you have to know. In the past ten years the American Legion Auxiliary had surrendered the charters of more than 2,100 little units. 2,100 beautiful little thriving units gone. Yes, we lost charters. But wait, we've gained them too. And I have to tell you about one moment that happened to me a couple of weeks ago. Because in the past eight months and eight days, this is truly one of the proudest moments I've ever had.

Way to go, Vermont, for rechartering the Gilman, Vermont, unit in little Gilman, Vermont. Why is that important? Well, that was the unit that Isadore Fox belonged to, and she was the wife of George Fox, one of the four chaplains that was lost on the Dorchester. Isadore was a past Department of Vermont president and also a past ALA national chaplain.

And that little unit had been surrendered long ago, but it's back now, and I signed the charter. And here's what's really cool about it. George Fox's and Isadore Fox's grandchildren are part of the members of that charter roll. So, the family and the American Legion Family has played a role in bringing that charter back. I promise you, as long as I am alive, that unit is going nowhere. It is strong and it is vibrant and they're going to do amazing things. Way to go, Vermont. *(Applause)*

And I've got to give a little love to President John Tester. Yes, the American Legion Auxiliary welcomes men, the spouses of veterans who have proudly served our country. And we have a president, who is a gentleman, in both Utah and Vermont. So well done, President John Tester, and the Vermont American Legion family. It was an amazing moment. So yeah, we have to keep our small towns strong and vibrant.

Truth statement number two, and if I could wave my magic wand and fix any one of them right now, I would fix this one. Leadership capacity is dwindling. We have to have leaders in this organization. It's the one thing that can fix everything.

Here's what I think about it. It's just the World According to Ward. You might think differently and that is okay. We need more leaders, we need more experienced leaders, people who maybe lead in their business environment and want to come lead with us.

And this is really important, I think. We need more diverse leaders. People who don't look like me, people who don't love like me, people who don't pray like me, because diversity makes us stronger. And here's the thing. In our military, our military is very diverse. So how can we help them if we don't understand them? And when we're stronger, the American Legion Family leads more people and lets them know that we stand for all the good things that this organization brings. People who don't look like me, people who don't love like me, people who don't pray like me. I don't care what your culture is, I don't care who you pray to, and I don't care who you love. If you want to support veterans and their families, we have a place for you. I believe that.

Third truth statement is this: Membership is aging and churning. Churning is just a big fancy work like "inculcate," and all it means is "leaving." So, I have a secret to tell you, and you know what that means: When you have a secret, go tell everyone. We're a membership organization, go sign everyone up. It makes us stronger. I want to see this organization thrive. We need members to do it, so let's go sign everybody up. I still haven't figured out why every eligible person in this country doesn't belong to us, because we do so much good, we really do.

The last truth statement is this: The infrastructure of some of our posts is weakening. If you were to bring your children and grandchildren to the post, that's a problem. Because in the old days, the kids grew up and they became leaders in this organization. You know what it was. "Hey, Mom and Dad, where are we going for summer vacation?"

"Wherever the Legion convention is."

They grew up together. They became leaders together. We want to keep that. I've seen amazing things happen. I tell a lot of stories. I promise, Jim, I'll get your team out of here by midnight, promise. *(Laughter)*

In my little town of Grove, Oklahoma, I know, it's very complicated. I'm from the Western Division, the great state of California. I proudly and forever will represent the Central Division, the great state of Kansas, my beloved Kansas; but I live in the Southern Division and that's Oklahoma. And when Steve and I moved there, we did what every Legion family does, "Let's go see the Legion," and we went right over to Qualate-Pritchard. And I looked at the building and I said, "I am not going in there, I'm going home." It was really struggling.

But people like you changed that. They had very little money in the bank, they got together, and they said, "Not here. We're going to fix it." And they did. They changed that post, they built that post. It's now thriving. And here's the big win. Here's the big win. That post that I would not go into in 2014, last year was the first post in the great state of Oklahoma where their Legion, their Sons, their Auxiliary and their Riders were 100 percent in membership. That's what people do. *(Applause)*

I believe we fix those four things, there is nothing that can stop us.

Last summer, I had the honor and pleasure to hang out at ALA Girls State, and it is my heart to meet those young people who come to us, and we change lives. And I had a young person in my community who is really struggling. That kid was really struggling. And I knew about it, but I was there. I was there for her. And she thrived and she was welcomed, and she participated, and it changed her life.

She said, "Would you write a letter for me to college?" Absolutely, I would. She got into her number one college. And then word came back to me that that kid was contemplating suicide. And because of Girls State, that kid felt valued and welcomed and believed that the future was there, and it is. We save lives, we do, not only in Be the One but in our children, and our children struggle, so we have to be there for them.

A couple of weeks back, it was a very difficult time for this president. As chairman of the board of the American Legion Auxiliary, I am responsible for decisions, and sometimes they're not popular. You lose friends, you lose people that you valued in your life. It's a very difficult time. And I'll be perfectly honest with you, every department I visited has been amazing. But Utah, Utah saved me. They did.

I was having to make some very difficult decisions for this organization, and I still continue to have to make those. I'd received some very difficult information from the Legion. My husband had been taken to the hospital, middle of the night, he's okay, but I'm out in the West Coast and he's in Kansas. I didn't know what was going on. The national president doesn't travel with an aide. So, me and my heavy luggage, we're alone and really tired.

But here's what happened. Utah took me to Jay Hess. Jay is an amazing Legionnaire who spent five and a half years in the Hanoi Hilton. Think about that. Over 2,000 days in the Hanoi Hilton. And all of a sudden, what was going on in my life couldn't compare to what had happened in his life.

And then they took me to an elementary school that's right next to an Air Force base, and it's comprised of 95% of military kids. And I had the opportunity to speak to second graders and fourth graders and fifth graders. And I talked to them about what being a military kid really means, the good and the not-so good. And this one guy raised his hand, and he said, "Well, it's hard when your daddy goes off to war and comes home in the hospital." What do you say? I couldn't say everything was going to be okay, because I wasn't sure, and I didn't know. But I could say this: "We will be there for him, and we will be there for you." That's a promise I could keep. *(Applause)*

And as I left and those second graders filed out, this one little guy came up to me, and he looked at me and he said, "I think you need a hug." And then he said, "I think you need another one."

So, if you ever wonder why we do what we do, I will tell you. Sometimes, like that young person at ALA Girls State, we save lives. And sometimes, like that little guy, they save us.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning. I can't wait to see you all in Tampa Bay. Today's a very special day. Commander LaCoursiere mentioned my father, John M. Brusati, proud member of the Greatest Generation, the U.S. Army in World War II, and today he would have been 106. *(Applause)*

On behalf of the nearly 600,000 members of the American Legion Auxiliary, it's my honor and pleasure to present to Commander LaCoursiere a check in the amount of $10,000 for the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, madam president. A charter member of Otero-Navarrete Squadron 72 in Albuquerque, our next guest is the son of Army veteran and New Mexico Adjutant Tony Navarrete and Past National President of the Auxiliary Rita Navarrete. He and his wife, Loretta, share a family of seven children and eight grandchildren. Through their shared values and example, they strive daily to teach their kids honor, love and respect. Ladies and gentlemen, it's my honor to introduce to you Sons of The American Legion National Commander Joseph Navarrete. *(Standing applause)*

Greetings: Joseph R. Navarrete, New Mexico
National Commander, Sons of The American Legion

Good morning. I am honored to be here with you today representing more than 390,000 members of the Sons of The American Legion. The Sons have continued with our historic year, with closing in on another all-time high in membership, we look to surpass that elusive 400,000 mark in membership going into Tampa Bay.

We continue to lead the pack in funds raised for the Child Well-Being Foundation. We just wrapped up our NEC meetings earlier this past weekend, and what a great weekend it was, with donations of just over $40,000 to CWF. *(Applause)*

Just under $9,000 to NEF, and $8,900 to the Veterans & Children Foundation. With a few smaller donations made to several other programs, we totaled over $74,000 this weekend alone. Your Sons continue to do what we do best. *(Applause)*

We all know this mission is not just about money. It's about making a real difference in the lives of those who have sacrificed for us. As Sons of The American Legion, we stand firm in that commitment, and I know we will rise to meet the challenges ahead.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "The better part of one's life consists of his friendships." This is so true, and I know it firsthand standing right here in front of you. The Sons of The American Legion have given me the opportunity to meet so many incredible individuals who are now my brothers and sisters. The bonds we share truly represent the better part of my experience as national commander.

It is a privilege and an honor to stand alongside you and work toward a shared goal of supporting our veterans and their families. Our members are providing support to our nation's veterans, our work in assisting veterans in local VA hospitals and medical centers continues to grow and will always remain a top priority of the Sons of The American Legion. We continue to pledge to Be the One and help end veteran suicide. Even one life is too many. Members in every detachment support the Four Pillars that our organization was founded on. We have proved that our local squadrons can and do make a difference, no matter how small or large they are.

Please know that your service is appreciated. I want to thank you for your commitment to this organization, to our country, and most importantly, to the Legion family. Commander LaCoursiere, thank you. You truly make me feel part of a family. I look forward to us finishing this journey off strong down in Tampa. I hope that you have a very productive and successful NEC, and I look forward to seeing many of you in my travels.

Thank you for allowing me to address you this morning and thank you for your service and everything you do. And always, always remember, *todo es posible con Dios y la familia,* everything is possible with God and family. Thank you and God bless. *(Standing applause)*

...National Commander LaCoursiere resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: The chair now recognizes National Vice Commander Gary B. Leach of California for his report.

Oral Report: National Vice Commander
Gary B. Leach, California

Thank you, commander. Good morning, members of the NEC. On the topic of what I've learned this year, the subject of membership. I've learned that some department leaders were unfamiliar with benefits of conducting membership revitalizations, some due to never having been a part of one. And some were reluctant to request national assistance with one because they believed that their respective departments were going to be responsible for picking up all the costs which is, of course, not true.

I've also learned there's confusion when it comes to DMS transfers. Some still believe there's a three-year waiting period that they have to go through before they can get DMS members transferred into traditional posts. In fact, we need to get them transferred in ASAP because the renewal rate for DMS transfers is less than 60 percent. But as of yesterday's national membership report, the renewal rate for traditional post members is up to 87.26 percent, slightly less than the commander's goal of 90 percent, but reachable, certainly. Hopefully, we've gotten all these misconceptions cleared up.

Unfortunately, I've also learned we still have some posts in rural areas who are still doing membership transmittals on paper and sending them in through the United States Postal Service because the post doesn't have a computer. Not having a computer at a post certainly puts them in a not-so-great position because they don't have access to the great membership tools that are available to us all on myLegion.org. They can't get to "Find members in my area" or transfer letters, renewal letters, mailing labels, et cetera.

On a positive side, I got to travel to Arlington, Virginia, for Veterans Day. I just have to say that I believe our Washington staff is made up of consummate professionals. They did a great job taking care of me there.

My visit to the Department of Washington in February, I learned that they were close to getting their charter back, and they are now off suspension. So, congratulations to the Department of Washington. *(Applause)*

Got a few more visits to do, more work to do on membership. But I'm confident that the Western Region will improve its numbers before the end of the year, hopefully 100%. Last but not least, speaking of 100%, I want to congratulate the Department of Hawaii, because they are the first department in the organization to reach their 100% goal. So, congratulations to Hawaii. *(Applause)*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Leach. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Leach. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair now recognizes National Vice Commander James C. Kellogg of Minnesota for his report.

Oral Report: National Vice Commander
James C. Kellogg, Minnesota

Good morning, Commander LaCoursiere, past national commanders, National Executive Committee members and guests. What I have learned as national vice commander of the Midwest. I have learned that the Legion members of the Midwest states have chosen wisely in electing some outstanding and dedicated Legionnaires.

I have learned that the national staff I have worked with are patient and the nicest and kindest employees that we could ask for. I have learned that we have a very historic and busy national headquarters in Washington, D.C. I hope all of you can see it one day, if not in person, then virtually in the near future.

I have learned that the timely distribution of membership dues from national back to departments is critical to maintain their cash flows without disruption.

I have learned that this is the most rewarding office I have held in my 48 years as a Legion member. I look forward to seeing our national commander in his cheerleading outfit at this year's Membership Workshop in July after another year of stopping decline in membership. Your national vice commanders are here to cheer you on to victory. *...The national vice commanders waved pompoms.* (*Laughter)*

Thank you for your kind attention. *(Applause)*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Kellogg. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Kellogg. Any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair now recognizes National Vice Commander Charles K. Robbins of New Jersey for his report.

Oral Report: National Vice Commander
Charles K. "Chuck" Robbins, New Jersey

Good morning. Tough act to follow there. National Commander LaCoursiere, national officers, past national commanders, members of the NEC, national staff, Legion Family members, distinguished guest. What an honor for me to stand before all of you today.

In an effort to be as brief as possible, tell no jokes, and to keep this report in line with National Adjutant Rolland's request, the following are a few of the many things I have learned this year and taken with me everywhere I have gone.

First, and maybe most importantly, would be the way each department in the Northeast handles membership. We all know membership is the lifeline of our organization. In the Northeast, every department promotes or conducts membership in line with its strategies outlined in the 21st century strategic plan. They promote membership effectively through recruitment, focusing on renewals and expressing the value of membership by retention through training, education and leadership development, by knowing the importance of Buddy Checks and promoting our Be the One mission, and lastly, knowing the importance of community involvement.

In the Northeast, we have shared throughout the year different ways each department promotes membership and our monthly Zoom calls were a great way of doing this. It was good to hear and see that many posts are focused on adapting to the needs and wants of our younger veterans and that our female veterans are treated on the same par as their male counterparts, and many are in key leadership positions.

I could go on and on with many other things I learned and shared throughout my year, and there are more which are outlined in my written report, but I'll end by saying this: I consider myself a very patriotic person, and like all you, I love this country and the principles and values it stands for, and the meaning of the word "freedom." And I know all too well the sacrifices my brothers and sisters have made on our behalf.

Recently, and maybe over the past five years or so, I've seen things happen or being done in our country that have sickened me and made me ask myself, my God, what direction is our country headed in and whatever happened to true patriotism? Well, since becoming a national vice commander, and because of The American Legion, I'm proud to report that true patriotism, love of country and respect for those who have served does exist and is alive and well in America.

Whether it be through my many department visitations, covering many events for National Commander LaCoursiere like Navy ship commissionings, or leading The American Legion contingent down the Canyon of Heroes in the New York City Veterans Day Parade, where at each I had the opportunity to speak with crew members, active-duty personnel and veterans alike.

And despite blizzard conditions, cold, freezing weather, and putting up with National Vice Commander Joe Lysaght for ten days *(Laughter)* our Wreaths Across America's incredible trek from Maine to Arlington last December, my faith that true patriotism is alive and well in America was truly restored. In all of our 22 stops along Wreaths trip, I have never seen an outpouring of true patriotism, love of country, and respect for those who have served, from young and old alike, like I did on this trip. Remember the fallen, honor those who have served and teach our children the value of freedom is Wreaths' motto and one we should all adhere to. National Commander, these are a few of the many things I have learned this year. I know in the coming months left in our year, I will learn a lot more.

Lastly, I want to thank all the departments in the Northeast for the incredible hospitality shown me. I thank the Department of France for currently being number one in membership, and also that Mark Woodsmall, member engagement coordinator, Internal Affairs and Membership Division for the Northeast Region, for all he has done for me in the Northeast this year. That's my report, commander. *(Applause)*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of the National Vice Commander Robbins. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Robbins. Any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair now recognizes National Vice Commander Joe Lysaght of South Carolina for his report.

Oral Report: National Vice Commander
Joseph A. "Joe" Lysaght, South Carolina

Good morning commander, good morning NEC members and distinguished guests. My report now resides on my hard disk at my computer in my study. The problem is, I was hacked three days ago and the genius that was able to break through my security has frozen my system down. But I'm going to have my three minutes or whatever I got, I don't know. Okay? *(Laughter)*

That's my report, it's going to be short and sweet. Okay?

I've learned a lot, not only about being a national vice commander, but I've also learned a lot over the 27 years I've had the chance to associate with a lot of the people in The American Legion, staff. And it's their support, their understanding, their acceptance which has allowed me to grow in The American Legion. And I am deeply grateful for that honor, really am.

As a national vice commander, I won't tell you I know a lot, because that's a big mistake. Nobody says that if they got any sense. But there are two things I learned so far. I learned the real meaning of commitment, and I have been taught to recognize and understand and appreciate patriotism. Chuck had to put up with me but I had to put up with him. Okay? *(Laughter)*

The ten days that we traveled down the coast, 756 miles, we made 22 stops. Every night was a different hotel. That's a little tricky right there. You don't unpack a lot because you're out the next morning.

But the one thing that I saw, which will resonate with me as long as I'm alive, I actually saw patriotism. And I ask you, how many of you have actually seen it? I'm not talking about Old Glory waving. How many of you have really seen patriotism? Because I have. What's it like to see people standing on the side of a road in the snow, with it snowing, waving the American flag, cheering you on, saluting you, running up to the car wanting to, you name it, they were doing it. And you know what? Some of them were only that big. Some of them were in strollers. Some of them were in the arms of their grandparents or parents. Every time we had a chance to stop or slow down, we had our windows down, our horns were blowing and everything. This convoy was about a mile-and-a-half long, I think, you know, with all the vehicles in it. And they want to come up, they want to see you.

Every time we stopped, we went into these auditoriums, sometimes it was a big post, but most of the time it was an auditorium. I'm an uneducated man. I don't have enough adjectives to tell you what it felt like. My God, I mean, it was unreal. The enthusiasm, honest enthusiasm. And we had a chance to lead them in cheers, we had to chance to shake hands. They greeted us like we were something unreal and I was embarrassed because, I mean, I put my pants on like most people, one leg at a time, but I swear to God, I think they thought we just jumped in them.

They wanted to touch you. Can you imagine the value you can receive from that kind of enthusiasm from young people, the people that are going to follow us, the people we need to train and educate and introduce? It's like Joe said a minute ago with the SAL. We need to get them in the SAL. We need to get them involved in the Auxiliary. We need to get them involved in The American Legion. I learned that.

When I visited my departments, and I've got a few more hundred to visit, I think. I don't know. My schedule is three pages long right now. I also leave with my departments a fact, and that is, I grew up with this slogan: You are your tomorrow, but you have to work for it today. You are your tomorrow, but you have to work for it today.

If you're going to succeed and be successful, you have got to accept within yourself your capabilities and what you can do. And if you're in this organization or any organization for yourself, my other pledge that I make, and many of you in this room have heard me say that: Take off the hat, I'll give you back your money for your dues, and I hope you don't speak French, but one person does, but get the hell out of here. Okay? *(Laughter)*

It could have been Spanish. The other thing I instilled in my departments, I have the Southern Region. We're number one. I mean, I can't help it, we got a good region. Okay? *(Laughter)*

Has nothing to do with me. I asked them to overcome. That region, in a short period of time, as most of you know, suffered a tremendous amount of disaster. You name it, we got it. We hadn't had a snow in seven years, and damn, we got snow. Okay? *(Laughter)*

Floods, mudslides, mountains caving in, roads collapsing. Just pick something. Okay? Houses floating down the road with people in the house. But those people said, "You know what? We can hit our numbers; we can do it." And I use an old phrase that you will recognize, but I really like it, where they said, and I kept saying, "We can do it, water boy, we can do it. Let's get out there and do it."

But two reasons, I am very proud to tell you the Southern Region is the third-time, fourth-time leader. We're going to beat California, I'm telling you that. Okay? We got them. But what that showed me was commitment. I can't do it. All you can do is encourage and support. And every opportunity I had, every month when I got those reports, I sent an email of acknowledgment to them.

And that's what we have to do as leaders. We've got to reach out there, not just in the Southern Region, not just in the right now, but forever. Let people know you appreciate the commitment. Because without commitment, this organization is not going to grow, and that back door is going to get bigger, that people are going out of.

So, by God, let them know how much you appreciate it. I don't care how little or how big the effort is, let them know you appreciate what they're doing. And for God's sake, don't be a leader and forget those people. Because when you do, your days are numbered and short. That's it, gentlemen, ladies, commander, that's my report. *(Applause)*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Lysaght. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Lysaght. Any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair now recognizes National Vice Commander Roger P. Mathison of Wisconsin for his report.

Oral Report: National Vice Commander
Roger P. Mathison, Wisconsin

Thank you, Commander LaCoursiere, members of the National Executive Committee, past national commanders, national staff, Legion Family members and distinguished guests. It's been an honor to serve in leadership this past year and I am proud to report the departments of the Central Region are working hard to support the programs of The American Legion and the promotion of the organization within their communities and doing so in conjunction with the entire American Legion Family.

The departments continue to stress the importance of the Be the One initiative and the Buddy Check program. The Be the One and the Buddy Checks, along with the Americanism programs, have a profound effect in our communities. It's being noticed and recognized by the public that The American Legion cares and does.

The Central Region was hit hard with natural disasters this past year, from the floods in Kentucky and Ohio and West Virginia to the winter ice storms in Michigan to the tornadoes in Indiana. But the departments have responded by giving needed aid and comfort to the veteran families and their communities. The disaster response teams organized in Illinois and Kentucky especially show how The American Legion can mobilize quickly to effectively give needed relief to communities in stress. It shows The American Legion is an organization of veterans that are still serving America.

While the Central Region is still not 100% in membership, the region led the organization for much of the year in renewals. And the departments in the region continue to renew members while conducting outreach to newer generations of veterans into The American Legion.

And recognizing that priorities of the newer generations of veterans and the priorities of our communities have changed from previous generations and their ways of communication have changed.

The departments in the region have had a great exchange of ideas and best practices in how to conduct outreach by using modern forms of communications and social media. The Department of Michigan has especially been successful in using texting in lieu of email and postal mailings to reach their members, and the program's success is evident.

The departments in the Central Region recognize the importance of training and education in The American Legion. The departments all have active training programs, and recognizing the key to growth is understanding the organization and the potential the organization has, and with that understanding to be able to effectively outreach to newer, younger veteran families.

Wisconsin has an online American Legion college and leadership courses that have developed many informed leaders and mentors in The American Legion family within our department.

Department of Michigan has a strong mentorship training program for new post commanders, guidance for female veterans and mentorship for new members to grow within the department.

The Department of Ohio has developed a strong mentorship program for adjutants serving in all capacities in the organization. Generational mentorship is evident in the departments, and good, strong younger leaders are being developed and encouraged to lead in committees and offices within the departments.

Innovative thinking has led the Department of Indiana to develop a successful program to organize American Legion posts within their prison system, giving incentive for inmates to reevaluate their lives, and a direction to return to productive lives upon their release and to reduce the recidivism rate.

In my visits within the region, I was impressed by American Legion families involved in their communities and how they're the center of the community activities in both large and small communities. And they continue with partnerships that they have developed with other organizations to better serve the needs of their communities. And the family is connected and being heard by their legislative representatives in Washington and their state capitols. And they are connected and volunteering in their local VA hospitals and clinics.

I'm very proud of the work of the Central Region, and they continue to impress me with their support and care for their fellow veterans' families. This concludes my report. Commander, thank you for allowing me to serve as your national vice commander this year. *(Applause)*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Mathison. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of National Vice Commander Mathison. Any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair recognizes National Adjutant Rodney K. Rolland of Georgia for any announcements.

Announcements

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: All national commission chairs have been certified as eligible members in good standing of The American Legion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you. Before we move on to our next order of business, I'd like to announce the results of the mail-in vote taken by this body concerning the reinstatement of the charter for the Department of Washington. The vote count was 58 in favor and one abstention. The motion to reinstate the Department of Washington passes. *(Applause)*

Resolution No. 1 (Mail): Reinstatement of the Charter of The American Legion Department of Washington
Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions
Submitted By: Subcommittee on Resolutions

WHEREAS, The charter of the American Legion Department of Washington was suspended on June 10, 2023; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Department of Washington has worked diligently to remedy the deficiencies and violations which caused the suspension; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion by a vote pursuant to Rule 12 of the Rules of the National Executive Committee, That the charter of the American Legion Department of Washington shall be reinstated on March 1, 2025; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Department of Washington shall remain in a probationary status until such time as a department adjutant is hired and trained, and such other benchmarks, as identified in a memorandum of understanding are met; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That such full reinstatement will be subject to a separate loan administration agreement which shall cover the total amount of its indebtedness to The American Legion as determined on March 1, 2025, at the applicable federal rate published by the Internal Revenue Service for long term obligations; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the terms of the indebtedness shall be reported to the National Executive Committee at its meeting in May 7-8, 2025; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That National Executive Committee Resolution No. 1, "Suspension of Department of Washington Charter," approved in special meeting on June 10, 2023, is hereby superseded and rescinded.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: The chair recognizes chairman of the Resolutions Subcommittee, William W. Kile of West Virginia, for a report on resolutions.

Oral Report: Subcommittee on Resolutions
William W. Kile, West Virginia, Chairman

Mr. Commander, your Subcommittee on Resolutions has been meeting regularly to review resolutions. We have 18 resolutions that will be presented coming from the commissions and committees who will make reports. Any resolution seeking National Executive Committee approval will follow the report of the commissions. All resolutions which have been disposed of by other action or held for further study will

be reported on an addendum. Our thanks to the commissions for their efficient and accurate handling of resolutions for this meeting. This has had a positive impact on the work of the subcommittee. Mr. Commander, I ask that you prepare the NEC for memorializing resolutions.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Please rise and uncover.

Memorial Resolutions
Miles S. Epling, West Virginia

WHEREAS, It has pleased almighty God, the Great Commander, to summon to His immortal legions our beloved comrade, Miles S. Epling - Department Vice Commander - 1980 to 1981; National Executive Committee Alternate Member - 1981 to 1983; 1986 to 1987; Department Commander 1983 to 1984; National Vice Commander - 1985 to 1986; National Commander - 1989 to 1990; Department Adjutant - 2002 to 2024; and

WHEREAS, We humbly bow to the will of Divine Providence, while ever cherishing in our hearts the memory of his distinguished service to our country and his outstanding contributions to American Legion comradeship; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee of The American Legion, in regular meeting assembled on this 7th Day of May in the year of our Lord 2025, does mourn the passing of our distinguished Legionnaire, Miles S. Epling, that we commend to all men his works and to God his spirit; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That in token of our common grief, a copy of this resolution be presented to his family.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Similar resolutions will be presented to families of the following: Willis Frazier, Alabama; Autrey B. James, California; Phillip R. Hearlson, Florida; Don G. Gunderson, Idaho; Norbert L. Bultemeier, Indiana; Donald R. Conn, Indiana; James E. Georgel, Indiana; John A. Klepfer, Indiana; Dennis W. Pettit, Indiana; Damon C. Christensen, Kansas; James R. Johnson, Louisiana; William J. Chisholm, Massachusetts; Norbert J. Schollett, Michigan; Joseph Schanda, Sr., New Hampshire; Anthony E. Kuran; New Jersey; Daniel E. McCole, New Jersey; Michael L. Braswell, North Carolina; Robert L. Krause, North Dakota; Louis Neubecker, Oregon; Raymond A. Cribari, Rhode Island; John E. Demers, Sr., Rhode Island; John D. Dellinger, South Carolina; Carl E. Levi, Tennessee; James E. Markham, Tennessee; Alexander J. Aerts, Utah; Hal G. Hatch, Utah; Norman I. Nelson, Utah; Huzon J. Stewart, III, Vermont; David F. Russell, Virginia; Thomas E. Saunders, Virginia; James A. Davidson, Washington; William D. Barnes, Wyoming.

When Earth's last picture is painted
and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded,
and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it–
lie down for an aeon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen
shall put us to work anew.

Eulogy for Miles S. Epling

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Remembering "A Pretty Special Kind of Fella." Past National Commander Miles Epling, who passed away April 13, praised for overcoming obstacles, foresight and steadfast support for the nation's veterans.

While serving in the U.S. Marine Corps and on patrol in Vietnam, Miles lost both legs when he stepped on a landmine. He was medically discharged in 1969 and earned a Purple Heart.

Miles, who passed away at the age of 75, went on to continue to serve in national positions after his tenure ended. In 2002, he took over the Department of West Virginia as adjutant, a position he held until July 2024. That dedication drew praise from his fellow past national commanders. After serving as national commander, he served as department adjutant for West Virginia for 22 years, which is an amazing feat itself when you add on top of everything else that he did.

"I could never understand how well he did with all his injuries, traveling throughout the nation as he did as national commander," Past National Commander Jake Comer said, "He was an outstanding Legionnaire, and I respect him wholeheartedly. He made a name for himself and The American Legion."

A life member of American Legion Post 23 in Point Pleasant, West Virginia, Miles was a 56-year member of the organization in which he held several positions at the local, state and national level. In addition to department adjutant, Miles also served as department commander, alternate NEC, national vice commander and on all the commissions and committees before and after he served as national commander. That dedication carried over to local government, where he served as Mason County magistrate and commissioner.

As national commander, Miles was a staunch supporter of a constitutional amendment to protect the flag from physical desecration. On June 21, 1989, the Supreme Court's ruling in Texas v. Johnson upheld the rights of protesters to burn the American flag.

"When somebody burns that flag or spits on it or tramples on it, he is desecrating not just the flag, but also the memory of those brave men and women. To accord such repugnant acts of disrespect and defiance, constitutional protection based on some legal interpretation of free speech defies logic and must not be permitted to continue. We, the people, have the right and the obligation to protect that flag, adopting a narrowly drawn constitutional amendment which will settle this issue once and for all."

It was during 1989 fall meetings that the Legion's National Executive Committee authorized the creation of what is now the National Emergency Fund. "There are several goals to be accomplished with the establishment of this special fund," Miles wrote in a January 1990 National Commander's message. "Hurricane Hugo devastation estimated to exceed $8 billion. Damages from the California earthquake are expected to exceed $13 million. When the disaster struck, Legionnaires reached out and helped. Your help now can make a big difference. In helping our fellow members, we demonstrate our steadfast 'devotion to mutual helpfulness.'"

By the 1990 national convention in Indianapolis, more than $500,000 had been raised for this fund. Since then, the National Emergency Fund has delivered over $10 million in aid to Legionnaires and their families.

"I think the NEF dumped $1 million into the Red River Valley," Ludwig said. "It is just another example of the vision of this organization and how we really work hard to understand the challenges we face."

It was also during a 1990 convention when delegates unanimously approved Resolution No. 1, which asked Congress to change the Legion Constitution to expand membership eligibility to include those who served on active duty in U.S. military during U.S. involvement in Lebanon, Grenada and Panama.

"He was a patriot," Ludwig said of Epling. "Obviously, he had a passion for veterans and a passion for freedom in this country. And he was my friend, and I'll miss him." Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, chairman. At this time, you all may be seated but remain uncovered for a moment. Is there anybody at this time that also may want to offer a eulogy for Past National Commander Epling?

NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Comrade Commander, Miles Epling was very special. He was a great Legionnaire. The tribulations that he went through with his injury and, he did it profoundly and to the good of this organization. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, Commander Comer. Is there anybody else? Hearing none, you may recover. I now call on the chairman of the American Legion Department Advisory Committee, Past National Commander Thomas L. Bock of Colorado, for a report.

Oral Report: Department Advisory Committee
Past National Commander Thomas L. Bock, Colorado, Chairman

Good morning. National officers, national commander, national staff, members of the National Executive Committee, it is our duty and responsibility to give you a report from the Department Advisory Committee. I always emphasize it's for advice, not reconstruction, even though our duties and responsibilities sometimes expand. We have a couple of active reports. I would like our vice chairman, David Rehbein, and Past National Commander Charlie Schmidt to join me up here to give a brief summary for the Department of Washington and the Department of Colorado.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SCHMIDT: Commander LaCoursiere, national officers, past department commander, members of the National Executive Committee, ladies and gentlemen. Commander, you announced just a few minutes ago the resolution that you all passed in regard to the Department of Washington. On February 1, National Vice Commander Leach, Ken George of the staff, and myself attended the midyear conference of Washington. During that conference, we announced the results of your resolution to reinstate the charter of the Department of Washington effective 1 March.

Since 1 March, things have been heating up. They have come together because, even though they got their charter along with a probation, and that probation was outlined in a memorandum of understanding that was made up with national and the Department of Washington outlining some things that not only national had to do, but the department had to do. Hire an adjutant. Get their officers elected. Get their commissions and committees in order. Review their constitution and bylaws, which they already had, and also their standard operating procedures.

They have got their officers elected. They are working on their commissions and committees. In fact, they're getting ready for Boys State. They are working on those SOPs, and hopefully, the commander says they will hopefully have those done by their department convention, July 11 through the 13. Hopefully they'll have them done before then. Probably the hardest task they have, and probably like five or six other departments, of hiring an adjutant. Because when you hire a department adjutant, you want to get the right person. So, I think that's probably going to be their most challenging thing right now.

But they're coming along, they're working together. You know, even while they didn't have any department officers, the districts and the posts carried on The American Legion in the state of Washington, even the service officers working, still serving veterans. We hope that, by their convention, that we will be able to lift that probationary cloud, and they will be a department in whole.

So, the good news is, I think good things are happening. And as a result of this, I think what I saw since March 1, a rise in their membership. They're going back at it, doing the things that they should do, growing and doing the Legion programs, serving veterans and serving their families. Commander, that concludes my report.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: The Department of Colorado. I wish I could stand here and give the same report for Colorado that you just heard for Washington, but Colorado has not yet progressed to that point. It's my hope, hope, that we will reach that point this summer and into the fall.

Right now, Colorado's progress, we have a constitution and bylaws written that will take effect when they become a department again. We're working on personnel policy, we're working on what you know as the Outline of Authorization, setting up committees. We will be going to a department convention the end of June. Between now and that department convention, the Legionnaires of Colorado have got to start taking ownership and helping make the decisions. That's a challenge for them, but it's going to be a challenge for us too, because in order for them to start taking ownership in the decisions, we as a committee have to step back some. Trust has to develop both ways, and so that's a goal.

One of the challenges that they have to meet, one of the decisions that they have to make: At their department convention, will they have an election of new officers, or will they instead do a vote of confidence in the officers that they have? If they elect new officers, if they chose to go that route, it will delay the reinstatement of their charter, because the committee has to work with the new officers until they become comfortable in the process where we are. So that's a big decision on their part. That's one they're going to have to struggle with, and I hope they make the right decision because, frankly, our committee's goal is to reinstate the charter as soon as we possibly can.

It's been two years in Colorado, been two difficult years. I think we can see a light at the end of the tunnel and know it's not a train, but, but there's a lot of decisions that have to be made yet. I will give you our committee's goal for that reinstatement process. One, they choose to stay with their current officers who have been developing the process so far. If that happens, then I think we can reasonably expect to come to this committee, to the National Executive Committee, with a recommendation to reinstate the charter at the Pre-Convention NEC. If that happens, then we can kick off the MOU probationary period. I think in Colorado we're looking at 90 to 120 days for that process to play itself out for full restoration of the charter.

But there are many, there are many ways that this process can go awry, so don't take that as a guaranteed timeline. Take that as a hopeful timeline. Because the Legionnaires in Colorado are beginning to take ownership. We have to continue to see that increase. We have to continue to see them take accountability for what happened in Colorado. Because until they take accountability for what happened in Colorado, we run the risk of it happening again, and that's the last thing this committee wants, is to reinstate the charter in six to nine months, and two to three years after that see this whole process start all over again. That danger exists. Until they take that ownership, until they step forward and say, "This is our department, we choose how to run it," that risk is going to be there.

But we're hopeful. We've got new people coming on board, some really bright individuals, particularly around the finances, which is a great thing. That's the one place where we really had a problem. So, progress is being made. We're looking forward to Colorado being back to full department status sometime next fall, but we got our fingers crossed that that's actually going to happen.

Mr. Commander, I want to thank you, I want to thank the NEC, but I particularly want to thank the members of the committee that have worked with Colorado: Mr. Paul Dillard, Mr. Jimmie Foster. They have been invaluable in helping work through the problems in Colorado to put this back together. Mr. Commander, thank you. Mr. Chairman.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BOCK: Thank you, gentlemen. I really appreciate those reports. The hard work of the committee has been going on, and I appreciate them filling in during my recent absence. But that's not the end of the road. We will give you some information we'll be passing out today for you to review tonight on the Department of Nebraska, and there will be a resolution for you to consider and vote on tomorrow for that. I wish I could say that's the end of the list, but it continues. We do have some concerns with other departments, several other departments, one being the Department of Oregon, one being the Department of Georgia.

I blame, don't smile when you say that the Department of Florida, because they discovered how to activate this committee. The first year we were having a great year, nothing happened. And then a couple of questions started up and then people started discovering how to activate, how to energize this committee.

We are, as I said, the Department Advisory Committee and we'd like to be in an advisory role. The reconstruction portion is very challenging and difficult. That's where we need your help in your departments. Make sure you're bringing your leadership and your membership together. This is a membership organization. We need their buy-in and their enforcement.

If we get some elected officials that read something into their title, one is commonly referred to as "chief executive officer." That's always been a hot button for me. We don't have a department chief executive officer. We have a Department Executive Committee that handles. We have a leader; it's called the department commander. And yes, he is a leader, but he is not the final leader that says, "It's my way or the highway."

We need you to help educate and train our membership on the roles and responsibilities of the posts, the districts, the department officers and your Department Executive Committee.

I realize we're being impacted a lot by this country right now. We're going through some traumatic things in the past several years and trying to come together. You heard conversations about Americanism and patriotism. It's coming back. But we need to make sure inside our organization, we're keeping focus on the mission of The American Legion, our Four Pillars, and why we really exist. So, I appeal to you to help, help us keep The American Legion strong again.

I was going to list off all the members of my committee, but sometimes your memory gets old. You heard some names: Jimmie Foster, David, Charlie, Denise Rohan, Paul Dillard. We also had great assistance from our national judge advocate, Mark Seavey; Ken George; and also, Shawn Long, our national treasurer. It's been a challenge, but we know the importance of it, to get The American Legion united. So, with your help, we can do that.

Mr. Commander, if there are no other questions that they'd like to write down and give me to consider later, that ends my report.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Department Advisory Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Department Advisory Committee. Is there any discussion? Yes, Jim?

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER RAMOS (FL): Commander, just as a statement. Back when somebody had a problem at a department, they should come and talk first before they throw people under the bus. Communication is number one. You don't have to like me, but you should talk to me, and if you need someone to referee, you should do that before throwing somebody under the bus. That's it, commander. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Any other discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. I now call on the chairman of the Membership Study Committee, Gaither M. Keener, Jr. of North Carolina, for a report.

Oral Report: Membership Study Committee
Gaither M. Keener, Jr. North Carolina, Chairman

I'm going to get us back on time. Thank you, commander. Welcome, everyone, to this short report. Okay. Your special membership study meeting had two meetings since October. Of course, the question was: What about the PUFL? What's our liability on the PUFL? Why don't we have members joining the PUFL?

Let me just read you very shortly. I just want to clarify the status of the PUFL. There is over $25 million in the trust. I sit on the PUFL Trust along several other Legionnaires. National receives $2.5 million annually in dues, an additional $140,000 as administrative fees that goes to the operation of the account. That does not count the money that goes to the post, does not count the money that goes to the department.

If we didn't sell another PUFL membership, the fund would be solvent for four years. Selling 9,000 annually, which we do consistently, and more than 9,000 annually, results in the trust never becoming insolvent. I say again, selling 9,000 PUFLs a year, our PUFL Trust never becomes insolvent, at least through my lifetime. *(Laughter)*

Selling only 1,000 PUFLs a year results in the trust remaining solvent until 2043. 2043. There is not a current situation that results in the trust failing to meet its liabilities.

Now, if you're financially literate and you read the trust, it shows you have a $15 million short fall in funding. That's annuities. That's actuaries. Do not pay attention to that. Pay attention to how much money we have and what goes in and what goes out. And I remind you, if the trust ever fails, the posts will always get their money out of that trust. But the department and national has to make sure and guarantee that, because it is a department and a national matter. So, what do you need to do? Sell PUFLs. You sell a thousand PUFLs every year, we're solvent to 2043. Sell 9,000 a year, we're solvent forever based upon the actuary costs.

We also had a subcommittee study premium life membership or club forms of membership similar as the VFW has. How many are life members of the VFW? Raise your hand. And what do you pay? Not very much. Where does the money go? National. Does anything go to the department? No. Does it go to the post? Very little. But then you can do those other life memberships where I can actually make sure some of my money goes to the post. We're not looking at that. We're looking at a different twist, a different format. There's a group working on that with Jay Bowen as the chair on that. Mr. Commander, that is my report of the Membership Study Committee.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Membership Study Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Membership Study Committee. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. I now call on the chairman of the Finance Commission, Gaither M. Keener Jr. of North Carolina, for a report.

Oral Report: Finance Commission
Gaither M. Keener Jr., North Carolina, Chairman

You have my written report as to the Finance Commission. The Finance Commission met on Monday and Tuesday, May 5-6. All commission members were in attendance along with the NEC liaison committee members also. The Finance Commission mourns the recent loss of its vice chairman emeritus, Carl Levi of Tennessee, and he will be missed greatly. I won't read my entire report. You have it. I want to point out a few matters.

At the regularly scheduled NEC meeting in October 2024, the NEC approved a resolution to fund the development of a membership data solution, getting rid of the other one. This resolution approved a new computer system at a cost up to $7 million. The Restricted Fund would be repaid on or before December 31, 2036. Transfer of funds from the Restricted Fund requires a vote by the National Executive Committee at two successive meetings. We are presenting today, again, that resolution the second time for your approval. If you have any questions, the resolution specifically provides how we pay it back, and NECmen, I know you read that.

In today's world, as many of you in business understand, we cannot often wait six months between the beginning and conclusion of a decision. Therefore, we present today a resolution titled "Modification of Restricted Fund" that will result in future withdrawals from the Restricted Fund requiring two NEC votes but not less than four hours apart. That gives you plenty of time, as in Rule 8-a, to just hit us and ask questions.

The Finance Commission recommends approval of a resolution titled "American Legion Baseball 100th Anniversary," which will be conducted at a cost not to exceed $13,500 from The American Legion general funds, which will come from The American Legion Charities which has already approved that to go to the funds. Mr. Commander, that's my brief report, as the written report goes into greater detail.

Report: Finance Commission
Gaither M. Keener Jr., North Carolina, Chairman

The Finance Commission met on Monday and Tuesday, May 5-6. All commission members were present, either in person or virtually. Also present were National Adjutant Rodney Rolland; National Treasurer Shawn Long; National Judge Advocate Mark Seavey; Executive Directors James Baca and Mario Marquez; and Finance NEC Liaison Committee Chairman Dan Wiley (KS) and members Robert Skinner (ID), Larry G. Dobb (MT), Charles O'Leary (OK) and Linden Dixon (VA). Several guests joined us throughout the meeting.

The following reports were received:

- National adjutant
- National treasurer
- National judge advocate
- National headquarters' executive directors
- Convention Commission
- Internal Affairs Commission
- Membership & Post Activities Committee
- Marketing Commission
- Americanism Commission
- American Legion World Series
- Endowment Fund Corporation
- Child Well-Being Foundation
- NFP Property & Casualty
- Information Technology office
- Office of Fund Development
- First Merchants Private Wealth Advisors
- Media & Communications Commission (written report)

The Finance Commission mourns the recent loss of its Vice Chairman Emeritus, Carl Levi of Tennessee. He will be missed by all.

At the Finance Commission's February 24 meeting in Washington, it:

- Approved the 2026 membership budget in the amount of $7,350,000.
- Approved $15,000 in budget overruns.
- Approved the purchase of a computer platform to support the financial processing needs of Emblem Sales, Print Production, and Shipping / Receiving at a cost of $1 million.

At its meeting this week, the commission approved $142,110 in budget overruns – most of which were for repairs for the HVAC system in Washington DC – and the write-off of $6,500 in obsolete manuscripts.

At the regularly scheduled NEC meeting in October 2024, the NEC approved Resolution 23, "Funding the Development of a Membership Data Solution." This resolution approved a new computer system at a cost up to $7,000,000. The Restricted Fund would be repaid on or before December 31, 2036. The transfer of funds from the Restricted Fund requires a vote by the National Executive Committee at two successive meetings. We are presenting today the second "Funding the Development of a Membership Data Solution" resolution for your approval.

In today's world, as many of you in business understand, we do not oftentimes have the luxury of waiting six months between the beginning of a decision and the conclusion of a decision. That is why we are presenting a resolution titled "Modification of Restricted Fund." The resolution would result in future withdrawals from the Restricted Fund being put on a similar basis as those that fall under the Rules of

the NEC's Rule 8-a. This would mean that future withdrawals from the Restricted Fund would require two NEC votes not less than four hours apart.

A resolution approving American Legion participation in the 100th anniversary of the beginning of American Legion Baseball is recommended for approval by the Finance Commission.

The 2024 audit has not yet been completed. We will have the information concerning the disposition of the 2024 budget by the 2025 National Convention.

The Convention Commission reported to Finance that the Department of Louisiana chose not to establish a convention corporation and opted to receive a $10,000 stipend to assist with items per NEC Resolution 3, May 2023. Chairman Walton noted the audit of the 2024 National Convention will be conducted and reported with the annual audit of The American Legion National Headquarters audit procedures in its normal course of business. Walton indicated there was revenue of $240,342.00, expense of $223,955.90, resulting in a surplus from the 2024 national convention of $16,386.10.

There are currently 257 authorized positions at national headquarters.

Mr. Commander, that concludes my report.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, I move to adopt the report of the Finance Commission with the exception of eight resolutions and no addendum. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt the report of the Finance Commission with the exception of eight resolutions and no addendum. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 11: Funding the Development of a Membership Data Solution
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee approved Resolution No. 23, titled, "Funding the Development of a Membership Data Solution" on October 9-10, 2024; and

WHEREAS, The transfer of funds from the Restricted Fund requires a vote by the National Executive Committee at two successive meetings; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the Restricted Fund provide an amount not to exceed $7,000,000.00 to fund the development of a membership data solution; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Restricted Fund be repaid on or before December 31, 2036, in ten annual escalating payments beginning on December 31, 2026, at an amount of $300,000 and increasing $90,000 annually until the funds are repaid, but in no case shall the repayment extend beyond December 31, 2036.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER WILEY: Resolution No. 11 has the approval of the Finance Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 11. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 12: Modification of Restricted Fund
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The Restricted Fund was created in 1928 as a safety net against future economic hardships; and

WHEREAS, The Restricted Fund has been funded and invested in a prudent manner resulting in a December 31, 2024, market value of $37,942,000; and

WHEREAS, Economic hardships require swift action; and

WHEREAS, The current rules concerning withdraws from the Restricted Fund require a vote of the National Executive Committee at two successive meetings; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That at the discretion of the Finance Commission a portion of the net surplus of The American Legion, accruing during each fiscal year be transferred to the Restricted Fund; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That such transfer be reported to the National Executive Committee at its next regular meeting; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the expenditure of interest and principal from the Restricted Fund shall be considered after the recommendation of the Finance Commission and a first and second reading, with not less than four hours intervening; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That National Executive Committee Resolution No. 60, November 1949, titled, "Amend Agreement Regarding Restricted Fund," National Executive Committee Resolution No. 22, May 1950, titled, "Amend 'Restricted' Fund Agreement," and 1980 National Convention Resolution No. 755, titled, "Amendment to Restricted Fund Agreement" are hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER WILEY: Resolution No. 12 has the approval of your Finance Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 12. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 13: Authorization to Delegate Contract Signing
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The national commander is the chairman of the National Executive Committee, The American Legion's board of directors; and

WHEREAS, The chairman of the board has full authority to execute contracts approved by the National Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion executes over 400 contracts annually; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee expects efficient and effective management of its contractual obligations to fulfill its mission of serving veterans, their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, A new relationship with an organization that provides products or services not in the course of ordinary business requires approval of the National Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, Costs associated with contracts that are considered ordinary course of business must be included and approved as part of the annual budget; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the national commander has full authority, as the chairman of the board of directors of the American Legion, to delegate his authority for the execution of all contracts of The American Legion to the national adjutant and/or national treasurer; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That no contract shall be signed, without the national judge advocate's review and approval for execution and signature in respect to legal compliance; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That all previous resolutions or portions thereof in conflict herewith are hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER WILEY: Resolution No. 13 has the approval of your Finance Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 13. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 14: Temporary Financial Assistance Program Policy Update
Origin: Committee on Children & Youth
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance (TF A) program ensures the integrity of the American family home and health and well-being for children of eligible veterans through cash grants that provide direct maintenance to those children; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 5 of the National Executive Committee, May 2022, titled, "Statement of Policy and Procedures for the Temporary Financial Assistance Program" established a maximum one-time non-repayable grant in the amount of $1,500 and established qualifying criteria and procedures to administer the program; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion remains committed to serving the needs of the veteran and the well-being of minor children of those veterans to advance the principles of Americanism and to honor those who serve; and

WHEREAS, A major factor that contributes to self-harm for veterans is financial instability, particularly when the veteran's family is affected, and The American Legion is committed to "Be The One" to help address a veteran in crisis; and

WHEREAS, Temporary Financial Assistance has had a substantive and significant history of helping a veteran care for their family in their time of need; and

WHEREAS, Significant increases in housing costs, utilities and sustenance continues to challenge some veterans with minor children in the home; and

WHEREAS, The Committee on Children & Youth, with concurrence of the Americanism Commission and Finance Commission; concludes that the grant amount established in Resolution No. 5 of the National Executive Committee, May 2022, is no longer sufficient to meet the needs of a veteran with a minor child in the home who is challenged financially to keep shelter; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the statement of policy governing the Temporary Financial Assistance is hereby updated as follows:

- **A single one-time non-repayable Temporary Financial Assistance grant of up to $2,500 may be permitted for the minor child(ren) of a qualifying veteran;**
- **A qualifying veteran is defined as a member of the United States Armed Forces currently serving on federal orders under Title 10 of the United States Code, inclusive of all components, or any veteran possessing an up-to-date membership in The American Legion;**
- **An inquiry into and verification of the need, and cause of need, should be conducted by a personal visitation to the home or other whereabouts of such child(ren) by a competent investigator(s);**
- **Formal documentation and/or a signed written testament of an investigator's statement of findings is required as part of the Temporary Financial Assistance investigation process, and verification that all other forms of financial assistance available have been sought and applied for, or have already been denied;**
- **Annual cumulative expenditure of Temporary Financial Assistance grants may not exceed $700,000 without prior approval of the chairmen of both the Americanism and Finance Commissions and the national commander; and, be it further**

RESOLVED, That the Committee on Children & Youth, with review and concurrence of the Americanism and Finance Commissions, maintain in writing and review at least every two years the conditions, rules, guidelines and procedures for managing administration of the Temporary Financial Assistance program; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That updates aforementioned in this resolution be effective with its passing, and that no previous grant recipients shall be eligible to apply due to present or future increases in the grant amount; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 5 of the National Executive Committee, May 2022, titled, "Statement of Policy and Procedures for the Temporary Financial Assistance Program" is hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER WILEY: Resolution No. 14 has the approval of the Committee on Children and Youth, the Americanism Commission, the Finance Commission, and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 14. Is there any discussion? Can you please use the microphone, Mary?

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ERDMAN (AR): Mary Erdman from the Department of Arkansas. I have two questions. Since that specifies Title 10, does that not leave out the Coast Guard? I don't think the Coast Guard's under Title 10. Can somebody check that? And then the other question I had had to do with the investigator. Who might that be? Is that somebody from national or is that from each department that has to investigate the home? If that can be clarified, I'd appreciate it.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: The chair recognizes Past Commander Morin.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MORIN: Comrade commander, this resolution is basically doing two things: increasing the amount of money from 1,500 to 2,500. That being said, if we go back and compare a resolution from the May 4-5 of 2022 to this resolution, you'll see that is what the difference is.

So as record of verification, whether it's Title 10 or Title 14, in that period, the graciousness of this organization gave Coast Guard, when the government stopped paying, we paid them and we paid them out of this account. There was no legal issue at that point concerning this resolution, as I don't see anything in the future considering the Coast Guard.

FINANCE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: Mr. Commander? If I may.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: The chair recognizes Gaither.

CHAIRMAN KEENER: There is no change in the original resolution except for the amount. Everybody knows that the investigation is done by the department, is done by the adjutant, done by the service officer. Ladies and gentlemen, the only thing we're doing is increasing the amount for people to have money. That's all we're doing here. Thank you very much.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Is there any further discussion on Resolution No. 14? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 15: 2028 National Convention Contract
Origin: Convention Commission
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission has reviewed the status of the proposed American Legion National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, August 25 - August 31, 2028; and

WHEREAS, Subject to receiving a properly executed contract from The American Legion Convention Corporation of Ohio, the Convention Commission believes that all conditions for a contract covering the American Legion National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, August 25 -August 31, 2028, have been satisfied; and

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission hereby recommends to the National Executive Committee that it enter into the appropriate contract with The American Legion Convention Corporation of Ohio; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the national commander, after receipt of an executed contract from The American Legion Convention Corporation of Ohio for the purpose of holding the American Legion National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, August 25 - August 31, 2028, and the review and approval of same from the national judge advocate, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute said contract and the national adjutant, be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest to same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER DIXON: This resolution has the approval of your Convention Commission, your Finance Commission, and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 15. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 16: Rescinding of Convention Commission Resolutions
Origin: Convention Commission
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission reviews its resolutions on a regular basis in accordance with the suggested review practices recommended by the National Convention and the 1961 Report of the Program Study Committee by the National Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission has completed a review of National Executive Committee and National Convention resolutions that are still in effect pertaining to conventions and/or events; and

WHEREAS, This review has found resolutions that should be rescinded because they have been superseded, accomplished and/or are obsolete; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the following resolutions are rescinded for the reasons indicated below.

SUPERSEDED/ACCOMPLISHED/OBSOLETE

Resolution No. 1	**2015 Pre-Convention NEC**	**2017 and 2020 National Conventions**
Resolution No. 23	**2015 Fall NEC**	**2017 National Convention Contract**
Resolution No. 13	**2015 Spring NEC**	**2018 National Convention Contract**
Resolution No. 31	**2016 Spring NEC**	**2019 National Convention Contract**
Resolution No. 31	**2018 Spring NEC**	**2021 National Convention Contract**
Resolution No. 6	**2019 Spring NEC**	**2022 National Convention Contract**
Resolution No. 37	**2020 Fall NEC**	**2023 National Convention Contract**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER DIXON: This resolution has the approval of the Convention Committee, your Finance Commission, and the Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 16. Any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 17: American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament Sites and Dates for 2026-2027
Origin: American Legion Baseball Committee
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 9 of the National Executive Committee, May 2009, established that beginning with the 2011-2012 seasons, regional tournaments of The American Legion Baseball program may be sited in one location for one (1) year or for two (2) consecutive years, based on accessibility and central location as determined by open bids using objective, weighted evaluation criteria; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 2 of the National Executive Committee, October 2022, established the minimum hosting bid for the eight American Legion Baseball Regional Tournaments be $20,000; and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of the Americanism Commission to select the sites and dates for the Regional and World Series tournaments of American Legion Baseball; and

WHEREAS, It is customary that the sites for regional tournaments be selected in advance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the dates for regional tournaments of the American Legion Baseball program shall be August 5-9, 2026, and August 4-8, 2027; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That National Executive Committee Resolution No. 5, "American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament Sites and Dates for 2024-2025," approved May 11-12, 2023, is hereby rescinded at the conclusion of the 2025 regional tournaments; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That sites for the 2026 and 2027 regional tournaments of the American Legion Baseball program be awarded to:

Region 1 - Shrewsbury, Massachusetts - $25,000	**Region 2-Shrewsbury, Massachusetts - $25,000**
Region 3 - Cherryville, North Carolina - $20,000	**Region 4-Cherryville, North Carolina - $20,000**
Region 5 - Lexington, Kentucky - $22,000	**Region 6-Fargo, North Dakota - $33,600**
Region 7 - Medford, Oregon - $20,000	**Region 8-Fairfield, California - $20,000**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER DIXON: This resolution has the approval of the American Legion Baseball Committee, the Americanism Commission, the Finance Commission, and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 17. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 18: American Legion Baseball 100th Anniversary
Origin: Americanism Commission
Submitted by: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, On July 17, 1925, the South Dakota American Legion held its annual convention in Milbank, South Dakota passing a resolution proposing American Legion Baseball; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 3 of the National Executive Committee, October 2023, established that American Legion Baseball will celebrate its 100th Anniversary in 2025; and

WHEREAS, A centennial celebration is a once in a lifetime opportunity to honor the rich tradition of American Legion Baseball; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that a 100-year centennial celebration of American Legion Baseball be held at the birthplace in Milbank, South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, American Legion Charities Inc. has approved a grant not to exceed $13,500 in support of this celebration; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That The American Legion will commemorate 100-years of American Legion Baseball by hosting a four-team double elimination tournament in Milbank, South Dakota, July 11-13, 2025; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Americanism Commission may conduct the four-team tournament with teams for Minnesota American Legion, Nebraska American Legion, North Dakota American Legion and South Dakota American Legion; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Americanism Commission may conduct the tournament funded by donations first as approved expenditures and that the total obligation by American Legion Charities, Inc. shall not exceed the grant amount of $13,500.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER DIXON: This resolution has the approval of your Americanism Commission, Finance Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 18. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: Mr. Commander?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, Commander?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: Members of the NEC, in light that the Resolution No. 18 was approved and it calls for the donations first and then funds from our national Finance Commission second, I'd like to start with the donation of $100, and I would like for us to run this for the next two days so members here would have the opportunity, if they don't have any cash or a check, to go to an ATM and help us support. This is only a once-in-a-lifetime 100th Centennial Tournament. So, I would like to ask that we pass the hat and see what we can collect to offset this cost and make it a quality tournament that the boys deserve.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: I appreciate that, commander. Sergeant-at-Arms, will you please see to that.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: Mr. Commander?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, commander.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: If I may, sir, based on what Past National Commander Dellinger has said, the Department of Iowa makes a commitment of $600 to go to this tournament, that commitment to be funded by personal contributions by the department commander and myself of $100, and $400 to come from the department.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you very much, Commander. Do I hear 700? (*Laughter)*

Past Nation Commander Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I don't have my checkbook with me, but I know the importance of this request for the 100th anniversary. I was fortunate enough to be at the 50th anniversary in 1975 in Rapid City, South Dakota, and now we're here for the 100th, so I pledge $500.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, Past National Commander Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: Mr. Commander?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, commander.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: The question came up, if you have a check, write it to American Legion Charities, and in the memo section write "Centennial Tournament."

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, commander.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER STOCKENBERGER (FR): Mr. Commander?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes? I recognize you.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER STOCKENBERGER: The Department of France has made a donation of $500 towards this cause.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you very much. I'll start accepting donations for all American Legion charities.

...National Vice Commander Robbins assumed the chair.

Collection of Donations

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER FRITZ (PA): Good morning, all. I'm John Fritz, commander from the Department of Pennsylvania. I have with me Mike Stelacio, our NEC for the department. We are the home of Past National Commander Ronald F. Conley. We have 112,000 veterans in our department, Legionnaires. So, on behalf of those, to help recover from the hurricanes and the wildfires we had last year, I would like to donate $64,684.50 to the NEF. *(Applause)*

PAST NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER HIGUERA: On behalf of my family, Denise Conrad and myself, we are making a personal donation to OCW in the amount of $15,000. *(Applause)*

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KOUTZ: Commander, as you know, we always have the annual bean and cornbread dinner at Post 64 the last Sunday in March. Well, we just had this, and I'll give you the totals of that and some other OCW contributions. Post 64 itself, American Legion, donated $50,700. American Legion Squadron 64, $5,000. American Legion Riders 64, $1,500. American Legion Auxiliary 64, $1,000. Mississippi Raglips band that's always donated their time to this and just donates the tips to OCW is $288. The bean dinner and tips were $648. Had some donations while we were there from Don and Linda Hudson, $100. Larry Lowry, $100. Rich and Andi Woodke, $100. Mike and Twyla White, $100. Cheryl Threte, $50. Boonville American Legion Post 200, $500. The total that day was $60,086. Then some other contributions we had since then. Rob and Suzi Burkhart, our department commander, $50. Jerry and Linda Jordon, $200.

Then I want to talk about this one just a little bit. I had a friend that his wife died. He went to the funeral home and told them that he wanted donations going to Operation Comfort Warriors. This envelope said "Wounded Warrior Project" because the funeral home went and put out the Wounded Warrior Project. I don't know how many thousands of dollars we lost because the checks were made out to Wounded Warrior Project. So, I ask you to go back and be sure you go to your funeral homes and be sure it's not this envelope.

As you can remember, back when I was national commander, I called Dan Wheeler. Right next to our American Legion post, Wounded Warrior Project put up a billboard, because they knew that was my post. So just be sure you go back to your funeral homes and be sure they're not using this envelope, because I don't know how much money we lost. But we ended up getting, because these have cash in them, that's the only reason we got to keep them is they got cash in them, and that was $150 from this memory of this gentlemen's wife.

So, with that total, everything that we've took in so far on Operation Comfort Warriors is $60,506. *(Applause)*

And I got one other $20 donation here. While me and Charlie, Past National Commander Charlie Schmidt and I were outside yesterday finishing our meeting and waiting on the van, we were talking, and somebody came up to me and gave me $20. And if you're in the room, please be sure to tell me who you are. I'll just put it down anonymous because I don't know. We were talking and about nine of you got out of the van and somebody gave me $20 for Operation Comfort Warriors. We want to be sure it goes on record who you are. And we hope that everybody on this list gets a thank-you note from the national organization. Thank you. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER SCARBOROUGH (MO): Commander, on behalf of Past National Commander Joe Frank, Department of Missouri, I'd like to donate $100 to the Veterans & Children Foundation. Thank you. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER PISA (AK): Commander, I have a couple of donations. I have two donations for the NEF, one from Seward Post 5 in Alaska, $250, and the second one, $100 from General Buckner Post 16 in Homer. Then I have three donations for the Veterans & Children Fund, $250 from Seward Post 5, $500 from Muldoon Post 29 in Anchorage, and $100 from General Buckner Post 16 in Homer, Alaska. *(Applause)*

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HELM: Commander, it's time for the canning pickles donation. My wife's good work and the generosity of all of you people, $1,000 to the Veterans & Children Foundation. *(Applause)*

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SEEHAFER: Mr. Commander, my friend, first and foremost I must say I apologize earlier, I heard that beautiful name "Dan" and I jumped the gun. Sorry, Mr. Wheeler. I know my place. I'm junior; all right? *(Laughter)*

Let's get on to some serious stuff. On behalf of you, my friend, and of course your leadership, our leadership team here. We talk about changing lives and saving lives. I know within this room there's some serious stuff; right? Sometimes it's some low valleys. And yes, we can laugh, and we can wave our pompoms, right, gents, okay, and have a great time. But you know something that moved me is, when I was traveling around this world and the influence that we do, we truly do change lives.

And there ain't no doubt about it, we save them too. *(Applause)*

Yes, thank you. But one thing that really, really hit home. I know we're going to have a little good time tonight and all that good stuff, but I'm sure you're like me. There are times where we open up that refrigerator and we're like, we're hungry, but we're like, there's nothing to eat; right? When I was in Guatemala, I had families who had nothing, nothing, commander, and you know that as well. Little niños with no

shoes running up and down. I was presenting them with bags of food that we would probably turn our nose up at. Necessities, noodles, rice, even a couple of things of soap, a little bit of oil. And then even for the little kids, to give them a box of juice, just a box of juice and some little wafer cookie, they thought it was Jesus. Somebody asked me, and one was even a mute, but one asked me, "Why do you do this?"

I'm telling you, all that noise out there that you might hear, that we're no good or we do this and all that other stuff, is a bunch of bull. My response was, "I'm an American, privilege. But you know something? I'm a Legionnaire"; right? Talking about raising that bar high. Sorry to preach. *(Laughter)*

However, on behalf of you, my friend, I want to present something that I did. I gave this little spiel to my congregation, and it was to a bunch of dedicated ladies, actually, from our Lutheran Missionary League, not only in our church but in our surrounding area. And for those bags of food, I want to present this in your name, commander, $2,345. Talking about changing a life and saving a life. I'm not done. *(Laughter)*

And then, of course, our project. I say "ours" and I appreciate you continuing to keep that little theme, because it does sum it up, changing lives and saving lives. Right, family? *...Chorus of "Right."*

On behalf of my district as well with myself, I want to present this donation of Veterans & Children Foundation as well for $1,000. And then I'm going to have to go back to work because they keep asking me for money, so here's the other $100 as well. Love you. *(Applause)*

...National Commander LaCoursiere resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, everybody. The chair recognizes Michael E. Walton of Illinois, chairman of the national Convention Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Convention Commission
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman

Good day, Commander LaCoursiere, members of the NEC. Although my written report is in all of your packets, I'd like to touch on some highlights of our meetings.

I gave a report on the 105th National Convention that was held in New Orleans. The 2024 National Convention followed the procedures of Resolution Number 3 in May of 2023 in which the Department of Louisiana chose not to have a convention corporation and opted to receive a stipend from national of $10,000 for assisting in items A through C of that resolution.

President Herbie Petit and his 88 Louisiana American Legion Family members with Chairman Byron, Chairman Allen, Chairman Rudy Bourg, Chairman Gerald and Chairman Gil helped make that National Convention something we consider a very huge success. We used 17,000 room nights and we had 7,900 in attendance.

Past National Commander Clarence Hill, who is the president of the Convention Corporation of Florida, gave an update on the progress of our up-and-coming 106th National Convention in Tampa, which will be August 22 through 28 of this year. Further information on the convention is on the National Convention website, and the updates will be sent out as we receive them from the convention office. Additionally, we will not have a band contest this year, but so far, we have six Junior ROTC applications, and we are looking forward to the color guards registering with us by the 25th of July, which is the cutoff date. The National Commander's Banquet is progressing very well. Tickets may still be available from the Conventions and Meeting office. Commander's Banquet this year will feature a Florida band by the name of The Landsharks Band, which is a Jimmy Buffett-style band.

Atlantic City, New Jersey; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania all provided presentations to the commission requesting that they be awarded the 2031 National Convention of The American Legion. It's the recommendation of the Convention Commission that the 2031 112th National Convention be awarded to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the dates of August 22 through 28, 2031.

In other business for the convention, Addendum A, Resolution 2847, was received and recorded by the commission from the Department of North Carolina. They are supporting a bid for 2031 or later in hosting a national convention of The American Legion. Addendum B states that Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is recommended to receive the tentative award of the 2031 National Convention. Commission unanimously approved a resolution to approve the 2028 National Convention contract and also resolution rescinding of Convention Commission resolutions.

Also, all the members received their assignments for the National Convention, and with the NEC approval, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for 2031, conventions will be set through 2031 as follows: This year Tampa; 107th in Louisville; 108th Kansas City; 109th Columbus; 110th Indianapolis; 111th in Salt Lake City; and as I mentioned, if you approve, the 112th will be in Pittsburgh.

As you all may be aware, our Indy team celebrated recent anniversaries with the American Legion as follows: Director Bridget Robinson has 17 years with us; Deputy Director Andrea Watson, 14 years; Ellen Miller, 32 years; and our new lady, Deanna Woodburn, just completed one year. *(Applause)*

Thank you, thank you, I appreciate it. Those of you who have worked with this great group of ladies know what a great team we have in our Indy headquarters. We look forward to seeing everyone in Tampa for another outstanding convention. Commander and members of the NEC, that concludes my report. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

Report: Convention Commission
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman

Chairman Michael E. Walton, Illinois, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. (EDT),
Monday, May 5, 2025, and Tuesday, May 6, 2025. Roll call was taken with all members either excused or present.

The Convention Commission recommends the NEC approve and adopt the listed resolutions. Copies of the resolutions accompany this report.

Items Requiring NEC Action:

Resolution No. – 2028 National Convention Contract - Approval of the recommendation by the Convention Commission that the contract between the National Organization of The American Legion and American Legion Convention Corporation of Ohio for the purpose of holding The American Legion National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, August 25 – August 31, 2028,
be signed by the National Commander and the President of the Convention Corporation.

Resolution No. – Rescinding of Convention Commission Resolutions – Approval by the Convention Commission that these resolutions be rescinded because they have been superseded, accomplished and/or are obsolete.

Addendum A:

Resolution No. 2847 - Submitted by the Department of North Carolina supporting a bid for the 2031 or later National Convention from the city of Charlotte, North Carolina - Received and Recorded

Addendum B:

The following cities provided presentations requesting they be awarded the 2031 National Convention of The American Legion: Atlantic City, NJ, Philadelphia, PA and Pittsburgh, PA. The city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is recommended to receive the tentative award of the 2031 National Convention for the dates of August 22 – August 28, 2031.

2024 Fall Meeting Minutes were approved, which was the last time the Commission met.

Chairman Walton gave the final report to the Convention Commission for the 105th National Convention of The American Legion. This year's National Convention followed the procedures of Resolution 3 of May 2023, in which Department of Louisiana chose not to have a convention corporation and opted to receive a $10,000 stipend for assisting with items a through c of the referenced resolution. The audit of the National Convention will be conducted and reported with the annual audit of The American Legion National Headquarters audit procedures in its normal course of business.

Planning for the 106th National Convention of The American Legion is on schedule. The Marriott and JW Marriott will serve as headquarters hotels. Tampa Convention Center will be the site of the general sessions for The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, exhibit hall, color guard contests, the National Commander's Banquet and the Auxiliary States Dinner. Sons of The American Legion's general sessions will be held at the JW Marriott. The National Staff Office, Distinguished Guest Registration and Badges & Packets will be in the Tampa Convention Center.

The Color Guard contest will take place on Friday, August 22, 2025, starting at 4:00PM.

With only one band submitting an application for this year's band contest in Tampa, it is the recommendation of the Chief Judge of Contests and Convention Commission to cancel the 2025 Band Competition in Tampa. All mentioned it is because of location and expenses for not attending this year. Many bands have verbalized interest in attending next year in Louisville.

The National Commander's Banquet on August 26, 2025, will feature a Florida band called

The Landshark Band - a Jimmy Buffet style band.

The National Convention Request for Proposal (RFP) was updated to reflect proposed changes for future national conventions to ensure what we provide to bidding cities is properly reflected within the RFP. The RFP will be updated each year as necessary.

Chairman Walton assigned each member of the commission specific assignments to observe at the 2025 National Convention. Each commission member will report their findings to the full commission during the 2025 Fall Meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Convention Commission discussed several logistical aspects for National Convention and will go into further discussion during the 2025 Fall Meetings.

We have the following cities to possibly bid on the 2032 National Convention: Spokane, Washington; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Reno, Nevada; and Charlotte, North Carolina. The Commission will review said proposals in the Fall to site no more than three cities.

Dates for future Conventions are the following:

Tampa Bay, Florida	August 22 – August 28, 2025	Columbus, Ohio	August 25 – August 31, 2028
Louisville, Kentucky	August 28 – September 3, 2026	Indianapolis, Indiana	August 24 – August 30, 2029
Kansas City, Missouri	August 27 – September 2, 2027	Salt Lake City, Utah	August 23 – August 20, 2030

Addendum A

Received and Recorded

Resolution No. 2862 (NC) (DEC): **City of Charlotte Offers to Host the 2031 or Later National Convention**

Addendum B

The Convention Commission recommends the following dates for the events/meetings from out report, which was presented to the body for disposition.

Commission Meeting Date	Event	Dates
May 5 & 6, 2025	2031 National Convention Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	August 22 – August 28, 2031

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Convention Commission with the exception of two addendum. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the National Convention Commission with the exception of two addendums. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Mr. Commander, attached to the report of the Convention Commission are Addenda A and B. I move the actions of the Convention Commission become the actions of the NEC. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded that the actions of the Convention Commission on Addenda A and B become the actions of the NEC. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair recognizes Paul E. Evenson of South Dakota, chairman of the Marketing Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Marketing Commission
Paul A. Evenson, South Dakota, Chairman

Good morning. Commander, members of the National Executive Committee and guests, thank you for the opportunity to provide a brief update for the Marketing Commission.

During our meeting, we reviewed the 2025 strategic plan which continues to build on the American Legion's strategic priorities: veteran suicide prevention, membership and financial stability. We continue to expand our corporate partnership portfolio with 29 active national partners and nine promising prospects in the sales pipeline.

As a part of our expansion, we are developing tool kits that can be used at both the department and post level. I encourage each of you to take the survey via the QR code provided in our written report, as your feedback will assist the commission in providing resources that will be useful for your needs. Please share this with your departments as this is your opportunity to provide thoughtful insight to the needs of your departments and posts.

A special update was also provided on our partnership with the Army-Navy Game. A key item to note, the Legion is the only veteran service organization selected through their competitive partner selection process, granting us exclusive representation at America's Game. Our contractual assets reflect the investment level of our partnership as an associate partner. Note that all national broadcast media are incremental advertising spends no matter the level of sponsorship. In 2024, the Legion did not forecast the spend as it was a new relationship, but it has been included in the 2025 planning.

Day two of our meeting focused on the website and branding. The redesign of legion.org continues to evolve, with improvements to user experience, content updates, and long-term plans to enhance the membership journey.

The Marketing Commission also approved the refreshed branding guidelines which now consolidates both the emblem and brand mark into a single easy-to-follow document. These guidelines are available at legion.org/brand for all of your branding needs. The Marketing Commission will review and approve these on an annual basis.

This concludes our report, and we thank you for your continued support.

Report: Marketing Commission
Paul A. Evenson, South Dakota, Chairman

Marketing Commission Overview

The Marketing Commission met in Indianapolis on May 5 – 6, 2025. The commission reviewed the 2025 Marketing Strategic Plan outlined below, reflected on 2024 milestones, and discussed key developments for the upcoming year. The Marketing Commission discussed specific areas including corporate partnership growth, the Army-Navy Game activation recap, website improvements, and the branding guidelines refresh to that includes both the Emblem and the Brand Mark.

2025 Marketing Commission Strategic Plan

Building on the foundation set in 2024, the Marketing Division continues to align its strategy with the organization's top priorities: preventing veteran suicide, strengthening membership, and ensuring corporate financial stability. In 2025, a fourth strategic pillar was introduced specifically for the Marketing Commission focusing on internal team culture and morale.

BE THE ONE Awareness
AMPLIFY *the message of veteran suicide prevention; collaborate across commissions to build the official program and foster a community-drive approach.*

VALUE of Membership
EARN *members by clearly communicating value across all generations and continuing to improve the digital experience.*

DIVERSIFY Revenue
EXPAND *our reach through creation of new assets, deeper internal collaboration, and partnership-driven revenue streams.*

TALENT Management
CREATE *a high-energy internal culture that promotes positivity, creativity and collaboration.*

Corporate Partnership Growth

- The American Legion continues to grow the corporate partnership portfolio with key brands with 29 current partnerships contract and multiple in the sales pipeline such as 1-800-Flowers, Comcast for Military and Liberty Home Guard just to name a few.
- Partnership expansion successes shared include the monetization of the Thank You Thursday booking over $450,000 and collaboration with VE&E Business Award winners to highlighted veteran-focused businesses within the Legion network.
- An upcoming development is to create Department Corporate Partners Toolkits to include best practices, revenue ideas, templates and more. A survey is available to share with departments and posts as these toolkits are created. Share the QR code below with your departments and posts to guide the creation process to best fit the needs at the local level.

Army-Navy Game Activation Recap

The Army-Navy Game partnership is centered around two key areas: pre-promotion and on-site activation—both of which are required components for all participating partners. As an associate-level partner, The American Legion is proudly positioned within Tier 3, the entry-level tier of partnership. While this tier represents the most modest investment, our asset package is fully aligned with the associate-level benefits. Notably, our involvement does not include national broadcast media exposure which requires a significant additional expenditure that was not forecasted in 2024, but one that has been fully accounted for in our 2025 planning. Most importantly, The American Legion is the **only** veteran service organization selected through the Army-Navy Game's rigorous and highly competitive vetting process, granting us exclusive representation in a nationally revered sporting event most known as America's Game.

Legion.org Updates

- The redesigned website aims to provide a clear, welcoming, and accessible experience for new visitors while continuing to serve the essential needs of our members—designed to **connect, engage, inspire, and support**.
- Ongoing user experience improvements include prioritizing high-impact page updates, actively monitoring and resolving 404 errors, and implementing necessary redirects to ensure a smooth navigation experience.

- Long-term enhancements include a comprehensive content refresh across all divisions and programs, the creation of a website content calendar, improved consistency across all digital platforms, and the continued development of an upgraded membership experience tailored to user needs.

Branding Guidelines Refresh

During each Spring Meeting, the Marketing Commission will formally review and approve The American Legion's branding guidelines on an annual basis to ensure consistency and alignment across all platforms and programs. At the 2025 meeting, the Commission approved a refreshed version of the Branding Guidelines, which now consolidates both the Emblem and the Brand Mark into one concise, easy-to-navigate document. These updated guidelines serve as the official standard for all internal and external brand usage and are available for review at legion.org/brand.

The Marketing Commission also heard updates from several key leaders. Past National Commander Denise Rohan provided a report on the Veterans & Children Foundation, highlighting its ongoing impact and fundraising efforts. Chairman Robert Burke shared an update on Emblem Sales, including performance metrics from 2024. Additionally, Deputy Director Henry Howard delivered a comprehensive report from the Media & Communications Commission.

Emblem Committee
Robert K. Burke, Massachusetts, Chairman

In 2024, Emblem Sales received orders amounting to over $16.3 million dollars. This marks a notable rise from the $16.1 million dollars recorded in 2023. In the first quarter of 2025, revenue from orders amounted to $4.61 million dollars. This is a slight increase from the $4.36 million dollars recorded in 2024. Approximately 24,000 orders were fulfilled during this period, resulting in an average order value of $191 dollars.

Flag sales during the first quarter of 2025 reached nearly 1 million dollars. This marks the highest first quarter revenue in our history. April continues to be busy with Emblem Sales selling close to 500,000 units for total revenue of $781,000 dollars.

As of now, the "Flag Rewards" program boasts 2,376 registered posts, with more than 42,000 schools, businesses, churches, and individuals participating as sponsors. Since the Spring Meetings in 2024, there has been an increase of 18 American Legion Posts in the Flag Rewards program. There has also been a notable increase, with nearly 4,000 new sponsors signing up during this period.

Emblem Sales persistently markets items to members and patriotic Americans through electronic and print mediums. In 2024, we distributed nearly 900,000 marketing emails at a cost of merely $973 dollars. These efforts generated an additional revenue of over $218,000 dollars.

The 2025 Catalog features over 48 newly developed items for sale. Since then, an additional 19 new items have been added to the website and are available for purchase.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Marketing Commission. There are no resolutions or addenda. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Marketing Commission. There are no resolutions or addenda. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Motion carried.

Next item, as we start gearing up for break and everything, I want to let everybody know, we have in the basement an assortment of sandwiches and other food items and beverages that are up for sale that you can purchase. At this time, let's all rise, address our colors and then we'll recess for lunch. With the colors of our great nation in place, hand salute. Two. We'll reconvene at 1:00.

...At 11:26 a.m., the National Executive Committee of The American Legion stood in recess.

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

Afternoon Session

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Colors of our nation in place, hand salute. One, two. The meeting of the National Executive Committee is now reconvened. At this time, all voting members of the NEC, you should have on your desk a copy of a letter signed by myself pertaining to the Department of Nebraska charter suspension investigation, a copy of the resolution, and other supporting documentation. It's highly recommended, well, actually, you need to, as a voting member, you need to digest this. Read this. Be ready to act and vote on this tomorrow. So, I encourage you to take the time to read through it thoroughly. The only ones that should have a copy of this are the NECs. At this time the chair recognizes James E. Grenier Jr. of Virginia, chairman of the National Security Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: National Security Commission
James E. Grenier Jr., Virginia, Chairman

Members of The American Legion, of the Executive Committee, I'm honored to stand here today and give you a report out to National Security. Basically, two primary issues we're going to talk about, basically the UNCLOS and DoD reductions.

National Security Commission met several times with ambassadors, generals and others in our National Security issue, and you can read the report. It's been a heck of a lot of activity, and they led me through this thing.

First, The American Legion has long advocated for the United States to ratify United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, or the UNCLOS. We believe that ensuring unimpeded access to global ceilings and protecting our maritime interest are vital to U.S. national security. Ratifying UNCLOS would strengthen our ability to certain navigational rights, secure economic zones and counter aggressive maritime behavior through international law. Our resolution is clear. We support ratification to enhance U.S. influence and maintain leadership in a rules-based global order.

Secondly, at the same time, we want to end DoD's proposed reductions in manpower by 8%. It's probably going to be a little bit more than 8% when everything comes down to it because of what they call "wedges" in the budget. If you want to talk about that, I've got some info on that too. While we support efforts to improve government efficiency and eliminate redundancies, we must do so without compromising military readiness, deterrence or operational capability. And of recent note, the NDAA for the Space Force recently created a continuum of service. One component, one active-duty component. This is massive. No Guard, no Reserve. Every Space Force person will be active duty. You will either be part-time or full-time. You will apply for part-time positions.

Again, I deal with this every day, so if you have any questions or a little bit more, I'll be glad to talk to you about it. The important thing that you hear is that you could very well see this throughout the Air Force, not just Space Force, real soon. That's some correspondence that was going on last week.

The American Legion remains deeply concerned that a shrinking force, if not carefully managed, could place undue strain on our servicemembers, undermine recruitment and retention and signal vulnerability in an increasingly volatile global environment. Our position is rooted in principle. We support a strong, capable and agile military. Efficiency must not come at the expense of effectiveness. The American Legion stands ready to work with all stakeholders across government, industry and civil society to ensure America's security remains uncompromised, its maritime rights protected and its armed forces properly resourced for the challenge ahead.

Thank you for your attention and commitment as we reshape some of our national security institutions.

Advance Report: National Security Commission
James E. Grenier Jr., Virginia, Chairman

The National Security Commission convened on February 24th during the 65th Annual Washington Conference at the Washington Hilton in Washington, D.C. The following report is a summary of this session:

The Commission was honored to welcome National Commander James LaCoursiere, American Legion Auxiliary President Trish Ward, and Sons of the American Legion Commander Joseph Navarrete were also in attendance. Lastly, the Commission was honored to host Past National Commanders Jake Comer, David Rehbein, Clarence Hill, Charles Schmidt, and Clarence Hill.

The program proceeded in the following sections:

Morning:

- Opening remarks and roll call
- LtGen David A Deptula, USAF (Retired), Dean Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies
- Keith Webster: President, Defense, and Aerospace Council & Federal Acquisition Council

Afternoon:

- Tim Dill: Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower & Reserve Affairs
- Reviewed One (1) Resolution
- Business for the good of The American Legion

I. Lieutenant General David Deptula (Retired), Dean, Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies

LtGen Deptula emphasized that the U.S. Air Force is currently at the smallest and least ready state in its 77-year history, even as global competitors modernize rapidly. He warned that aging aircraft, reduced pilot training hours, and chronic underfunding have eroded readiness and jeopardized deterrence. Meanwhile, the newly formed Space Force, although critical for national security, remains undersized and underfunded, lacking both the resources and authority to consolidate the Department of Defense's numerous space-related organizations.

LtGen Deptula stressed the need for immediate and substantial investment to recapitalize and modernize air and space capabilities, calling for a shift away from commercial "just-in-time" logistics practices in favor of ample stockpiles of munitions and spare parts. He also highlighted the importance of transparent budgeting—specifically removing a "pass-through" account that inflates the Air Force's top-line

budget without directly benefiting the service. Ultimately, he underscored that restoring the Air Force and Space Force to adequate strength is essential for maintaining peace through deterrence and ensuring the United States remains prepared for future conflicts.

II. Mr. Keith Webster, President, Defense and Aerospace Council & Federal Acquisition Council

Mr. Keith Webster provided an in-depth overview of the current challenges facing the U.S. defense industrial base, focusing on issues like decades-long mergers and consolidations, heavy reliance on just-in-time manufacturing, and obstacles in obtaining critical minerals due to environmental and procedural constraints. He emphasized that the surge in production demands—driven by urgent support for allies such as Ukraine and Israel, coupled with the need to replenish U.S. military stockpiles—has exposed vulnerabilities in the industrial supply chain. Mr. Webster highlighted how multi-year procurement authority, stable funding, and stronger partnerships with allies can help overcome these hurdles.

Looking ahead, Mr. Webster advocated for onshoring and "friend-shoring" key manufacturing capabilities, citing the CHIPS Act as a prime example of bipartisan legislation designed to reduce reliance on foreign suppliers. He pointed out that adopting new technologies such as AI and autonomous systems can help streamline production and mitigate workforce shortages. Ultimately, he stressed the importance of modernizing permitting processes, reforming budgeting practices, and fostering public-private collaborations to ensure the American defense industrial base remains robust, competitive, and ready for future contingencies.

III. Tim Dill, Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower & Reserve Affairs

Chairman Grenier interviewed Mr. Tim Dill. The discussion emphasized the need to streamline military operations by facilitating smooth transitions between various permanent change of station (PCS) for servicemembers. Key points include implementing automation to reduce labor-intensive administrative processes, enhancing the efficiency of transitioning between different service components, and improving interoperability among active duty, reserve, and National Guard forces.

This integrated approach is exemplified by collaborative efforts at the southern border—where diverse forces work together under joint memorandums—and by ongoing legal and policy reviews to ensure that military deployments are effective and compliant with established guidelines.

Equally, the conversation highlights significant initiatives to boost the quality of life for military families and address workforce challenges. New measures such as dependent care and healthcare flexible spending accounts provide financial relief for everyday expenses, while continuous reviews of basic allowance for housing aim to align benefits with actual living costs. Complementing these efforts, robust recruitment and retention strategies underscore the importance of a strong service value proposition, further reinforced by a modernization drive in DoD education. This includes national assessments of educational programs and multi-billion-dollar investments in state-of-the-art learning facilities, all designed to prepare servicemembers and their families for both current demands and future challenges.

IV. National Commander James LaCoursiere, ALA National President, and Sons of the American Legion National Commander Remarks

Before lunch, National Commander James LaCoursiere visited the National Security Commission. He stressed the importance of national security and that its purpose and relevance cannot be overlooked.

Commander LaCoursiere stressed the importance of maintaining a robust national security framework, both domestically and internationally. Drawing on his extensive experience as Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, he underscored the critical importance of the committee's efforts in safeguarding our nation's interests and ensuring that strategic defense measures are effective and comprehensive. During his recent international tour, he witnessed firsthand the positive impact of the Commission's initiatives on servicemembers and veterans. This direct observation reinforced his appreciation for their diligent work, as it enhances our national security posture and provides meaningful support and reassurance to those who serve our country.

Mrs. Trish Ward, National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, visited the Commission to express her sincere and profound appreciation for its devoted work. She lauded the Commission's tireless efforts and underscored its critical role in supporting initiatives that enhance the welfare of our military community.

President Ward also reaffirmed that the American Legion Auxiliary stands ready to integrate its resources and expertise on all matters related to national security and the quality of life for our service members and their families. Emphasizing the importance of collaborative engagement, she highlighted the Auxiliary's commitment to working alongside the Commission to address current challenges and help forge a stronger, more resilient future for our American Legion Family.

Sons of the American Legion Commander Joseph Navarrete also visited the National Security Commission and thanked the members for their military service. He stated that veterans have paved the way for his freedom, and it's the reason he can go to bed every night. He expressed his unwavering support and willingness to carry out the mission.

V. Resolutions Review & Discussion

After the three speakers concluded, Chairman Grenier briefly discussed one resolution submitted to the National Security Commission. Chairman Grenier read **Registered Resolution 2859 (DEC, IL): United States Withdrawal from the United Nations**. The National Security Commission was provided an update on the resolution's purpose and that the issue is being studied as the new administration is modifying its position on the United Nations.

VI. Congresswoman Radewagen's Trip to North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia

From January 23 to February 2, Congresswoman Radewagen visited military installations and held American Legion town halls in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. These visits aimed to engage with servicemembers, veterans, American Legion representatives, and local leadership to discuss legislative priorities, veterans' issues, and concerns related to quality of life, healthcare, citizenship, and other matters.

The American Legion accompanied Congresswoman Radewagen during these events, helping to organize town halls, facilitate discussions, and gather feedback from military personnel and veterans for future advocacy efforts.

The visit fostered visibility on veterans' issues, amplified concerns about healthcare and benefits, and strengthened relationships with installation leadership. The Congresswoman has already expressed interest in partnering with the American Legion again next year for a similar trip.

Moving forward, the American Legion will follow up with the Congresswoman's office to address key issues—most notably, VA facility conditions, the cost of travel for service members from U.S. territories, citizenship pathways, and the expansion of veterans' courts. Additionally, the National Security Division will pursue implementing the BASE program at interested installations, with Fort Moore as the primary location.

By maintaining a collaborative relationship with Congresswoman Radewagen, Vice Chair of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, The American Legion stands to enhance its advocacy efforts nationwide and ensure that military, veterans, and their family's concerns are addressed promptly and effectively in the legislative arena.

VIII. Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee Chairman, update on the Regional and National Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter of the Year Awards

On February 14, 2025, the Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee convened virtually to vote on the annual Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter of the Year Awards, where it selected the regional winners. The Committee, chaired by Chairman George Wehrli (FL), selected five recipients for each category as follows:

Regional Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Winners for 2025:

- Northeast Region – None Submitted
- Southern Region – Michael Helbech of Louisiana
- Central Region – None Submitted
- Western Region – Jacob Blair of Oregon
- Midwest Region – Shane Maloley of Nebraska

Regional Firefighter of the Year Winners for 2025:

- Northeast Region – Robert Weiskerger of New York
- Southern Region – Jason Harmsen of Georgia
- Central Region – None Submitted
- Western Region – Scott Bernards
- Midwest Region – Grant Bergstrom of Nebraska

The National winners will be announced at the 2025 American Legion National Convention.

IX. Other Washington Conference Associated Activities

The National Security, Americanism, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division staff helped plan and facilitate the ANAVICUS breakfast and related Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. National Security Staff assisted the Legislative Division with escort duties for assigned Commander's Call guest speakers. National Security Staff also assisted the Legislative Division with activities associated with the National Commander's testimony before the Joint House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee hearing.

Report: National Security Commission
James E. Grenier Jr., Virginia, Chairman

Our Advanced Report addressed the 65th Annual Washington Conference. After the Washington Conference, the National Security Commission, its seven committees, and the Council remained engaged on national security portfolio issues. The National Security Resolution Screening Committee and Commission met on Tuesday, April 22nd, to review resolutions to be brought forward to the National Executive Committee for consideration.

National Security Resolution Screening Committee

- James E. Grenier Jr. (VA), Committee Chairman
- Cindy Lacoste (MA)
- Devell Durham Jr. (NC)
- Gary Walker (WA)
- Michael Landkamer (NE)
- Theresa L. Pucket (VA)
- PNC Clarence Hill (CT)

On April 22nd, 2025, the National Security Resolution Screening Committee convened to deliberate on Registered Resolution No. 2859: United States withdrawal from the United Nations, Registered Resolution No. 2863: Merit-Based Criteria for Military Personnel Decision, and Resolution No. XX: Ensuring National Security and Strategic Access through U.S. Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The meeting, chaired by the Committee Chairman James E. Grenier Jr., commenced with a quorum being present. Chairman Grenier opened the session by stressing the importance of transparency in addressing resolution concerns. Gary Walker (WA), Cindy Lacoste (MA), and Devell Durham (NC), respectively, all provided detailed briefings on the background of each resolution.

The National Security Resolution Screening Committee reviewed and provided recommendations on the following resolution:

- **Registered Resolution 2859:** *United States withdrawal from the United Nations* – **Recommend Reject**
- **Registered Resolution No. 2863:** *Merit-Based Criteria for Military Personnel Decision* – **Recommend Reject**
- **Resolution No. XX:** *Ensuring National Security and Strategic Access through U.S. Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* – **Recommend Approve**

National Security Commission Meeting

Presiding was Chairman James E. Grenier Jr. (VA)
Vice-Chairman: Dale Todd (NC)

The Committee Chairman present included: Milton H. Woodle (NC), Thomas Schottenbauer (MN), Douglas Haggan (FR), Michael Landkamer (NE), George Wehrli (FL), William Flanagan (IL), Guillermo Guillen (VA), and 21 Commission members.

On April 23rd, 2025, the National Security Commission convened to review and deliberate on several resolutions submitted for consideration. Following a comprehensive review and thorough discussion, the Commission reached consensus on the resolutions under consideration. The Commission recommended rejecting Registered Resolution No. 2859, *"United States Withdrawal from the United Nations."* Similarly, Registered Resolution No. 2863, *"Merit-Based Criteria for Military Personnel Decisions,"* was recommended for rejection. Resolution No. XX, *"Ensuring National Security and Strategic Access through U.S. Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,"* was recommended for approval. These recommendations reflected the consensus of the Commission members following extensive discussion on the merits and implications of each resolution.

After the Commission's action, the Chairman and the division received new information concerning Registered Resolution No. 2863. Although the Commission understood and agreed with the general concept of establishing merit-based criteria for military personnel decisions, it was determined that several "Whereas Clauses" lacked clarity and required additional analysis. Additionally, the Department of Defense (DoD) is implementing a new policy that addresses merit-based criteria decisions, which requires further research and analysis.

Exercising his authority as Chairman and ensuring a complete and thorough evaluation, the Chairman amended the original recommendation for Registered Resolution No. 2863 from "Reject" to **"Hold for Further Study."** Notification of this action, including justification for the change, was provided to all Commission members and the Resolution Screening Committee via written correspondence.

RESOLUTIONS

Commission Chairman James E. Grenier Jr. (VA) led a discussion on the following resolutions to make recommendations to the Spring 2025 National Executive Committee:

Title: United States Withdrawal from the United Nations
Origin: Registered Resolution No. 2859 (IL) 2024 DEC

National Security Commission Recommendation: The Commission moved and seconded to **reject** this resolution for consideration by the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee. The motion carried.

Title: Merit-Based Criteria for Military Personnel Decisions
Origin: Registered Resolution No. 2863 (CA) 2025 DEC

National Security Commission Recommendation: The Commission moved and seconded to **Hold for Further Study** this resolution and not move forward for consideration by the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee. The motion carried.

Title: Ensuring National Security and Strategic Access Through U.S. Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
Origin: Resolution No. XX, National Security Commission

National Security Commission Recommendation: The Commission moved and seconded to **approve** this resolution for consideration by the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee. The motion carried.

Addendum A

Reject

Register Resolution No. 2859 (IL) (2024 DEC): **United States Withdrawal from the United Nations**

Hold for Further Study

Register Resolution No. 2863 (CA) (2024 DEC): **Merit-Based Criteria for Military Personnel Decisions**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the National Security Commission with the exception of one resolution and one addendum. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the National Security Commission with the exception of one resolution and one addendum. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 1: Ensuring National Security and Strategic Access Through U.S. Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
Origin: National Security Commission
Submitted by: National Security Commission

WHEREAS, American national security is threatened in multiple ways by the U.S. absence from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and from leadership in the International Seabed Authority (ISA), terms of which were negotiated during the 1980s to meet requirements set by then-U.S. President Ronald Reagan, to place the United States in a position of leadership and oversight on the legal use of international waters; and

WHEREAS, No fewer than 168 nations and the European Union have adopted the UNCLOS since 1994, including China, which has misinterpreted the convention to expand island-building initiatives for military uses, restrict navigational freedom of military and non-military U.S. vessels, monopolize deep-seabed mining of copper, nickel, cobalt, manganese and rare earth minerals necessary for American defense and operate without environmental oversight, to include over-fishing; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has passed no fewer than six national resolutions calling for the protection of U.S. military and economic interests in international maritime zones worldwide, specifically referencing in 2016 that island building in the South China Sea

"would allow China to dominate a major trade route" and "deny access to foreign military forces, particularly the United States" and that "sovereignty in the area should be determined by the (UNCLOS)"; and

WHEREAS, U.S. adherence would open our access to approximately $2 trillion in strategic minerals in two deep-sea zones still reserved for the United States, with two others having been lost to other countries due to U.S. inaction on the UNCLOS; and

WHEREAS, Adherence would open U.S. access to offshore gas and oil drilling in the Arctic, which, according to University of Alaska research, would create no fewer than 54,700 jobs nationwide and generate $193 billion in federal, state and local revenue; and

WHEREAS, The UNCLOS has bipartisan Senate support as it appears that China is seeking to take advantage of the U.S. absence from the convention to replace traditional U.S. oceans leadership; and

WHEREAS, Three-hundred forty-six high-level U.S. national security officials, including 123 U.S. generals and admirals, along with 189 U.S. ambassadors and American intelligence advisers, recently signed a letter calling for urgent Senate advice and consent for UNCLOS; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the United States Senate urgently advance the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) treaty to a vote for ratification and consent, to preserve and strengthen U.S. strategic and economic interests that are increasingly being exploited by other nations, including adversaries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SKINNER: This resolution has the support of the National Security Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to approve Resolution No. 1. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SKINNER: Attached to the report is Addendum A. I move the actions of the National Security Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to accept Addendum A. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Opposed? Carried. The chair recognizes Matthew J. Shuman of Arizona, chairman of the Legislative Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Legislative Commission
Matthew J. Shuman, Arizona, Chairman

Mr. Commander, national officers, past national commanders, members of the NEC, Legion Family, good afternoon. Yet again, I find myself in awe by the opportunity to address this room, a room fully dedicated to all who have served.

Since October, I have been fortunate to serve as your national Legislative chairman, an honor which brings great joy to my heart. In January of this year we welcomed a new administration and a new Congress. And since then, it has certainly been a wild time. *(Laughter)*

From force reductions to increased budgets and more national news than we can digest. But your national legislative staff and commission has manned the watch. In February, our national staff pulled off a spectacular Washington Conference. And in a moment of history-making, the Legislative Commission held our meeting in the House Veterans' Affairs committee room on Capitol Hill. We had the ability to shake hands with history. We felt the weight of that space, a room where the fate of veterans' health care is debated, a room where the doors to better benefits can be opened or slammed shut. That room has been the birthplace of policy that has changed the lives and has been the battlefield where flawed legislation has been stopped, where every brick, chair and microphone has witnessed the shaping of veterans' policy in America.

It's interesting, though, because I could say all those exact same things about the room that we find ourselves in this very moment. And after our meeting on Capitol Hill, Legionnaires from every community in America flooded the halls of Congress to urge them to help end veteran suicide, to bring a swift end to veteran homelessness, and to serve veterans of America better.

And then our national commander gave a powerful testimony before Congress. We all saw him stand firm in the face of chaos. One thing is clear: When the Legion speaks, Congress listens. That said, Congress only listens because we are a large organization, an organization that has power, that has membership. But Legion Family, Congress will listen less if we do not use the power we have. I'll say that again. Congress will listen less if we do not use the power we have.

So please ensure that you are engaged with our Legislative Action Center every single day. Make it part of your routine. Brush your teeth and tell Congress what to do for veterans. Make sure you're telling every Legionnaire in your state how to sign up and how to do exactly the same. The power of our American Legion comes not from this room but from the members and posts across the globe from our entire Legion Family.

In closing, I thank all of you for your continued support for our Legislative Commission. I thank you for placing your trust in me to help lead our legislative efforts on Capitol Hill, and I ask you all to ensure that your members of Congress know every single day where The American Legion stands on the positions that serve our veterans. Lastly, I want to thank our national staff, and particularly our national Legislative Director Julia Mathis and her entire team for keeping us relevant and engaged on Capitol Hill. In fact, I think our staff are on Capitol Hill more often than members of Congress.

With that, commander, I yield back and I'm happy to answer any questions as my written report has been submitted. Thank you.

Advance Report: Legislative Commission
Matthew J. Shuman, Arizona, Chairman

This report summarizes the commission and congressional actions since the 2024 Fall NEC Meetings on issues of particular concern to the American Legion. The report is arranged by program areas.

RECENT CONGRESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The November 2024 elections had a large impact on the Congressional landscape for the 119th Congress, electing former President Donald Trump as the 47th President of the United States. This election also led to a Republican majority in both the House and the Senate.

The former Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman, Jon Tester (D-MT), lost his campaign for re-election, and his Chair position was flipped to Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS). Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) now serves as SVAC's Ranking Member. Congressman Mike Bost (R-IL) and Congressman Mark Takano (D-CA) returned to serve their positions on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs as Chairman and Ranking Member, respectfully.

On January 2, 2025, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act was signed into law. This bill represents more than 90 pieces of legislation that aim to expand benefits and services to veterans and their families. Some of the key benefits of the Dole Act include:

- Home Care and Caregiver Support: increased VA's share of home nursing care costs from 65% to 100%, reduced red tape for caregivers seeking benefits, offered training and financial aid for caregivers not eligible for VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC), and provided assistance provisions for caregivers seeking mental health support (COPE Act).
- Veteran Homelessness: allowed VA to supply bedding, food, and transportation to medical appointments to unhoused veterans.
- VA Health Care Access: allocated funds for in-home care services, improved long-term care options, established a pilot dental program for veterans with heart disease, enhanced telehealth services for veterans in rural or underserved areas.
- Education, Economic, and Employment Benefits: enhanced the Fry Scholarship and strengthened the GI Bill housing stipend, expanded access to technology training and education programs for transitioning veterans (VET TEC program), broadened eligibility for burial allowances, and revised the definition of surviving spouses.

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

The American Legion met for the annual Washington Conference on February 24, 2025. The Legislative Commission met in person on February 24, 2025, and Legislative Chair, Matthew Shuman (AZ), presided over the meeting. Legislative Council Chair, Paul Espinoza (NM), presented his report on Legislative Council activities. The Commission presented a video made by the Chairman and Legislative Director, in which the pair met with several members of Congress and discussed tips and tricks on how to have a good meeting with a member of Congress. The Commission welcomed Congressman Ro Khanna (D-CA) to discuss his VA Home Loan Transfer legislation and speak to Legionnaires. Commission business wrapped up with a Q&A panel discussion with staff directors from HVAC and SVAC.

On the morning of February 25, 2025, the Legislative Division helped Legionnaires prepare for their meetings on the Hill during the Commander's Rally. The Division presented a "Know Before You Go" briefing, which included each associate highlighting legislation in their portfolio that Legionnaires could discuss with their Members of Congress. Associates touched on the Be The One program and veteran suicide rates, community care, C&P exam quality, transition assistance program modernization, modernization and lethality of armed forces, and reducing veteran homelessness.

On February 26, 2025, National Commander, James LaCoursiere, testified before a joint session of Congress. In his testimony, he highlighted the success of the passage of the Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act in the 118th Congress. He went on to highlight the Legion's top priorities for the 119th Congress: combatting veteran suicide, community care, modernizing electronic health records, treating toxic exposure, enhancing survivors' benefits, protecting and enhancing VA benefits, modernizing TAP, prioritizing veterans in federal contracting, transferring of VA home loans, enacting National Guard and Reserve GI Bill parity, and amending and updating the U.S. flag code.

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

In late January, The American Legion endorsed S. 275, the Veterans' Assuring Critical Care Expansions to Support Servicemembers (ACCESS) Act of 2025. This legislation would change the eligibility access standards and processes for community care treatments and procedures. The American Legion released a quote of support for the bill:

"The American Legion fully supports this long-overdue piece of legislation which will finally address major issues plaguing the VA Community Care Program. Our 1.6 million dues-paying members overwhelmingly support these reforms, including codification of access standards to include consideration of veterans' preference. This legislation keeps with our belief that the VA should remain the care coordinator while providing realistic solutions to the friction veterans face in scheduling community appointments. We look forward to working with Chairmen Moran and Bost to ensure the bill's passage."

In November 2024, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Deputy Director for Health Policy Joshua Hastings submitted a Statement for the Record to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health regarding "Life After Limb Loss: Examining VA Amputee Prosthetics Care." He shared stories from amputees as well as suggested a need to highlight age and gender-appropriate resources for young veterans seeking care.

In February, VA&R Health Policy Analyst Matthew Cardenas submitted a Statement for the Record to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health regarding the evaluation of community care. In it, he referenced the Legion's support for the MISSION Act of 2018 but stressed that the effects should simply be a supplement to VA direct care, and the VA should remain the center of veteran healthcare. He advocated for improving access to specialty services in VHA facilities and better resources for transportation for veterans.

On March 11, VA&R director Cole Lyle testified in front of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs regarding pending and draft legislation, expressing Legion support for bills such as S. 124 (Restore VA Accountability Act), S.410 (Love Lives On Act), S. 201 (Aviator Cancers Examination Study (ACES) Act), S. 607 (Improving Veteran Access to Care Act), and S. 611 (Caring for Survivors Act). Mr. Lyle also submitted a Statement for the Record for the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA) hearing on March 5. He expressed Legion support for H.R. 1732 (Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act), as well as Legion opposition to H.R. 1656 (Preserving Lawful Utilization of Services for Veterans Act of 2025).

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

In January, the American Legion began working closely with Congressman Ro Khanna's office regarding his VA Home Loan Transferability Act that has not yet been introduced. This bill would allow veterans to transfer their unused home loan benefits to a covered family member. Representative Khanna stopped by the Legislative Commission meeting to discuss this bill with Commission members.

The American Legion has continued to endorse and show support for H.R. 1423/S. 649, the Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act. This bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to expand eligibility for Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to members of the National Guard who perform certain full-time duty and for other purposes.

In March 2025, Senior Policy Associate Andrew T. Petrie submitted a Statement for the Record to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity for their hearing: "Mission Incomplete: Strengthening the TAP Program to Ensure a Smoother Transition to Civilian Life for Tomorrow's Veterans." In this statement, he emphasized that TAP's effectiveness could have an overall impact on the Department of Defense's mission of meeting the nation's national security needs. In addition, he highlighted the importance of an evolving TAP approach, including the development of a TAP mobile app to increase the ease and accessibility of transition assistance.

NATIONAL SECURITY

The American Legion has continued to support the Major Richard Star Act and is currently advocating for it to be reintroduced and passed this year after not being passed during the 118th Congress. This bill aims to allow combat-injured veterans to receive their earned retirement pay and disability compensation without offset.

In February, the American Legion endorsed H.R. 488, the Combatting Cartels on Social Media Act of 2025. This legislation aims to require the Secretary of Homeland Security and Secretary of State to implement a strategy to combat the efforts of transnational criminal organizations to recruit individuals in the U.S. via social media platforms and assess their use of platforms for illicit activities.

In March, the National Security legislative priorities were delivered to members of the House Appropriations Committee in preparation for the FY26 budget process. These include fully funding the State Department, improving Border Patrol recruiting and retention, and ensuring the Coast Guard is not left unpaid in a government shutdown.

COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Legislative Commission met at the 2025 Washington Conference. The meeting was held in the House Veterans Affairs Committee Hearing Room in Cannon House Office Building, the first time this meeting was held on the Hill. In this meeting, we discussed the current legislation and presented a video aimed to help Legionnaires understand how to have an effective meeting with their Members of Congress.

We also hosted Rep. Ro Khanna (CA-17) who discussed his VA Home Loan Transfer Act and other veterans' issues, as well as a panel of 4 Corners staff directors from Veterans Affairs Committees. The Legion Commission Chair and the National Legislative Council Chair both provided reports to the Commission membership, and the Division Staff provided a congressional overview and legislative brief to the attendees. Leadership from both the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary travelled to Capitol Hill to address the Commission.

This concludes The American Legion National Legislative Commission's Report to the National Executive Committee.

Report: Legislative Commission
Matthew J. Shuman, Arizona, Chairman

This report summarizes the commission and congressional actions since the Washington Conference 2024 on issues of particular concern to the American Legion. The report is arranged by program areas.

RECENT CONGRESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The 119th Congress continued to introduce legislation and refer important veteran-related bills to the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. The American Legion provided important feedback and recommendations on bill text, as well as testifying before the committees on our positions.

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

On March 11, VA&R director Cole Lyle testified in front of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs regarding pending and draft legislation, expressing Legion support for bills such as S. 124 (Restore VA Accountability Act), S.410 (Love Lives On Act), S. 201 (Aviator Cancers Examination Study (ACES) Act), S. 607 (Improving Veteran Access to Care Act), and S. 611 (Caring for Survivors Act). Mr. Lyle also submitted a Statement for the Record for the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA) hearing on March 5. He expressed Legion support for H.R. 1732 (Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act), as well as Legion opposition to H.R. 1656 (Preserving Lawful Utilization of Services for Veterans Act of 2025).

On April 9, VA&R Policy Associate Brandon McClain submitted a statement for the record for the HVAC Disability subcommittee's oversight hearing on decreasing delays in disability and compensation claims. On April 25, VA&R Healthy Policy Analyst Sri Benson submitted a statement for the record to SVAC on enhancing outreach to support veterans' mental health.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

In March 2025, Senior Policy Associate Andrew T. Petrie submitted a Statement for the Record to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity for their hearing: "Mission Incomplete: Strengthening the TAP Program to Ensure a Smoother Transition to Civilian Life for Tomorrow's Veterans." In this statement, he emphasized that TAP's effectiveness could have an overall impact on the Department of Defense's mission of meeting the nation's national security needs. In addition, he highlighted the importance of an evolving TAP approach, including the development of a TAP mobile app to increase the ease and accessibility of transition assistance.

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In March, the National Security legislative priorities were delivered to members of the House Appropriations Committee in preparation for the FY26 budget process. These include fully funding the State Department, improving Border Patrol recruiting and retention, and ensuring the Coast Guard is not left unpaid in a government shutdown.

COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Legislative Commission did not hold any meetings between the Washington Conference and the Spring NEC meeting in 2025. This concludes The American Legion National Legislative Commission's Report to the National Executive Committee.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Legislative Commission. There are no resolutions and no addendum. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Legislative Commission. There are no resolutions or addendum. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MORIN: Comrade Commander?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, Commander Morin.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MORIN: If we can go back to the report, the written report on National Security, the previous report, please. On the last page of the written report under "Title," if we can move it, instead of "access" to Resolution 1, and change in the next paragraph the word "reject" to "approve" for the record, please.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, commander.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER WILEY: Commander, Dan Wiley from Kansas. I move that Commander Morin's suggestion be adopted by this body. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. Thank you, Commander Morin. The chair recognizes David F. Wallace of Virginia, chairman of the Media & Communications Commission, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Media & Communications Commission
David F. Wallace, Virginia, Chairman

Thank you, commander, national officers, members of the NEC, my friends. I know you wanted to get quickly into the complexities of paper, printing, postage and advertising, and I'll get to that, but first I want to share with you some of the ways in which your Media & Communications team has worked with others in the organization to advance The American Legion's top priorities.

The Media & Communications and Marketing Commissions in particular have been operating in similar and shared orbits since the Marketing Commission was established over a decade ago. Over the last six months, that relationship has evolved. It now connects the James G. Elliott Company, which for over 20 years has been the advertising sales arm for *The American Legion Magazine*, website and e-newsletters with the marketing team. That relationship has borne much fruit, significantly this year, with $144,000 in Thank You Thursday sales to date and nearly a half-million dollars in sales expected through the budget year.

Media & Communications and Marketing are collaborating in more ways, including: surround-sound awareness building of the Legion's Be the One mission to prevent veteran suicide; media coverage and support of special events and relationships, like the Army-Navy Game to Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball; fulfilling external media responsibilities. And on day-to-day basis, the staffs of Media & Communications and Marketing are working in alliance, communicating and executing on social media, creative development, revenue enhancement and other areas.

The collaboration is one of many where Media & Communications is working in harmony with other areas of the organization. One example you may have noticed in the front window as you entered national headquarters today is the collaborative effort between Media & Communications and Americanism, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of American Legion Baseball. The media plan for American Legion Baseball centennial began well over a year in advance. It has concluded a new 88-page bookazine titled, *A Century of Citizenship Through Sportsmanship*. It has brought to life a new video on the program's first century, along with a flurry of social media graphics we call "Dugout Diamonds" and highly popular American Legion department baseball profiles. The American Legion Baseball Centennial media tool kit for local use is now refreshed to include all the new elements that have been developed over the last eight months.

The Media & Communications group has also worked closely with Americanism to bring to market a graphic novel treatment on the U.S. flag's history and the meaning behind our flag-retirement ceremonies. That product, *Rise of Our Flag*, is being released now.

Media & Communications has also worked with the Children & Youth team to publish the second edition of the "Whole Child" booklet, as you'll see this as well on the Legion's support for kids that came out in April for Children & Youth Month. The Media & Communications team also continues its collaboration with Membership & Post Activities, with the recent delivery of a new welcome tool kit, and with the Legislative Commission for a special video on how Legionnaires can best work with Congress, which many of you saw at the Washington Conference. Media & Communications also meets weekly with the Office of Fund Development and works with that team to grow our planned giving program with positive results.

For the magazine, website, and e-newsletters, traditional advertising is running under budget. But when you add advertising for important corporate partners like USAA and Centene, overall advertising revenue remains strong in positive territory in all digital media, and over $4 million in total magazine ad sales so far this year.

Paper and printing are stable for now, with costs running slightly under budget. Postage remains a challenge, $25,487 over budget for the year at this time, despite having printed and distributed 16 fewer magazine pages than budgeted. Another increase we do not know yet will be expected this summer.

The American Legion Magazine now stands as the 11th most widely circulated periodical in the nation and ranks first among male readers for having read four of the last four issues and three of the last four. These are the important data points.

Foremost, the Media & Communications Commission has encouraged the spirit of collaboration with all areas of the organization, and we look forward to more of that as we are all striving to reach the same goals. Get the word out in the best ways possible. This, my friends, is what our commission believes. This is the way not just for Media & Communications, but for the entire American Legion.

We have just one resolution, to rescind six resolutions that have either been accomplished or are obsolete. The commission has approved this resolution and now presents it to the NEC for consideration.

Commander, thank you so much for the opportunity to serve as your Media & Communications Commission chairman. I can tell you, from having personally attended nearly every morning planning meeting of this group, that the staff is working hard every day to inform, promote, educate, celebrate and entertain through multiple media channels that reach a variety of audiences.

Commander, that concludes my report.

Report: Media & Communications Commission
David F. Wallace, Virginia, Chairman

The American Legion Media & Communications Commission and the American Legion Marketing Commission are continuing to operate in similar and shared orbits as 2025 unfolds, to advance such top national strategic priorities as:

- Prevention of veteran suicide
- Enhance membership
- Corporate financial stability
- And talent management

Among many developments in this increased synergy are continuous and robust coverage and media development in support of the Be the One mission to prevent veteran suicide. The commission is also encouraged by results from the newly developed "Thank You Thursday" advertising program, with Marketing, using the James G. Elliott Co. as the sales team. The Elliott Co. has been the sales arm of The American Legion Magazine, the Online Update and the national website for many years under Media & Communications and is now generating business for the Marketing Commission. The staffs of Media & Communications and Marketing are working together in inter-divisional teams, and collaborating with each other's vendors, to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

This is the way forward in an ever-changing American Legion information universe.

Traditional outside sales into The American Legion's Media & Communications assets continue to fluctuate. Through April, outside ad sales in four different print and digital platforms – the magazine, website, e-newsletter and podcast – stood at $2,388,122 against a budget of $2,849,082. However, that does not factor in $1,224,000 in magazine ad orders for Marketing Commission partners through the June issue, plus additional placements for revenue-generating areas of The American Legion, such as planned giving and Emblem Sales. Ads placed for Marketing Commission alliances and internal promotions have accounted for 29.66 pages through the June *American Legion Magazine*.

These shifts in the revenue picture come at a time of relative stability in paper and printing prices. However, postage costs continue to exceed budget with an increase of yet-to-be-determined percentage expected in July 2025.

The commission is also pleased that Media & Communications staff members have worked on multiple interdivisional teams on projects including:

- Print, digital, social and physical media in support of the 100th anniversary of American Legion Baseball
- Video, web and print media in support of The American Legion's Legislative Division and the national commander's testimony before Congress
- A new membership welcome toolkit for 2025 to go along with a 2024-released "Welcome to The American Legion" video
- Leadership of the "Operation Metrics" team to better collect, document and promote American Legion impact metrics for multiple uses
- A graphic novel treatment for teens and adults on the history of the U.S. flag, titled "Rise of Our Flag"
- Creative and technical assistance for Marketing to enhance the new national website at legion.org
- External media support for the Washington National Headquarters and their work, as well as special events, from the Army-Navy Game to the Salute To Our Heroes Inaugural Ball to American Legion presence as a preferred charity of INDYCAR

The American Legion Media & Communications Commission has evolved greatly since it was so named over a decade ago, ultimately combining the former American Legion Magazine Commission and the Public Relations Commission. Today, as the commission oversees multiple initiatives that involve a wide range of American Legion priorities, and collaborations from Marketing, Internal Affairs, Americanism, Legislative and others, the evolution continues.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of Media & Communications Commission with the exception of one resolution. There is no addendum. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Media & Communications Commission with the exception of one resolution. There is no addendum. Is there any discussion? Yes, Commander Morin.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MORIN: Everyone, on your desk, has this pamphlet. ["Measurable Impact"] You really need to look at this. We discussed it at the National Commander's Advisory Committee on Sunday. Probably one of the best pieces of literature I've seen put out by national. And I know this morning, a lot of you raised your hand when you said you belong to the VFW. Well, if you've just seen the last issue of the VFW, they were touting $14 billion raised.

Me, being a little boisterous, said we should put on the front cover of the national magazine, "American Legion, 21 billion; VFW, 14 billion; DAV, 10 billion." Who is the largest raiser of benefits?

Now, you take that 21 billion, as my friend the judge over here, divided it down into how many houses that supplied. You see on TV another group advertising how much houses they pay for for veterans. $21 billion The American Legion got in one year for veterans. How many houses does that cover? You go further, and our good friend Past Commander Jimmy Koutz is somewhere in here, how many $3 million-plus in grants for Operation Comfort Warriors. *(Laughter)*

Through the great chairman and the director this lovely piece of literature you can use in any speech you give, but more importantly will become the centerfold of your August magazine. Encourage at your post level, in your department, take this out. Use it as a tool, one, the greatness that we always talk about our organization. We never toot our own horn. It's time we start tooting our horn by using this brochure.

Use it for a recruitment tool. It has so many pluses for us. I commend you, commander, the adjutant, the staff and the volunteers for the time and energy that went into this. This is the finest piece of brochure I've seen in this organization. Use it wisely.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you, commander. Any further discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 10: Rescinding of Media & Communications Resolutions
Origin: Media & Communications Commission
Submitted by: Media & Communications Commission

WHEREAS, The Media & Communications Commission has conducted a review of National Executive Committee resolutions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the following resolutions be rescinded for the reasons stated herein.

No.	Year	Meeting	Title (Brief)	Reason
10	1954	Pre-Conv	Advertising Contract with The American Legion Auxiliary News	Obsolete
30	1991	Fall	Continued Operation of the Family Support Network	Obsolete
6	2008	Fall	Authority to Negotiate Agreement with Blackhorse Productions on Creation of Documentary about The American Legion	Accomplished
13	2010	Spring	Recognition of the GI Film Festival	Accomplished
11	2011	Spring	Establishment of The American Legion Amateur Radio Club	Obsolete
5	2014	Fall	Authorization to Purchase Paper from Lindenmeyr Central	Accomplished

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER STELACIO: This has the approval of the Media & Communications Commission and the Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its approval. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 10. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. At this time, the chair recognizes John W. "Jay" Bowen, the chairman of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, for the purposes of a report.

Oral Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
John W. "Jay" Bowen, Colorado, Chairman

Good afternoon, Commander LaCoursiere, national officers, past national commanders, members of the National Executive Committee and distinguished guests. It is an honor to serve our nation's veterans as chairman of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission.

Commander, I appreciate the support you and The American Legion national leadership and staff have provided to the VA&R Commission this past year. You have been provided a copy of my written report outlining the VA&R Commission's activities since the fall of the 2024 NEC meeting, but I'd like to share a few things outside of that report.

First, I would like to take a minute to introduce our new VA&R director in Washington, D.C., Mr. Cole Lyle. *(Applause)*

Cole started his career in D.C. a decade ago as an analyst in VA&R before going to work for a U.S. senator, a former VA secretary and other veteran service organizations. But he found his way home to The American Legion, and in his short time here, VA&R has made great progress reasserting itself in the veteran policy space in Washington.

You know, if any of you folks had an opportunity to sit in or watch the commander's testimony a couple of months ago in Washington, D.C., you would have seen and been introduced to Cole the proper way. He was a rock star. He fielded the overwhelming majority of the VA&R-related questions that the senators and congressmen had. He finally passed one off to me, which was really easy to answer, and I think that is the only reason he gave it to me. But he really did. He is a tremendous asset to this organization and to VA&R.

Over the past few months, VA&R policy staff members have been on the front lines engaging with Congress. Policy analysts are meeting weekly with congressional staffers, other veterans service organizations and industry experts. Since the beginning of the congressional session in January, our staff has also reviewed 55 different bills in addition to providing valuable input towards eight expert testimonials and statements for record directly up to our nation's lawmakers.

From April 2024 to March 2025, 652 service officers completed our service officer training program. Additionally, last fall The American Legion was successful in hosting our inaugural DSO Symposium for over 50 American Legion and one VFW service officers. Here, service officers attended a five-day symposium to discuss real-life scenarios incorporating complex claims such as navigating and filing under the new PACT Act criteria, or strategies for choosing the most optimal Appeals Modernization Act option. Attendees were able to observe a live U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims appellate panel oral argument. Service officers were able to gain valuable in-person networking opportunities, foster deeper peer support relationships, and take back ideas to streamline their own processes at their home state departments to make their claims processes even more successful.

For the fiscal year 2024, American Legion accredited service officers accounted for more than $21 billion, as shared with us by PNC Morin, in claims assistance for veterans, breaking the previous record of $19 billion. We continue to focus on reinforcing and strengthening our service officer network.

Finally, I have a few reminders for all of us. This year's Department Service Officer Symposium is coming up in October. Nomination instructions have already been sent to department adjutants, service officers and NEC members. The nomination form must be returned through the department adjutant. Additionally, I want to encourage departments to consider submitting award nominations for the VA Physician of the Year, the VA Health-Care Provider of the Year, and the William F. Lenker National Service Trophy. VA&R staff will send out an email to department commanders, adjutants and NEC members in June with instructions on how to apply.

Distinguished members of the NEC, I ask that you take this back home and share it with your members. All our commissions, committees, and divisions work tirelessly, often behind the scenes, in support of veterans, rarely receiving the recognition they have earned. Our committed volunteers and staff are ever present and available to ensure our nation's veterans are getting all the benefits they have earned through their time in service.

Commander, I would like to take a moment of personal privilege to recognize and say thank you to our amazing VA&R staff. They work tirelessly in support of our veterans and their families. I'm especially thankful for this division's director, Cole Lyle, for his leadership and counsel. I feel privileged to work alongside this very professional staff.

Commander, thank you for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. Subject to questions, this concludes my report.

Advance Report: Veterans Employment & Education
John W. "Jay" Bowen, Colorado, Chairman

I. NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMISSION CONFERENCE

The 65th Annual Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Commission Conference was held at the Washington Hilton on February 23-24, 2025.

II. MEETING OF THE NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION COMMISSION

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Commission met at the Washington Hilton on February 24, 2025. Commission Chairman John Bowen, CO, presided. Reports received and matters considered during this meeting are as follows:

A. VA Voluntary Services Volunteer of the Year Award

National Commander James A. LaCoursiere, Jr., recognized Mr. Roger Anderson (CT), as the VA Voluntary Services (VAVS) Worker of the Year award during the 2025 Washington Conference. Legionnaire Anderson was nominated and awarded the VAVS citation for his more than 15 years of dedicated service to the Newington Campus of the VA Connecticut Healthcare System.

Roger Anderson is a USAF veteran, serving from 1963 to 1975. He is a member of Post 133 South Windsor and has volunteered at the West Haven VA Medical Center and Rochy Hill Veterans Home and Hospital since the early 1990's. He volunteers with the 40&8, and maintains membership with the Vietnam Veterans of America. Legionnaire Anderson is a 2016 inductee into the Connecticut American Legion Hall of Fame and sets a positive example as VA Voluntary Services volunteer worker of the year.

Unfortunately, due to ill health, Legionnaire Anderson was unable to attend the Washington Conference in person. However, K. Robert Lewis, the National Commanders Representative to the Veterans Benefits Committee and member of the Department of Connecticut's delegation received the award on behalf of Legionnaire Anderson from Commander LaCoursiere.

B. Remarks from Guest Speakers

American Legion Auxiliary President, Trish Ward, and Sons of the American Legion National Commander, Joseph Navarrete, provided remarks on their priorities for the year and their dedication to serving veterans and their families. It was an honor to have both attend and address the VA&R Commission.

Ms. Cicely Burrows-McElwain, Deputy Director of Special Projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Office of Suicide Prevention, discussed the Veterans Health Administration's continued efforts to reduce veteran suicide. She mentioned anchors of hope and where organizations like the Legion should pay close attention. Many initiatives are contributing to reductions. She noted 7 key areas for suicide prevention:

1. Promoting secure firearm storage,
2. Building community collaboration,
3. Expanding crisis and intervention services,
4. Enhancing mental health care access from the full continuity of care,
5. Advancing suicide prevention into non-clinical support/peer support,
6. Integrating suicide prevention within medical settings, and
7. Tailoring services to the audience being reached

The information provided was well received and the VA&R Commission looks forward to continuing work with this office.

Ms. Anne Lord Bailey, Executive Director, Strategic Initiative Lab, Department of Veterans Affairs, presented on the immense growth in immersive technology. These include Extended Reality, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Mixed Reality, and Spatial Computing. The efforts of the VHA Digital Health Office are making immersive therapies more normal. The VA&R Commission had numerous questions about this system and is looking to discuss a resolution on this type of solution for veterans interested in immersive technologies.

A discussion panel was held with VA leadership to answer questions submitted by several departments and the VA&R Commission. The panel consisted of the following VA leaders: Kenneth Arnold, Vice Chairman of the Board of Veterans Appeals, Ronald E. Walters, Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, Dr. Erica Scavella, Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services, and Michael Frueh, Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits.

The commission had no resolutions to consider.

III. MEETING OF THE BE THE ONE/MENTAL WELLNESS COMMITTEE

On February 23, 2025, The American Legion's first Be The One Mental Wellness Committee was held at the Washington Hilton, Georgetown, Concourse Level. Committee Vice Chairman, Jeremy Ehart (KS) conducted the meeting. Approximately 30 combined committee members and other Legionnaires attended the meeting.

Josh Goldberg: CEO, Boulder Crest Foundation, gave a presentation on Post Traumatic Growth (PTG) which is rooted in the belief that we can grow from our traumatic experiences. Mr. Goldberg focused on five areas of PTG: new possibilities, deeper relationships, personal strength, appreciation of life, and existential change.

Next, the committee heard from Bryan Escobedo, Chief Growth Officer, Combined Arms, who discussed the importance of using a data driven approach to identify resources veterans are using in the area and diverting resources to address any gaps in service delivery. This has led to the creation of a digital community which provides accountability and transparency for all partnered organizations.

Finally, the committee heard from Adam Marr, Director of Operations, Veteran Mental Health Leadership Coalition, who provided a presentation on the impact emerging therapies are having on veterans and the challenges they face seeking treatment. Mr. Marr notes that many veterans seek treatment outside of the United States through unauthorized sources. It is the duty of the VA to ensure these treatments are properly researched and provided to veterans safely, and in a way that will bolster existing research.

The committee had no resolutions to consider.

VII. PRESENTATION OF THE NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION VA PHYSICIAN AND HEALTHCARE PROVIDER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

During the Commander's Call, on February 24, 2025, VA&R Commission Chairman, John Bowen, and the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Douglas A. Collins, announced and presented the awards for the 2024 VA Physician and Healthcare Provider of the Year recipients.

Dr. Steve Allen, Psychologist from the George E. Whalen VA Medical Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, was recognized as the Physician of the Year.

Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program Coordinator and proud Legionnaire, Patricia Mathes-Kerr from the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center was selected as the Healthcare Provider of the Year.

Both awardees were recognized for their distinguished public service and commitment to the care of America's veterans. Their dedication to caring for the nation's veterans demonstrates the highest degree of professionalism and respect while providing exceptional health care.

VIII. SYSTEM WORTH SAVING (SWS) AND REGIONAL OFFICE ACTION REVIEW (ROAR)

System Worth Saving

Past National Commander (PNC) Ronald Conley, PA, initiated the SWS Program in 2003. The American Legion resolved to support the SWS program through Resolution 206, which authorized visits to designated Veterans Health Administration Medical Centers. The American Legion passed Resolution 105, "Reiteration of the SWS Program," during its 2015 National Convention that established SWS as a permanent program managed by the VA&R Commission.

From October 2024 through March 2025, The American Legion's SWS team completed one site visit to the Fort Harrison, Montana, VA Medical Center. VA&R staff and volunteers discussed staffing and human resource challenges that the facility faces. The rural location of Fort Harrison makes it difficult to recruit staff, especially clinical providers. Moreover, because budgetary resources are minimal, financial incentives to recruit staff are limited.

The SWS team was briefed on a mental health best practice at the Fort Harrison VAMC. The Suicide Prevention and Mental Health staff at Fort Harrison highlighted the Nurse Navigator Program, which facilitates and coordinates transitions of mental health care. Nurses, who are employed by the VA and embedded in private hospitals throughout the state, ensure that veteran needs are met and resources for next steps are provided.

For the remainder of the year, the SWS team plans to visit the following facilities:

- New Orleans VAMC
- Jesse Brown (Chicago) VAMC
- West Haven VAMC
- Des Moines VAMC
- Washington D.C. VAMC

Information gathered from these site visits will be compiled into reports that will then be posted online and shared with VA leadership, members of Congress, and White House staff.

Regional Office Action Review

During this year's Washington Conference, the veterans benefits staff presented and published its year 2024 Regional Office Action Report (ROAR) findings on February 24, 2025, during the VA&R Commission meeting. Here, the benefits policy team presented key trends and findings from the four most recent Regional Office (RO) site visits at St. Petersburg, Florida, Phoenix, Arizona, Albuquerque New Mexico, and Ft. Harrison, Montana. Key findings revealed that artificial intelligence has improved claims speed and efficiency by reducing the most mundane manual tasks that slowed down staff efficiency. However, operational challenges identified were training deficiencies from the surge of new hires under PACT Act authorities, not fully developed claims, and delays in the decision review process. Through continued oversight and dedication on improvements to best practices, VBA's claims accuracy rates and backlog issues should trend towards a more manageable state at ROs.

In March of 2025, The American Legion's Regional Office Action Review (ROAR) team made its first of four site visits for year 2025. The ROAR team traveled to the San Juan VA regional office (VARO) in San Juan, Puerto Rico. In preparation for this visit, staff members conducted two virtual pre-conference visits and reviewed 50 veterans' VA case files for accuracy by Bergmann & Moore, LLC, our training and education partner. The analysis helps to gauge the quality of VA claims processing and adjudication, identifying errors found in the claims. The discrepancies found are addressed in the individual staff interviews and the results are later shared with the VARO's leadership.

The ROAR team conducted a thorough onsite visit that included interviews with staff and leadership to evaluate their contact center, call centers for quality assurance, their outreach in the community and their impact informing veterans of their entitlements to help identify best practices, and any significant challenges that may exist. An ongoing concern has been the impact created by the rising number of VA disability claims being filed due to passage of the PACT Act of 2022.

For the remainder of the year, the ROAR team plans to visit the following VA Regional Offices:

- Louisville, Kentucky
- Chicago, Illinois
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Information gathered from these site visits will be compiled into reports that will then be posted online and shared with VA leadership, members of Congress, and White House staff.

Department Service Officer Symposium

The American Legion hosted its inaugural DSO Symposium on October 20-25, 2024, at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, VA. The symposium was the first in-person training held since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Presented by Bergmann & Moore, The American Legion's education and litigation partner, the lecture series, exercises, and speakers were tailored for top-tier service officer training and the professional development of Department Service Officers (DSOs). A highlight of this event was the reinforcement of key concepts through a live appellate panel oral argument presented before the chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC).

VIII. LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Since the 2024 National Convention, Congress has asked the VA&R Division to testify or submit statements for the record on eight different topics to the U.S. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC) or the U.S. House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC), including:

- HVAC Subcommittee on Health hearing to consider pending legislation – December 17th, 2024.
- HVAC Full Committee oversight hearing on community care – January 22nd, 2025.
- HVAC Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs oversight hearing on veterans' 2nd amendment rights – January 23rd, 2025.
- HVAC Subcommittee on Health oversight hearing on community care – February 12th, 2025.
- Joint HVAC & SVAC Legislative Hearing for The American Legion – February 26th, 2025.
- HVAC Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs legislative hearing on unaccredited representatives in the VA claims process – March 5th, 2025.
- SVAC Full Committee hearing to consider pending legislation – March 11th, 2025.
- HVAC Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs oversight hearing on the VA Disability & Compensation process – April 9th, 2025.

Further, VA&R national staff has been asked to review 85 pieces of legislation and completed 58 of them.

Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
John W. "Jay" Bowen, Colorado, Chairman

I. VA&R COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Screening Committee met virtually via Microsoft Teams on April 21, 2025, with Commission Chairman John "Jay" Bowen, (CO) presiding. This meeting focused on reviewing, discussing, and establishing recommendations on resolutions for the VA&R Commission's consideration.

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission met virtually via Microsoft Teams on April 22, 2025, with Commission Chairman John "Jay" Bowen, (CO) presiding. This meeting focused on reviewing, discussing, and establishing recommendations on resolutions for NEC consideration.

The Screening Committee and the Commission reviewed and provided recommendations on the following resolutions:

- Awareness Campaign for World Trade Center Health Program and World Trade Center Victim Compensation Fund Eligibility for Veterans – **Reject**
- Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits Eligibility for Veterans Affected by the September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks – **Approve with Amendments**
- Department of Veterans Affairs Foreign Medical Program Eligibility – **Reject**
- Five Year Look-Back Period for Pension Benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs – **Reject**
- PGA HOPE (Helping Out Patriots Everywhere) Program – **Approve with Amendments**

RESOLUTIONS

Commission Chairman John "Jay" Bowen, CO, led a discussion on the following resolutions in order to prepare for the May 2025 National Executive Committee meeting:

Title: Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits Eligibility for Veterans Affected by the September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks
Origin: Department of Wisconsin
VA&R Executive Committee Recommendation: The VA&R Commission moved and properly seconded to present this resolution to the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee for consideration with amendments. Motion carried.

Title: PGA HOPE (Helping Out Patriots Everywhere)
Origin: Department of California
VA&R Executive Committee Recommendation: The VA&R Commission moved and properly seconded to present this resolution to the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee for consideration with amendments. Motion carried.

Addendum A

Reject

Resolution No. 5 (WI) (2024 National Convention): **Awareness Campaign for World Trade Center Health Program and World Trade Center Victim Compensation Fund Eligibility for Veterans**

Resolution No. 9 (LT) (2024 National Convention): **Department of Veterans Affairs Foreign Medical Program Eligibility**

Resolution No. 18 (MN) (2024 National Convention): **Five Year Look-Back Period for Pension Benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. commander, motion to receive and file the report of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission with the exception of two resolutions and one addendum. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission with the exception of two resolutions and one addendum. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 8: PGA HOPE (Helping Our Patriots Everywhere) Program
Origin: Register Resolution No. 2858 (CA) 2024 Department Convention
Submitted by: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The members of The American Legion are dedicated to the principles of Americanism, community service and supporting our nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, PGA HOPE (Helping Our Patriots Everywhere) is a program developed by the PGA of America to provide golf as a therapeutic rehabilitation tool for all military veterans, helping them assimilate back into their communities through the social interaction the game of golf provides; and

WHEREAS, PGA HOPE strives to enhance the mental, social, physical and emotional well-being of veterans with disabilities through golf, giving them an opportunity to learn and enjoy the game while promoting overall health and wellness; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion recognizes the positive impact that recreational activities, such as golf, can have on the rehabilitation and reintegration of military veterans into civilian life; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion acknowledges the dedication of the PGA of America and its PGA HOPE program in supporting our nation's veterans and fostering a sense of camaraderie among them; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion expresses its full support for the PGA HOPE program and its mission to improve the lives of our nation's veterans through the game of golf; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That The American Legion encourages its members to actively promote and participate in local PGA HOPE events, and similar events aimed at this national need by volunteering their time and resources to support the program and its participants.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, this resolution has the approval of your Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 8. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 9: Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits Eligibility for Veterans Affected by the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001
Origin: Resolution No. 6 (WI) 2024 National Convention
Submitted by: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was established to provide health care and benefits to military members related to their military service to the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Many responders to and survivors of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 suffer from health conditions directly related to their exposure including but not limited to: respiratory disease, cancer, neurological disorders, mental health disorders and musculoskeletal disorders; and

WHEREAS, Research documents such as "The Development of the Inventory of 9/11 Agents" published by the World Trade Center Health Program (WTC HP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have identified more than 350 chemical hazards that September 11, 2001 responders and survivors may have been exposed to, the health implications of these exposures can be severe and long lasting; and

WHEREAS, The CDC and the WTC HP, with these research documents, have established a list of presumptive illnesses related to September 11, 2001 responders and survivors' exposure at all three crash sites; and

WHEREAS, There are more than 1,200, September 11, 2001, responders and survivors from the Pentagon and Shanksville currently enrolled in the WTC HP and eligibility for enrollment for U.S. military responders and survivors was signed into law with the National Defense Authorization Act (Gillibrand Braun Amendment) in December of 2023; and

WHEREAS, Enrollment in the WTC HP by eligible U.S. active duty, reserve and National Guard military responders, as well as their caregivers and survivors, may support claims for service connection and benefits from the VA by establishing a nexus between their service and WTC-related health conditions; and

WHEREAS, It is essential that these veterans receive the same consideration and access to health care and benefits that all military members exposed to hazards during their military service are entitled; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is committed to empowering veterans to lead high quality lives with respect and dignity; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That The American Legion urges the secretaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense and the U.S. Congress to review all relevant research, records and documentation to confirm hazardous exposures and deem eligible for VA health care and benefits September 11, 2001 military responders who participated in rescue, recovery, security and other on-site support operations at the Pentagon, Shanksville (PA), and Ground Zero for related illness and injuries; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion vigorously advocate for legislative and administrative actions to recognize illnesses related to the domestic military response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, as presumptive service-connected conditions, including formal recognition of such domestic response activities as toxic exposure risk activities; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion will collaborate with other veterans service organizations, providers and stakeholders to support this initiative and ensure our veterans have access to the health care and benefits they have earned through their service.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, this resolution has the approval of your Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 9. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, attached to the report is Addendum A. I move the actions of the VA&R Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Addendum A. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER HERNDON (DC): Commander, I'm the NEC for the Department of District of Columbia. I think this is also a wonderful tool that can be used for future recovery, retention and recruitment. May I legally make copies of this and give it to all my recruiters, which means every one of my Legionnaires?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, sir.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER HERNDON: Thank you, commander. Also, I recruited that member right there.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Good job, thank you. At this time, the chair recognizes Jeremy Ehart of Kansas, vice chairman of the Be The One Mental Wellness Committee, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Be The One Mental Wellness Committee
Jeremy J. Ehart, Kansas, Vice Chairman

Good afternoon, commander, national officers, NEC and distinguished guests. It's an honor to continue to serve our nation's veterans as vice chairman of the Be The One Mental Wellness Committee.

Commander, Chairman Bowen, I appreciate the support that you and The American Legion national leadership and staff have provided the committee this past year. The Be the One initiative is actively working to reduce the stigma associated with mental health treatment and encourages everybody to be ready to save a life. This includes arming yourself with the knowledge to identify the warning signs and factors of suicide.

To that end, The American Legion has partnered with Columbia University to develop suicide prevention training offerings. As of April 22, 2025, 19,000 individuals have been trained in the Columbia Protocol or Question, Persuade and Refer or QPR.

The VA&R division held numerous meetings with The American Legion's Be the One manager. In this role, the manager answered an estimated 750 calls that needed support, 300 of which were after normal working hours. Of those, 13 needed immediate referral to the crisis hotline. Further, we have continued to engage with our committee speakers from the 2025 Washington Conference. Those were Boulder Crest Foundation, Combined Arms and the VA Office of Suicide Prevention. These organizations will be key partners in the Be the One's effort to reduce veteran suicide.

Finally, the committee is working on potential memorandums of understanding with Stop Soldier Suicide and America's Warrior Partnership to expand training and case coordination for veterans who need crisis intervention and further support on upstream issues before they reach a crisis point.

Commander, our committed volunteers and staff are ever present and available to ensure our nation's veterans are getting the assistance they need to help reduce the stigma of asking for help and reduce the overall suicide rate. Thank you for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. This concludes my report.

Report: Be The One Mental Wellness Committee
Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania, Chairman

The Be The One Committee is actively working to reduce the stigma associated with mental health treatment and encourages everyone to be ready to save a life. This includes arming yourself with the knowledge to identify the warning signs and risk factors of suicide. To that end, The American Legion has partnered with Columbia University to develop suicide prevention training offerings.

BE THE ONE MENTAL WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Be The One Committee met on February 23rd, 2025 at the Washington Conference, Chaired by Vice Chairman Jeremy Ehart. The committee hosted three organizations - The Boulder Crest Foundation, Combined Arms, and the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Suicide Prevention – to discuss their programs and the latest data on veteran suicide in the United States.

TRAINING UPDATE

As of April 22, 2025, 19,000 individuals have been training in the Columbia protocol or Question Persuade Refer (QPR). The VA&R Division held numerous meetings with The American Legion's Be The One Manager. In this role, the manager answered an estimated 750 calls that needed support, 300 of which were after normal working hours. This included 13 calls that needed immediately referral to the Crisis Hotline.

RESOLUTIONS - No applicable resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of the Be The One Mental Wellness Committee. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Be The One Mental Wellness Committee. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. Next, the chair recognizes Matthew D. Jabaut of Maine, chairman of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission, for his report.

Oral Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Matthew D. Jabaut, Maine, Chairman

Good afternoon, Commander LaCoursiere, national officers, past national commanders, members of the National Executive Committee and distinguished guests. It is an honor to continue serving our nation's veterans as chairman of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission. Commander, I truly appreciate the support that you and The American Legion national leadership and staff have provided to

the VE&E division this past year. You have a copy of my written report of the VE&E Commission activities from the fall 2024 NEC meeting, but I would like to share a few things outside that report.

Since the fall NEC meetings, the VE&E policy staff have been working diligently with Congress to advocate for the needs of our nation's veterans. In partnership with their legislative counterparts, the policy staff has significantly improved their effectiveness, earning greater trust and respect to become more involved in the legislative process than in previous years. We have challenged ourselves and continue to restore the respect and influence The American Legion rightfully deserves as the largest veterans service organization.

Since the start of the 119th Congress, VE&E staff have reviewed 45 bills while collaborating on four statements for the record and providing expert testimony. There's been an intentional effort to foster relationships on Capitol Hill with congressional staffers, our counterparts in veterans service organizations, third-party organizations who advocate within the veteran space, federal executive departments and key staff involved in the passage of critical legislation.

Additionally, the staff have spearheaded outreach efforts to ensure The American Legion always has a seat at the table to advocate for veterans through conversations surrounding key initiatives, such as the federal reduction in force of employees, oversight of various programs and ensuring veteran-owned and service-disabled-owned veteran-owned businesses are taken care of by the Small Business Administration, the Department of Labor and the Office of Personnel Management.

Finally, I have a few reminders for you all. The national Veterans Employment & Education Commission's award program will be adopting a new and improved processing system. The application and submission process for all awards will be online. Detailed information on how to submit the awards will be sent to department commanders and department adjutants in August following our National Convention. The submission process will be available in December. Additionally, I want to encourage all departments to consider submitting award nominations for these programs. These are great awards to give to employers and companies in your local area that support our local veterans and a great way to establish relationships for potentially future donors and supporters of your department and your programs.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to serve The American Legion in this capacity, and this concludes my report.

Advance Report: Veterans Employment & Education
Matthew D. Jabaut, Maine, Chairman

I. NATIONAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION COMMISSION CONFERENCE

Members and guests of the National Veterans Employment & Education (VE&E) Commission (VE&E) and its two standing committees, the Employment and Veterans' Preference Committee and the Veterans Education, Other Benefits, and Homelessness Committee, met at the Washington Hilton in Washington, D.C., on February 21, 24, & 25, 2025 to convene the 65th Annual Washington Commission Conference.

Meetings discussing the Commission's ongoing initiatives to assist transitioning servicemembers in achieving their academic goals, finding gainful employment, preventing homelessness, and ensuring mental well-being were held in conjunction with the Sixty-Fifth Annual Washington Conference. The Commission was honored to welcome National Commander James LaCoursiere, American Legion Auxiliary President Trish Ward, and Sons of the American Legion Commander Joseph Navarrete were also in attendance.

The National VE&E Commission events commenced with a pre-Washington Conference virtual VE&E Commission meeting, co-hosted by the Veteran Small Business Task Force (SBTF), on February 21. Additionally, VE&E held a Commission meeting on Monday, February 24, which consisted of four panels: Homeless Awareness and Prevention, Mental Health and Wellness, Tuition Assistance, and Task Force Movement. Additionally, the Awards Selection Subcommittee, comprising members of the VE&E Commission and its two committees, convened virtually on March 20 to select the national winners and runners-up in the Commission's two national awards programs.

A. MENTAL HEALTH SPEAKER

2025 Mental Health Speaker – "Courage to Heal: Empowering Veterans Through Mental Wellness" Derek Blumke, Veteran Impact Fellow, Grunt Style Foundation

On February 24, the VE&E Division hosted a special Mental Health and Wellness session featuring keynote speaker Derek Blumke, Veteran Impact Fellow at the Grunt Style Foundation.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), in 2022, there were 6,407 veteran suicides, slightly up from 6,392 in 2021. That averages to about 17.6 veterans lost per day. Of these individuals, only 38% were actively using VA health services at the time of their death, highlighting the need for more accessible and diverse mental health resources outside the traditional VA system.

This session aimed to explore alternative, community-based mental health strategies and inspire stakeholders to think beyond conventional clinical models. Derek Blumke, drawing from personal experience and professional insight, emphasized the critical importance of connection, purpose, and peer support in the healing journey.

He encouraged attendees to support programs that prioritize human interaction, such as community outreach, veteran-led initiatives, and non-traditional therapies, thereby fostering engagement and emotional well-being. Blumke underscored that isolation continues to be a leading factor in veteran suicide and that empowerment through purpose is essential in combating this crisis.

The session was well received, with attendees expressing a renewed commitment to broadening the scope of mental health care for veterans. Under the theme *"Courage to Heal,"* the 2025 mental health programming reinforced The American Legion's dedication to being part of the solution in preventing veteran suicide.

B. EMPLOYMENT SPEAKER

"Employment and Training"
Ivan E. Denton, Director of National Programs, DOL-VETS

On February 24, the VE&E Division hosted a discussion held by Ivan Denton where he spoke about the successes of DOL-VETS programs and initiatives and their progress throughout the last year. Specifically, the Off Base Transition Training peaked interest from the crowd as the program allows veterans who may not have had the best experience in the Transition Assistance Program or simply did not have access to the program when the veteran completed their service. Additionally, Ivan went in depth regarding the efforts focused on USERRA as America's Reserve and National Guard components have become more heavily relied upon in recent years.

C. COUNCIL ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

"From Service to Second Chances: Advancing Justice for Veterans",
Brigadier General David "Mac" MacEwen, U.S. Army (Ret.), Director of the Veterans Justice Commission, Council on Criminal Justice

On February 24, the VE&E Division hosted a discussion led by David MacEwen, who shed light on effective policy strategies for incarcerated veterans, emphasizing the importance of interventions at every point between transition and reentry.

Topics included:

Three sectors of CCJ's policy work:

- Transition from military service
  - Recommendations:
    - DOD should make transition a priority mission and integrate evidence-based practices
    - VA should automate healthcare records and national enrollment in VA healthcare
    - Arrest through sentencing
  - Recommendations:
    - Define and identify veterans in the justice system
    - Alternatives to prosecution/incarceration
    - Create a National Center for Veterans Justice
    - Corrections and reentry
  - Recommendations:
    - Prioritize recruiting/hiring of justice-involved vets
    - Provide VA healthcare to incarcerated veterans
    - Eliminate administrative barriers to housing
    - Create "second look" review processes that recognize military service

JC Model Policy Framework:

- Establish public policy that recognizes the burdens veterans carry from military service and provides support for veterans to accept responsibility for their offense and participate in treatment to facilitate healing.
  - Broad eligibility criteria and Judicial Discretion
    - Maximizes participation
    - Judges determine eligibility and terms of suspension
  - Standardized Veteran Sentencing Option (VSO)
    - For probation-eligible charges: pre-trial/probation with treatment instead of conviction/incarceration unless the judge finds the veteran to be a risk to public safety
  - Evidence-based case plan approach
  - Implement evidence-based standards used by accountability courts

Establish public policy that recognizes the burdens veterans carry from military service and provides support for veterans to accept responsibility for their offense and participate in treatment to facilitate healing.

D. HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PANEL

"Hearts for Heroes: Caring for Displaced Veterans"
Panelists:

- Anthony Love, Principal Advisor, Intra/Inter-Agency Collaboration and Director of Community Engagement, VHA Homeless Programs
- Clifton Lewis, Chief Operating Officer, Access Housing, Inc. (SEVSC)
- Darryl J. Vincent, President & Chief Operating Officer, U.S. VETS
- Kathryn Monet, Chief Executive Officer, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
- Sarah Bierman, Deputy Director for Grants and Training (ONP), U.S. Department of Labor
- Phillip Leverette, Vice President, Family Services, SOME (So Others Might Eat)
- Moderator: Mark Walker, Deputy Director, Swords to Plowshares

On February 24, the VE&E Division hosted a panel discussion titled *"Hearts for Heroes: Caring for Displaced Veterans."* The session brought together leading experts to discuss strategies to eliminate veteran homelessness.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2023 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, approximately 35,574 veterans experienced homelessness in 2023, representing a 7% increase from the previous year. Despite this, veteran homelessness has declined by 52% since 2009. There was a 14% increase in unsheltered homelessness and a 3% increase in sheltered homelessness among veterans. (HUD.gov)

Panelists emphasized the importance of strengthening collaboration across all levels—from federal to local partners—and improving the dissemination of information regarding veteran services. They noted that many community members and volunteers are unaware of the extensive resources available, underscoring the necessity for continued outreach.

To complement the panel discussion, VE&E led a Homeless Veterans Shelter Site Visit on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, visiting three veteran-serving shelters in Washington, D.C., and Maryland. The Division donated a total of $2,000 and distributed care packages provided by the Disabled Veterans National Foundation (DVNF) to the following shelters:

- So, Others Might Eat (SOME): With a mission spanning over 50 years, SOME provides comprehensive services to residents of Washington, D.C., impacted by poverty and homelessness. VE&E donated $1,000 and DVNF care bags.
- Unity in the Community: This nonprofit serves over 100 veterans annually through housing and mental health support. They recently opened the first Full-Service Center for veterans in Prince George's County, MD. VE&E donated $500 in gift cards and care packages.

- Access Housing, Inc. (SEVSC): A long-time community partner, Access Housing provides critical transitional housing and supportive services to homeless veterans. VE&E provided $500 in funding and care packages.

This site visit reinforced the panel's message: eliminating veteran homelessness requires policy dialogue and direct, tangible community support. By engaging shelters, providing resources, and promoting collaboration, VE&E demonstrates a proactive commitment to ensuring that no veteran is left behind.

E. STUDENT VETERAN PANEL

"Student Veterans: Building Futures Beyond the Uniform"
Panelists:

- Kelley Bell, USAF, Bowie State University
- Brittany Andrade, USA, American University
- Katesha Goodson, USA, Assistant Director, Office of Military & Veteran Services, Howard University
- Luther Gourdine Jr., Howard University

On February 24, the VE&E Division hosted a panel moderated by Tammy Barlet, Vice President of Government Affairs, Student Veterans of America. The panel focused on issues veterans and military-connected students have in utilizing their educational benefits. Specifically, students mentioned issues related to the processing time for benefits to be implemented, which occur repeatedly every semester. Additionally, the VRE program was praised for what it can do for veterans who no longer have access to the GI Bill or who may have transferred it to their dependents during service. Yet, this program remains woefully understaffed, and the interpretation of the law as written is in the hands of individual counselors within the program, rather than being mandated by Congress or the VA, leading to vastly different experiences among users of the program.

Another issue discussed was the GI Bill, a crown jewel of legislation that was created and passed largely in part by The American Legion has had some updates within the past decade. However, the stipend available at the beginning of the semester is still $1,000 and hasn't changed or been updated to match the inflation rate or cost of living. Further, there is still no parity between Reserve and National Guard members who serve under Title 10 orders in addition to Title 32 orders leaving these veterans unable to use the GI bill.

The Commission also had the opportunity to hear from and understand what it is like to be a dependent using GI Bill benefits, and the struggles associated with that. Additionally, the Commission was given the opportunity to learn more with the assistance of the university and the school certifying official. Additionally, the Commission was given the opportunity to learn more with their assistance.

F. SMALL BUSINESS PANEL

"From Service to Veteran Entrepreneurship"
Panelists:

- Michael D. Thornton Sr., U.S. Air Force (Ret.), Chief Operating Officer and Co-Owner of Visionary Consulting Partners, LLC.
- Donnell E. Johns Sr., CSM U.S. Army (Ret.), Owner and Founder of Veterans Grown America
- Hyacinth Tucker, U.S. Army (Ret.), Owner of Laundry Basket, LLC.

On February 24, the VE&E Division hosted a panel moderated by Stan Kurtz, Director of Policy and Engagement for SBA's (OVBD). During this panel, the veteran entrepreneurs spoke about their experience in how they established their businesses, handled transition during this time, and the programs that they have utilized or are utilizing that are available to veterans, noting their experience in using these programs and how the programs exceeded or failed their expectations.

G. RESOLUTIONS REVIEW & DISCUSSION

After the speakers concluded, Chairman Jabaut briefly discussed one resolution submitted to the Veterans Employment and Education Commission.

H. TASK FORCE MOVEMENT PANEL

On February 25, VE&E hosted a Task Force Movement (TFM) panel. TFM was launched in April 2022 as a grassroots initiative to bring together the government and private industry to address labor shortages in sectors such as trucking. The goal is to move well-qualified transitioning service members, National Guard and Reserves members, veterans, and military spouses into high-demand jobs. Panelists included The Honorable Patrick J. Murphy, Chairman, TFM, Elizabeth Murray-Belcaster, Executive Director, TFM, Jack Dever, Cybersecurity Chairman, TFM, John Decoteau, Vice President of Military Admissions, Universal Technical Institute, and Kristopher Rick, Office of Strategic Outreach, Veterans' Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor.

While TFM began as an initiative to assist transitioning service members with pathways into the trucking field, it has expanded to cybersecurity, healthcare, aviation, and skilled trades areas. In the cybersecurity field alone, there are approximately 500,000 unfilled positions in the U.S. This number is expected to increase considerably over the next decade, along with more substantial shortages in the healthcare and aviation fields. Considering this, panelists expressed the need to expand opportunities for service members, veterans, and spouses in those above critically staffed career fields. Not only will this benefit the military-connected community, but it will also significantly reduce the negative impact(s) these shortages will have on supply chains, national security, transportation, and access to healthcare.

To address this, the panelists encouraged those in attendance to promote licensing and credentialing opportunities that lead to good-paying, family-sustaining careers, particularly those in critically staffed fields. Additionally, for service members struggling with obtaining their disability and educational benefits an artificial intelligence backed program developed by Fusion Cyber that can be used on the web or over the phone to point veterans to service officers/organizations and resources from the Department of Veterans Affairs was discussed.

II. CAREER FAIRS AND WORKSHOPS

On October 19, the VE&E Division collaborated with the Department of Puerto Rico, SkilMil Municipio de Carolina, Conexion Laboral (Carolina), and the Departamento del Trabajo y Recursos Humanos to conduct an employment resource and job fair.

On April 2, the VE&E Division collaborated with Military Hire to conduct a virtual national hiring event. During the event, nearly 1,000 connections were made between candidates and recruiters seeking employment, ranging from defense contractors to military-friendly corporations and various federal agencies.

III. SMALL BUSINESS TASK FORCE VIRTUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

On February 21 Current or prospective small business owners who attended in person or virtually The American Legion-Small Business Administration (SBA) Small Business Conference were provided a wide range of information, including advice on gaining access to capital, navigating difficult times as a business owner and choosing a franchise over starting an new venture. Attendees also learned about a program whose graduates have secured billions of dollars in contracts for their businesses. That program is also free for veterans. The Veteran Institute for Procurement (VIP) was referenced throughout the day-long conference, from both its leadership and veterans who have gone through the program. VIP training programs are designed to teach veteran-owned small businesses how to increase their ability to win and manage government contracts. Most of the success of the VIP program goes to The American Legion for assisting in finding additional revenue sources for this program to develop and grow.

A roundtable discussion featuring four veteran business owners discussed some of the challenges they faced, both in starting their businesses and in continuing to establish financial stability and increase their profit margins. Another roundtable featured two SBA employees and focused on navigating government programs for business growth. During the discussion, Larry Stubblefield, Deputy Associate Administrator of the Office of Government Contracting and Business Development, expressed his praise for the relationship that has developed between The American Legion and his agency. He related the determination of The American Legion to advocate for increasing the number of veteran business centers around the country from two to now being 31 centers. Other speakers included past National Security Director of The American Legion, Rhonda Snip (LtCol, USA, Ret.). Rhonda Snip discussed the benefits of starting a franchise or team-building business. She is the first Black owner of a Dale Carnegie as managing partner of North Florida Southeast Georgia Dale Carnegie. Tom Bartow (Col, USA, Ret.), Chief Executive Officer, Iron Eagle Logistics, shared tips on working with Amazon as a small business. David Vardeman, Senior Vice President, Capital Bank and the primary sponsor of the event, provided advice in choosing financing options and shared his work as a military and veteran advocate in his role as Capital Bank's Not for Profit and Global Business Development Director. The last speaker of the day was Elizabeth Sullivan, President, Madison Services Group, Inc. Madison provided an overview of the current legislative climate in the 119th Congress. Additionally, Madison included information regarding budget or staffing cuts and executive orders from the administration, as well as how these changes could impact small businesses.

IV. PRE-WASHINGTON CONFERENCE NATIONAL VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION COMMISSION MEETING ON SMALL BUSINESS

On February 16, the American Legion's National VE&E Commission convened its virtual pre-Washington Conference Small Business Meeting. The meeting's purpose was to inform Commission Members of ongoing initiatives pertaining to veteran-owned small businesses and to discuss the SBTF's goals and priorities.

Guest speakers included Larry Stubblefield, Deputy Associate Administrator of the Small Business Administration (SBA), and Timothy Green, Associate Administrator of the SBA. Mr. Stubblefield and Mr. Green expressed the importance of strengthening small businesses in underserved communities, including inner-city and rural areas. Additionally, the SBA aims to support further manufacturing businesses crucial to the United States (U.S.) economy. Following a discussion with the SBA, SBTF Subcommittee members provided recommendations ranging from enforcing veterans' preference in contracting to expanding cybersecurity protections for small businesses.

The meeting culminated with the SBTF expressing the importance of increased advocacy from Task Force members, particularly regarding the Vets First Contracting Program and its expansion to the Department of Defense.

V. AWARDS SELECTION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

The National Veterans Employment & Education Commission's Award Subcommittee reviewed all the nominations received in 2024 for the Employer of the Year and Employment Service Awards programs. The presiding subcommittee members were Matthew Jabaut (ME) Chairman; Lloyd H. Woods (ME); Eugene O'Grady (NJ); Alonzo Scott (VA); and Brian Ring (IA).

Members of the Awards Selection Subcommittee met on March 20 to consider various nominations. In 2024, Departments submitted 31 nominations for employers and employment services: nine for small companies (1-50 employees), six for medium-sized companies (51-200 employees), ten for large companies (201+ employees), two for Employer of Older Workers, and four for the Enhance the Lives of the Disabled category.

The same subcommittee also selected the winners of the Employment Service Awards program. Departments submitted four nominations for LVERs, five for DVOPs, and two for Local Employment Service Offices.

Before the meeting, the staff liaison to the subcommittee emailed and mailed hard copies of all nominations and supporting data to each subcommittee member. After a thorough review, the subcommittee selected the following winners:

SMALL EMPLOYER:	**Camouflage LLC DBA Camo Vets** Barnegat, NJ
MEDIUM SIZE EMPLOYER:	**Oakhurst Dairy** Portland, ME
LARGE EMPLOYER:	**JB Hunt Transport Services, Inc.** Massachusetts
EMPLOYER OF OLDER WORKERS:	**Defense Consulting Services** San Antonio, Texas
LVER OF THE YEAR:	**Brian L. Seiffert** San Antonio, Texas

DVOP OF THE YEAR:	**Maria Lindsey** San Antonio, Texas
ES LOCAL OFFICE OF THE YEAR	**Redbird Workforce American Job Center** Dallas, Texas
MICHAEL GUTY'S HOMELESS VETERANS OUTREACH	**No winner selected**
ENHANCE THE LIVES OF THE DISABLED	**Vincent DePaul** **Rehabilitation Service of Texas Inc**
"DPA Peak Performers"	Austin, Texas

The winners for the Employer of the Year categories will be reviewed for pending safety and health or fair labor practice violations before the announcement.

VI. TESTIMONY EFFORTS

Since October 2024, the VE&E Division has been involved in producing three separate instances of testimony. The most recent was "A Statement for the Record on the Transition Assistance Program," dated March 25, 2025, written by Andrew Petrie, Senior Policy Associate. Additionally, earlier in the month on March 11, 2025, in a joint effort, the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director, Cole Lyle, testified on pending legislation in which an analysis and testimony were written for the Legislation monitored by the VE&E division. The last piece of legislative testimony is the National Commanders' Joint Hearing testimony that took place on February 26, 2025, detailing VE&E policy priorities.

VII. TRAINING

In December of 2024, the VE&E Division attended The American Legion 2024 Policy Workshop given by Kilo Alpha Strategies to the entire American Legion Government Affairs Office as part of Executive Director, Mario Marquez's new training initiative for Policy Analysts/Associates.

Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Matthew D. Jabaut, Maine, Chairman

I. VE&E COMMISSION AND SCREENING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Veterans Employment and Education (VE&E) Screening Committee met virtually via Microsoft Teams on April 2, 2025, with Commission Chairman Matthew Jabaut (ME) presiding. This meeting focused on reviewing, discussing, and establishing recommendations for the single resolution to be considered by the VE&E Commission.

The VE&E Commission met virtually via Microsoft Teams on April 2, 2025, with Commission Chairman Matthew Jabaut (ME) presiding. This meeting focused on reviewing, discussing, and establishing recommendations for the single resolution to be considered by the National Executive Committee (NEC).

The Screening Committee and the Commission reviewed and provided recommendations on the following resolutions:

- Increase The Grant Amounts Authorized in The Specially Adaptive Housing Program – Approve

RESOLUTIONS

Commission Chairman Matthew Jabaut (ME), led a discussion on the following resolutions in order to prepare for the May 2025 NEC meeting:

Title: Increase The Grant Amounts Authorized in The Specially Adaptive Housing Program
Origin: VE&E Commission

VE&E Executive Committee Recommendation: The VE&E Commission moved and properly seconded to present this resolution to the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee for consideration with Resolution Number 12, October 2023, titled, Increase the Grant Amounts Authorized in the Specially Adaptive Housing.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission with the exception of one resolution. There is no addendum. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission with the exception of one resolution. There is no addendum. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 2: Increase The Grant Amounts Authorized in the Specially Adaptive Housing Program
Origin: Resolution No. 21 (MN) 2024 National Convention
Submitted by: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion is committed to ensuring that veterans have access to the resources and support necessary for a dignified and comfortable life, acknowledging the sacrifices they have made in service to our nation; and

WHEREAS, The Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) and Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) grants are crucial programs designed to provide financial assistance to veterans with severe service-connected disabilities, enabling them to live independently in a barrier-free environment; and

WHEREAS, The current grant rates for SAH and SHA programs may not fully cover the costs associated with adapting homes to meet the specific needs of severely disabled veterans, due in part to rising construction costs and the unique requirements of accessible home modifications; and

WHEREAS, An increase in the SAH and SHA grant rates would significantly benefit veterans by providing them with more substantial support to cover the necessary modifications, thereby enhancing their quality of life and ability to live independently; and

WHEREAS, Adjusting the grant rates to reflect current and future economic realities is essential to ensure that these programs continue to serve veterans effectively and fulfill their intended purpose; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That The American Legion strongly supports and advocates for an increase in the grant rates for the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) and Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) programs, to adequately address the needs of veterans with severe service-connected disabilities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges Congress, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and relevant policy makers to review and adjust the SAH and SHA grant rates in a manner that reflects the increasing costs of home modifications and the critical importance of these grants in supporting veterans' independence and quality of life; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution be communicated to all relevant parties, including members of Congress, the Department of Veterans Affairs and veteran advocacy groups, to mobilize support for the necessary legislative and administrative changes to increase SAH and SHA grant rates for the benefit of our nation's veterans; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That National Executive Committee Resolution No. 12, October 2023, titled, "Increase the Grant Amounts Authorized in the Specially Adaptive Housing Program" is hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER STELACIO: This resolution has the support of Veterans Employment & Education Commission and the Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its approval. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 2. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. At this time, the chair recognizes Americanism Commission chairman, Mark A. Avis of Massachusetts, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Americanism Commission
Mark A. Avis, Massachusetts, Chairman

Commander and members of the National Executive Committee, I am privileged to stand before you today and report on the actions of your Americanism Commission. Your Americanism Commission is strong, and we are moving full steam ahead. Copies of my detailed written report have been distributed for your review, so I'll only brief you on some of the highlights of our meetings.

It was a record-breaking year again for the Legacy Scholarship. There were 724 Legacy Scholarship applications received as complete. Of those, 559 demonstrated a financial need to be considered by this body for scholarship.

It is my honor to tell that you every child that demonstrated a need will receive funds to address that need. 15 children of the fallen were awarded, and 544 children of post 9/11 service-connected disabled veterans were awarded. The total dollar amount of scholarships awarded was $1,779,460. *(Applause)*

The Americanism Commission approved the Committee on Youth Education's recommendation that Colonel Jeffrey Gaylord of Tennessee receive the 2025 American Legion Education Award. For Scouting, Oliver Burke of Texas was selected the 2025 American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year and will receive a $10,000 scholarship. Those incredible Americans, along with our other youth program champions, will be invited to our National Convention to speak on the convention stage and represent the success of our Americanism youth programs.

2025 is significant for many reasons. 250 years ago, the United States Army, Navy and Marines were born to protect and defend this homeland. It was also the year of the famous ride of Paul Revere who warned of the British coming. Our first commander in chief, General George Washington, took command of a 17,000-man Army in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Revolutionary War began.

Next year, The American Legion needs to commit to leading civil society in the grand celebration of the 250 years of American independence. All of us in this room committed our best years to this great nation, and we need to double down on celebrating America. I ask that you consider working for your state America250 commission to make sure The American Legion has a large presence in every community celebration of American independence in 2026.

Lastly, our American Legion Baseball program is celebrating its 100th year of existence. Our programs deliver leaders to this country, and baseball has been doing it for a century. I ask the members of this NEC to honor and celebrate the incredible milestone with me and consider growing and promoting the baseball program.

As your Americanism Commission chairman, I personally want to thank everyone in this room and the departments for their generous support for the 100th anniversary tournament planned for July 11 through 13, 2025, in Milbank, South Dakota.

To honor American Legion Baseball, our friends in Media & Communications have developed an incredible video that I would like to show you today. Please watch. ...*The National Executive Committee viewed a video. (Applause)*

I encourage you all to go down and visit your Americanism Division staff. They stand ready to work for you and do anything that they can do to help you progress 100% Americanism. And I further invite you to go down and introduce yourselves to our new hire, Johnny Holmes, who Director Neff has just hired to assist in the Americanism Division.

With that said, Mr. Commander and members of the NEC, unless there are any questions, that concludes my report.

Report: Americanism Commission
Mark A. Avis, Massachusetts, Chairman

The Americanism Commission met at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana on May 5th and 6th, 2025. There were 118 members present that included members of the Americanism Commission, Americanism Council, American Legion Baseball Committee, Committee on Children & Youth, Committee on Youth Education, and Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee and various guests. We were privileged to welcome National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr. (CT) and American Legion Auxiliary National President Trish Ward (KS). The Commission also welcomed Past National Commanders John "Jake" Comer (MA), Daniel Dellinger (VA), Thomas Bock

(CO), Dave Rehbein (IA), Daniel Ludwig (MN), Vincent Troiola (NY), Charles Schmidt (OR), and Thomas Bock (CO). Other distinguished guests who attended the Commission meeting included, Americanism Commission Chairman of The Sons of The American Legion Jeffrey Hicks, Chairman of the Child Welfare Committee of the Sons of The American Legion Mark Nave, and other honored guests representing The American Legion and affiliated organizations.

Members of the Americanism Commission Present During Proceedings:

Chairman Mark Avis (MA), Darell Bishop (OH), National Commanders Representative Douglas Boldt (NE), Consultant Jon OConnor (MA), Randy Goodman (GA), Sandra Crossno (ID), Steve Colcord (IA), David King (KY), Gerald Theriot (LA), Scott Pardis (ME), Car Kellett (MO), F. Leon Martinez (NM), Steven Hayes (CO), Theodore Howarth Jr. (NJ), Lyman Brenner (DW), Francis O' Riter (NY), Lewis Jones (PA), Patricia Dandy (SC), Douglas Harris (SD), James Watson (TX), Randy Edwards (UT), Leslie Clevinger (VA), Loren Sperry (WA), Herschel Nicholson Jr. (WV), Michael Donnelly (NC), and National Executive Committee Liaison James Pisa (AK).

Chairman Avis opened the meeting and gave remarks to the commission on the significance of 2025 being 250-years since the midnight ride of Paul Revere, the birth of the United States Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. He then discussed the obligations of The American Legion to take a leadership role in the grand celebration of the United States of America turning 250-years old in 2026. Chairman Avis then expressed the importance of celebrating 100-years of The American Legion's oldest youth program- American Legion Baseball. He briefly talked about some of the merchandise, products, and a tournament in Milbank, SD, the birthplace of American Legion Baseball. He concluded his opening remarks expressing gratitude for the work of the Committee on Youth Education, under the leadership of Michael Westergren (AR), for selecting 2025's American Legion Legacy Scholarship scholars and educator of the year, and finally discussed the 2025 National Oratorical Competition in Hillsdale, MI.

Chairman Avis next recognized distinguished guests in the audience and offered Past National Commander Daniel Dellinger (VA) time for remarks. President of The American Legion Auxiliary Trish Ward (KS) then offered remarks and words of encouragement. Finally, Sons of The American Legion Americanism Commission chairman Jeffrey Hicks offered remarks.

The Commission then received a report from the Committee on Youth Education (COYE) and heard an update on The American Legion World Series, the 100th Centennial celebration, and new baseball updates from program manager Steve Cloud.

Americanism Division Director Ron Neff (IN) provided an update on the national efforts to support America 250 and encouraged departments to engage their department 250 commissions.

National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr. (CT) then addressed the commission and thanked them for their hard work to tend to America's youth.

The commission recessed for committee and subcommittee breakouts at 10:25 a.m.

The second day of the commission meeting began with remarks from Chairman. After recognizing distinguished guests in the room, the commission received reports from the committees and subcommittees that convened the previous day and considered (3) resolutions needing the concurrence of the finance commission. The commission then recessed at 9:50am.

A summary of the committee and subcommittee reports is provided below:

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH EDUCATION
Michael Westergren, (AR), Chairman

Opening

The Committee on Youth Education (COYE) met in the Illinois Room of the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 3 from 9:00 am until 2:35 pm and again on May 4 from 9:00 am until 10:35 am.

Chairman Michael Westergren (AR) led a salute to the flag of the United States and called the 2025 spring meeting of the COYE to order. George Pogge (KS) then offered an inspirational invocation, and Vice Chairman, Jim Davis (WV) honored the POW/MIA empty chair before American Legion Auxiliary National Education Chairman, Suzanne Knapp led the Pledge of Allegiance. Americanism Youth Education Program Manager, Drew Godby, conducted a roll call and determined a quorum was present.

Committee members present included: Chairman, Michael Westergren (AR); Vice Chairman, James Davis (WV), Jean Williams (NY), Ron LaRose (VT), Tom Marciciak (IL), George Pogge (KS), Steve Tatro (MD), Randy Goodman (GA), Hugh Holmes (SD), Michael Donnelly (NC); and American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Suzanne Knapp (MI), Kristen McLaughlin (OH), and Nancy Magginnis (IN).

Welcome and Greetings

Chairman Westergren (AR) opened the meeting by bringing greetings to those in attendance and having them offer a word about themselves.

Review and Approval of Agenda and Previous Report

The committee then reviewed and approved the agenda for the 2025 Spring meeting of the COYE and approved the report from the 2024 Fall meeting unanimously.

The American Legion 21st Century Policy on Education

The COYE at the request of the NEC is reviewing and updating the American Legion Resolution 22: The American Legion 21st Century Policy on Education. The updates and changes to the 21st Century Policy on Education reflects terms, wordage, and ideologies that the American Legion need to address in the current times. Highlight of discussion was on the emphasis of not seeking federal based education curriculum, but state decided curriculum. The support of policies of teacher empowerment, student support through various programs like health care, counselling, and summer program. The COYE motioned to defer the Educational Policy for the time being to see about current administration stance on education and Federal governmental structure until the Fall Meeting.

Samsung Scholars Recognition After-Action Report

Chairman Westergren present to the COYE a report on the Samsung Scholars attending the Washington D.C. Meeting in February 2025. The report highlights the excellent planning of the event on National Staff member Jeff Bennett and the Samsung Scholars enjoying the event. The only major critique was the under representation of the Girls State recipient's ALA Department. Discussion of including ALA Department

of Girls State recipients at future events was discussed and plans how to inform them through the ALA professional staff. The COYE voted to put the report on file for the review of the Americanism Commission which is attached to this report.

Samsung American Legion Scholarship

All materials, including electronic, and instructions to leadership are ready for the 2025 season. A recap of the Combined Americanism Conference presentation to Boys State and Girls State Leadership was given by Program Manager Drew Godby. The committee was retrained on the new website, new forms, and the process of how to grade applications. The committee was shown the process of how each Boys/Girls State Program access and grade application. The 2024 Annual Samsung American Legion Scholarship Report was presented to the committee. The committee recommended that digital copies of the reports be sent to the Boys/ Girls State Leadership and Department Adjutant and ALA Department Secretaries for their reference.

Samsung American Legion Scholarship Alumni Association

The Samsung American Legion Scholarship Alumni Association (SALAA) is being re-invigorated. The management of the Alumni Association will be handled by the Americanism Division under the Program Manager of Youth Education and Civics. Social Media pages on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram will be reactivated to help promote the activities of the Alumni Association. The 2025 Samsung Scholarship recipients will be invited to join the SALAA. The committee discussed how they can support the goals and purpose of the Alumni Association. They did discuss the possibility of advantageous Networking and Mentoring potential and payoffs for current and formers members of the Scholarship.

The American Legion Legacy Scholarship 2025 recipients

The 2025 American Legion Legacy Scholarship- the online application process was open from January 1 – May 27, 2025, and produced 724 completed applications. There were 559 applications that demonstrated financial need. Based on all applicable resolutions, policies, and available funds, the COYE recommends that 559 applicants, representing 48 departments, receive this scholarship. The total dollar amount available for award for the 2025 American Legion Legacy Scholarship is $1,779,460.63. See the enclosure for the breakout by department, name, and amount.

Guest speaker

Mark Clark (MO), Chairman of The American Legion Riders, discussed what the importance of the American Legion Legacy Scholarship has been to the youth as he discussed the 2025 Legacy Run. While future Legacy Runs funds raised will be dedicated to other charitable Legion programs, if NEC indicates a need for the Legacy Scholarship, the Riders will be glad to help raise money again. He then discussed the itinerary for the 2025 Legacy Run. Chairman Michael Westergren talked about continuing to engage with schools along the route providing them with information about the Legacy Run in a lesson plan format. He encouraged all COYE members, if available, to Participate in the Legacy Run. The 2025 Legacy Run will begin in Southern Virginia.

Education Award

In accordance with Resolution No. 6 of the National Executive Committee (NEC) October 2011, the COYE recommends **Col. Jeffery Gaylord of Tennessee** for the 2025 National Education Award. He has served as the JROTC instructor for the State of Tennessee and has continued to grow the program in the state to help students achieve their potential through the program. Col. Gaylord further provides his students in support of The American Legion World series for the last few years to present the colors daily.

Goals of relationship with the Jack Miller Center on Civic Education

The COYE discussed the overall goals with the collaboration with the Jack Miller Center. The main goals are the promotion of Civics education, accurate teaching of historical events and figures, and getting American Legion Family members involved to promote the two goals above locally and at state level. To help achieve these goals, the Jack Miller Center has asked the COYE for a list of Legion Family members who are educators. This is to offer them the services and training opportunities of the Jack Miller Center. The members of the COYE discussed getting this information out to the membership through TAL, SAL, and ALA National and Department Newsletters and dispatches, social media, websites, and other methods. Suggestion for having a booth for the Jack Miller Center at future National Conventions was discussed.

Americanism Commission Education Appreciation Certificate

The COYE is wanting to revitalize the Americanism Commission Education Appreciation Certificate program. The Education Appreciation Certificate is to recognize educators that have helped promote the four pillars of the American Legion, core values and educational goals of The American Legion through their efforts. This is open to any individual that has demonstrated these criteria. Each TAL Department, ALA Department, and SAL Detachment can nominate 3 individuals each year. Nominations to the COYE will be due to the Americanism National Headquarters before the Fall Meetings. An email will be sent to TAL Department, ALA Department, and SAL Detachment that explains the certificate program, the criteria, and timeline of nominations. The committee reviewed and approved of the cover letter and certificate of the Education Appreciation Certificate.

Further Meetings

The COYE will continue its meetings on TEAMS. The next schedule will begin on June 17th, 2025, at noon. Fall meetings for the COYE are on Saturday and Sunday, October 4 and 5, 2025 at the Sheraton City Center, Indianapolis.

For the Good of the Committee and the American Legion Technical Motion

Vice Chairman Jim Davis (WV) made a motion that staff be authorized to make technical corrections to resolutions, minutes, and commission report, to ensure proper spelling, wording, and format, without changing the substance of meaning or intent of the Americanism Commission. Motion was carried unanimously.

Closing

Chairman Westergren led the committee in closing remarks and just as with the opening invocation, George Pogge (KS) provided the benediction and Jim Davis (WV) honored the POW/MIA flag. Chairman Westergren then called upon those present to salute the Colors and thereby announced that the COYE is adjourned at 10:35am.

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL COMMITTEE
Gary Stone (MO), Chairman

The American Legion Baseball (ALB) Committee met via conference call on Thursday, April 24 and again on Monday, May 6, 2024, at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel.

The ALB Committee received an update regarding the 2025 online registration status from Assistant Baseball Operations Program Manager Tom Starnes. As of April 30, 1,903 teams (1,107 senior teams and 796 junior teams) from all 51 departments have registered online for the 2025 season.

The ALB Committee recommended to the Americanism Commission that it **approve** the 2025 American Legion Baseball National Tournament Rules and Policies for 2025 post season tournament play.

The ALB Committee received an update on the American Legion Baseball centennial celebration in 2025. Cloud emphasized as part of the celebration season, the "Centennial Classic", a four-team double elimination tournament to be hosted in Milbank, South Dakota will be held July 11-13 between teams from Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Games will be live streamed online. Cloud also indicated the Centennial pop-up online store is live and will be up until September 30. Cloud acknowledged the gratitude and hard work of the Media and Communication staff along with the Library and Archive staff for developing a special bookazine *"A Century of Citizenship through Sportsmanship"* which highlights the accomplishments of the past 100 years of American Legion Baseball.

The ALB Committee discussed the ongoing work to explore recommendations on how to control the ever-increasing costs to conduct the eight regional tournaments and world series. Currently the program covers hotel, transportation, and per-diem costs for 56 teams to field the 64-team pairings, 51 department winners and five additional department runners-up. Eliminating these five additional teams could reduce regional costs between $50,000-$60,000. Removing the additional teams, however, would require some regional sites to conduct six-team double elimination tournaments and others host eight-team double elimination tournaments. Conducting a six-team tournament would reduce the tournament to four days, reduce the number of hotel nights and per-diem.

The ALB Committee recommends beginning with the 2026 national tournaments, we conduct super-regionals on a trial basis in an effort to collect data and its effects of reducing additional teams. The concept is one host site conducts two regional tournaments similar to Little League regional tournaments.

The ALB Committee reviewed the multiple regional bid proposals and recommended the **approval** of the "***American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament Sites and Dates for 2026-2027"*** resolution.

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH
Herbert J. Petit, Jr. (LA), Chairman

The Committee on Children & Youth met at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel, Panorama A, 21st floor in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Monday, May 6, 2024.

The Committee on Children & Youth, in its biennial review of the Temporary Financial Assistance program, ensures that the program's administration directly benefits the basic needs of minor children. This review, mandated by Resolution No. 5 (May 2022) titled The Statement of Policy and Procedures of the Temporary Financial Assistance Program, is a commitment to providing clear and concise information to those working with the Temporary Financial Assistance program.

The Committee on Children & Youth is currently reviewing a significant addition to our literature, the newly created book titled The Whole Child. This book serves as a powerful tool, showcasing to an external audience the comprehensive efforts of The American Legion for children and youth nationwide at all levels of the organization, a testament to your collective contributions.

The committee is eagerly looking forward to the Children & Youth conference segment of the Combined Americanism Conference, which will mark our first in-person meeting since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. This exciting event, scheduled for September, is open to all Legion Family members who wish to attend, promising a vibrant exchange of ideas and best practices.

The American Legion Child Welfare (CWF) Foundation met on Sunday, May 5, 2024, at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. The CWF Board of Directors received an update on the grant statuses for projects conducted in 2023 and 2024 and preparation for this year's exhibition booth at the American Legion National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana. CWF brochures recently received an update and have been posted on the Legion's website.

The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program continues to provide for the basic needs of minor children of current active duty servicemembers or American Legion members through cash grants made possible through the generosity of the American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation. In 2023 TFA assisted **56** minor children of **22** veterans throughout **14** states in receiving $**29,030** in non-repayable cash grant assistance at the national level.

MEETING OF THE YOUTH CADET LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE
Richard Neville (NC) Chairman

On May 5, 2025, the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee met in person at the Sheraton Hotel, downtown Indianapolis, meeting started at 1:30 PM.

Members present included Committee Chairman, Richard Neville (NC), Committee Vice Chair, Gaylord Sanneman (KS), and Committee Consultant Delmar Buske (IL). Several Guests were present during the meeting.

Meeting topics presented and discussed included: an introduction of members, and guests, followed by a review of the 2024 Spring Meeting and approval of minutes by Committee Chairman, Richard Neville. Chairman Neville provided a brief history of the program for guests and new members with how to contact existing programs in other departments. An update of Kansas program by Vice Chairman

Sanneman (KS) with 40 registered attendees for the upcoming year. Next Consultant Delmar Buske (IL) provided an update on Illinois program with 17 cadets registered.

Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Programs across the U.S. stand at 22, Oregon working with Washington and Idaho on a possible YCLE program. Chairman Neville briefed Texas and Tennessee are interested in starting a departmental program.

Committee meeting points of emphasis:

The need for every department to develop a Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program.

The need for greater Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program awareness.

Background checks following national vendor (PYS).

Departments without a program should contact a Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee member immediately if they have any questions about how to start a program.

The next meeting of the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program Committee will be on October 6, 2025.

REPORT ON YOUTH ACTIVITIES SUBCOMMITTEE
David King (KY), Chairman

Staff Liaison: Kim Shriver, Youth Programs Manager, Americanism Division

The Youth Activities Subcommittee met on Monday, May 5, 2025. After opening with the Salute to the Colors, Invocation, and POW/MIA Remembrance, the roll call was taken. The following subcommittee members were present: David King (KY), Randy Goodman (GA), Lyman R. Brenner (DE), Patricia Dandy (SC), Michael Donnelly (NC), Steve Colcord (IA), Cary Kellett (MO), Herschel Nicholson (WV), Loren Sperry (WA), and Scott Paradis (ME). A quorum was declared.

Staff members in attendance were Program Manager Kim Shriver, Program Manager Jeff Bennett, and Assistant Program Manager, Johnny Holmes.

National Americanism Commission Chairman Mark Avis was in attendance, and gave remarks regarding the upcoming program year, thanking and encouraging staff and volunteers.

AMERICAN LEGION & SCOUTING

Oliver Burke of Texas was selected the 2025 American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year and will receive a $10,000 scholarship. Runners-up recipients of the $2,500 are Jack DeBisschop (CT), Nicholas Storm (FL), and Morgan Johnson (OK). The motion and second to approve these results was made. The motion carried.

Nineteen applications were submitted from the following departments: Texas, Connecticut, Florida, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Colorado, Minnesota, South Dakota, Ohio, Arizona, Indiana, Utah, New York, Illinois, Maryland, Vermont, Tennessee, Washington, and Oregon.

The Scouting Chairmen's Conference will be held in September.

AMERICAN LEGION JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM

The 34th American Legion Junior Shooting Three Position Air Rifle National Championship will be held July 16-19, 2025, at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan; 701 athletes entered the individual National Postal Match Competition from 111 clubs entered the team National Postal Match Competition.

The annual Junior Shooting Sports Chairmen's Conference will be held in September. Additional information will be posted on the program website.

AMERICAN LEGION HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL ORATORICAL CONTEST

The 86th National Finals Contests will be conducted on May 16-18, at Hillsdale College. There will be 50 department winners who will be competing for scholarship money.

The pairing bracket for the 2026 national finals is attached. Assigned topics for the 2026 National Oratorical Contest are:

- **Amendment IV –** The right of the people to be sure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated.
- **Article III, Section 3 –** Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies. .
- **Article IV, Section 4** – the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion
- **Article VI, Clause 3** – The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers.

The annual meeting of department Oratorical chairpersons will be held in September 2025. Additional information will be posted on the program website.

AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE AND BOYS NATION

Program Manager, Jeff Bennett provided an update on the 2025 Boys Nation Program, stepping through the week and activities the participants will experience. Again, it will be held at Marymount University in Virginia, with visits planned and confirmed for The White House and the Pentagon.

After the benediction and salute to colors, this meeting was recessed at 11:17 a.m.

REPORT OF THE CITIZENSHIP & NATURALIZATION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE AMERICANISM COMMISSION
Gerald Theriot (LA), Chairman

Opening

At 10:10 am EST, Chairperson Theriot (LA) led a salute to the flag of the United States and called the 2025 Spring Meeting of the Citizenship and Naturalization Subcommittee (Cit Nat) (CNSC) to order. He then offered an invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Drew Godby, Americanism Program Manager, conducted a roll call and determined a quorum was present.

Present:

Gerald Theriot (LA) Chairman, James "Bret" Watson (TX), Leslie Clevinger (VA), Steve Hayes (-CO), Randy Edwards (UT),Sandra Crossno (ID), Douglass Harris (SD)

Guests included:

Mark Avis (Americanism Commission Chairman), Hayden Woods (OK), Gleen Scott (TX), Ken Bourgeois (Latin America), Roger Deaton (MI), Ariel De Jesus (Interim Director of National Security), and James Grenier Jr. (National Security Commission Chair)

Welcome and Greetings

Chairmen Theriot opened the meeting by greeting those in attendance. He emphasized the importance of the work the committee completes and encourages all members to remain active and engaged. He then opened the floor to allow members and guests to give a brief introduction of themselves and why they are here.

Review and Approval of Agenda and Previous Report

The subcommittee then reviewed and approved the agenda for the 2025 Spring Meeting of the CNSC. The agenda was approved unanimously without correction or discussion.

The subcommittee next reviewed and approved the report from the 2024 Spring Meeting of the CNSC. The report was approved unanimously without correction or discussion.

Purpose and Focus of Subcommittee:

Chairman Theriot (LA) want to remind all those present of the Purpose and Goals, stated below, of Cit Nat Sub Committee. Committee members and guests shared their opinions, ideas and personal stories regarding citizenship and naturalization and how the subcommittee can be of greatest support. Many discussions focus on fostering a relationship with the NCO at the Military bases as the first point of contact for naturalization of Discharged Soldiers, participating in Citizenship Ceremonies, hosting INS training session at the Post and contacting your local Government to help further the goals of the Subcommittee.

The Chairman went over existing Resolutions (*Res. 31, 2014, EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE IDEALS AND GOALS OF CITIZENSHIP DAY, Res. 43, 2003, REDUCE IMMIGRATION LEVELS, Res. 295, 2016, Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance, Res. 296, 2016, Support Fairness for Immigrant Spouses, Res. 335, 1949, PROTEST OF READMISSION OF ALIENS DEPORTED FOR PROVEN DISLOYALTY, Res. 333, 2000, FILIPINO VETERANS CITIZENSHIP INTERVIEW REQUIREMENT)* that have an impact on the purpose of the committee. Discussion was held about readdressing/ reissuing and supporting these active resolutions. More directions will be needed from Americanism Director Ron Neff.

Increasing Legion participation in citizenship and naturalization events at the post level

National Security Interim Director Ariel De Jesus and National Security Commission Chair James Grenier Jr addressed the committee about the National Security Commission stances on Naturalization and Citizenship. James Grenier Jr iterated that The American Legion emphasizes a strong National Defense, rule of law, and support for those who have won the uniform. Illegal immigration continues to be a serious issue for all three of these goals. The Legion is a strong proponent of citizenship through the proper methods. Chairman Grenier applauds the Subcommittee of their efforts and groundwork for help those obtain citizenship. He addressed questions about the Legion making connection with the NCO to help soldiers get started on obtaining citizenship.

Discussion by Steve Hayes (CO) about examples of Colorado Posts and Department participation in Naturalization Ceremonies where they handed out Flags, certificates, and flyers to New Citizens of the United States. Randy Edward (UT) brought up his Post host INS citizenship training classes. The INS partners with nonprofit organizations to help educate individuals on the path to citizenship and need places to meet.

Naturalization Ceremony at the National Convention 2026

Members of the Committee have brought up interest of inviting Legionnaires to the 2026 National Convention in Louisville, KY to a Naturalization Ceremony. Program Manager Drew Godby has been tasked with working with the Convention Commission, Ad-Hoc 250 Committee, and others about having this ceremony.

Naturalization of Discharged Soldiers

There is concern that command posts are not ensuring that their discharged soldiers are naturalized (this should be done through the NCO). Many agreed that the CNSC, Americanism Commission, and National Security Commission should place emphasis of working with the local branches of the Military and American Legion Post to promote citizenship to soldiers how are about to be discharged.

Get-Out-To Vote Programs

Chairman Theriot encourages all post to be involved in this program. Post can host debates for Candidates. Members of the committee reminded everyone that Legionnaires and Post cannot endorse a Candidate or Political Party. If hosting a debate, all emblems need to be taken down and that no member can wear Legion Caps at these events and take pictures with Legion logos on themselves. Electronic and physical copies of the Get-Out-To Vote brochures are available for anyone to use. Members that would like an electronic copy may reach out to National Headquarters.

Further Meetings

The subcommittee has agreed to meet online once as an ad hoc working group prior to Convention 2025 via TEAMS. The meeting in date and time are still to be decided.

For the Good of the Committee

The Committee approved the creation of two certificates. One being available for those that have become legal U.S. Citizen that congratulate them on behalf of the American Legion. The other being a certificate of appreciation for those that help people with becoming citizens. A draft of the certificates will be presented to the committee at their next virtual meeting for consideration.

Closing

Chairman Theriot made closing remarks and gave the closing benediction and honored the POW/MIA flag. Then Chairmen Theriot called upon those present to salute the Colors and thereby announced that announcing that the CNSC stood in recess at 11:32 am.

RESOLUTIONS

At the meeting of the Americanism Commission at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 5-6, 2025, a total of 3 resolutions were considered. The Americanism Commission recommends the following:

Approve

- American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament Sites and Dates for 2026-2027
- Temporary Financial Assistance Program Policy Update
- American Legion Baseball 100th Anniversary

The commission further recommends new dates for Americanism programs and conferences as outlined on Addendum B attached to this report.

Enclosure 1
2025 American Legion Legacy Scholarship

State	2025 Legacy Winner Full Name	Award Amount
AK	Elena Danielle Parker	3,000.00
AK	William Tucker Gleaton	1,518.00
AL	Calista Bourgue	3,000.00
AL	DeYonna Jes'Maria Hatfield	3.000.00
AL	Murphy Isaiah Adams	3,000.00
AL	Gabriel Isaak Buenopatino	3,000.00
AL	Chandler Drew Kimball	3,000.00
AL	Trenton Clark Rainwater	3,000.00
AL	Tyler Secor	3,000.00
AL	Maya Marie Wassenberg	3,000.00
AL	Ja'Nese Lashay Cosby	3,000.00
AL	Jennifer Ann Santiago	3,000.00
AL	Brian Esteban Eldredge	3,000.00
AL	Abbrionna Thomas	3,000.00
AL	Austin Ellis Rainwater	3,000.00
AL	Landon Robert Shoup	3,000.00
AR	Nataleigh Burtts	3,000.00
AR	Gustav Parker Schmidle	3,000.00
AR	Tierney Caldwell	3,000.00
AR	Taylor B Anderson	3,000.00
AR	Brandon Lee Oehlert	3,000.00
AR	Haiden Kay Horne	3,000.00
AR	Savannah Aneice Schmidle	2,144.00
AZ	Alana Solane	20,000.00
AZ	Ongree Lee Thrasher	3,000.00
AZ	Chase Archer	3,000.00
AZ	Cierra Marnae Gonzales	3,000.00
AZ	Esteban Lavelle Gonzales	3,000.00
AZ	Brittyn Anneliese Taylor	3,000.00
AZ	Keanu Colt Mortenson	3,000.00
AZ	McKenzie Taylor Mazzanti	3,000.00
AZ	Benjamin Jacob Cosner	3,000.00
AZ	Isabel Bathke	3,000.00
AZ	Meadow Mikrut	3,000.00
AZ	Kaitlyn Shea O'Connor	3,000.00
AZ	Keely Ashlyn Howard	3,000.00
AZ	Mary-Kate McCarty	3,000.00
AZ	Alicia Leonard Sullivan	2,712.08
AZ	Haylee Marie Fusner	1,819.06
AZ	Kristin Dawn McCarty	1,017.85
CA	Carlie Rae Duvall	3,000.00
CA	Zachary James Courtney	3,000.00
CA	AngelaMariah Hughes	3,000.00
CA	Collin White	3,000.00
CA	Marilyn Muse	3,000.00
CA	Isaac Bricker Jung	3,000.00
CA	Sa'Nya Esmeralda Polo	3,000.00
CA	Aurora Rosalie Eskridge	3,000.00
CA	Stephanie Denise Puno	3,000.00
CA	Tiffani Nicole Jungmann	3,000.00
CA	Amber R Ide	3,000.00
CA	Destiny Quinn	3,000.00
CA	Sidney Alexis Swanson	3,000.00
CA	Ryan Alexander Flowers	3,000.00
CA	Makayla Sharonne Hamlin	3,000.00
CA	Kaydee Rae Baker	3,000.00
CA	Jonathan Ibarra	3,000.00
CA	Carter James Crosbie	4,771.09
CO	Hayden Grace Creason	20,000.00
CO	Aaron M Johnson	10,777.00
CO	Mackenzie Morgan	3,000.00
CO	Callie Melinise Thomas-Esteves	3,000.00
CO	Nina Noelle Adams	3,000.00
CO	Justine Jaros	3,000.00
CO	Baylie Hoogeboom	3,000.00
CO	Katharine Hutnick	3,000.00
CO	Treasure Ta Mia Adams	4,254.00
CO	Dominick Caleb Lind	696.00
CO	Ariel L Martin	408.09
CT	Veronica Michelle Castro	3,000.00
CT	Sunshine Rangel	3,000.00
CT	Carmela Rangel	3,000.00

CT	Charles Gussen	3,000.00
CT	Madison Morgan Miller	3,000.00
CT	Maegan Makala Miller	3,000.00
DC	Katherine Weiss	3,000.00
DC	Paige Arden Moffat	3,000.00
FL	Nazeraeh Aleiyah Montrond	20,000.00
FL	Alexander Harrison Lawrence	3,000.00
FL	Darius Xavier Daily	3,000.00
FL	Shawn Nathaniel Brower II	3,000.00
FL	Julia Leigh Morgan	3,000.00
FL	Derek Xavier Odar	3,000.00
FL	Karvin Jay Ortiz	3,000.00
FL	Laila Janae Pitts	3,000.00
FL	Morgan Renee Werner	3,000.00
FL	Ava Starr Winkler	3,000.00
FL	Micah Linzy	3,000.00
FL	Gage Spencer	3,000.00
FL	Andreas Gamaliel Lozano	3,000.00
FL	Kyndra Allyson Waldon	3,000.00
FL	Gabriella Oliver	3,000.00
FL	Aaron Greenhouse	3,000.00
FL	Chloe Renee Roby	3,000.00
FL	Jordan Taylor Mann	3,000.00
FL	Kianna Nicole Burgos	3,000.00
FL	Rebecca Kay Schaefer	3,000.00
FL	Kayla Mason	3,000.00
FL	Chiara McCarthy	3,000.00
FL	Sheldon Rolle Jr.	3,000.00
FL	Josiah David Jordan	3,000.00
FL	Michael A Lucero	3,000.00
FL	Raegan Elise James	3,000.00
FL	Jillian Ava Juarez	3,000.00
FL	Teresa Esther Peluso	3,000.00
FL	Jaina Goodemoot	3,000.00
FL	Elizabeth Shaw Footman	3,000.00
FL	Juan Carlos Herrera Jr.	3,000.00
FL	Jacob Cosme Herrera	3,000.00
FL	Macy Lena Wanner	3,000.00
FL	Mckenna Stapleton	2,201.09
FL	Paityn L Griffith	1,951.00
FL	Daniel Mauricio Villa	1,739.00
FL	Maddison Bradford	1,593.00
FL	Joshua Juwan Sea	841.09
GA	Amanda Margaret Moreno	3,000.00
GA	Jaylin Reign Leola Mills	3,000.00
GA	Geovanii Pacheco	3,000.00
GA	Jamie Lynn Martinez	3,000.00
GA	Carrington Robertson	3,000.00
GA	Kasey Lynn Martinez	3,000.00
GA	Savannah Marie Doble	3,000.00
GA	Lily Elizabeth Ratliff	3,000.00
GA	Fernando Fabian Olivas Ramirez	3,000.00
GA	John David Clelland IV	3,000.00
GA	Miriam H Daily	3,000.00
GA	Sahra Elizabeth Hightower	3,000.00
GA	Alanah Romaella-Hall	3,000.00
GA	Nathan Benjamin Sevdy	3,000.00
GA	Jaaziel Noel Mercado	3,000.00
GA	Autumn Elise McLean	3,000.00
GA	Taniya Young	3,000.00
GA	Alexa Gyselis Fontanez-Virella	3,000.00
GA	Leilani Mahogany Larkins	3,000.00
GA	Matthew Milan	3,000.00
GA	Clairese J Adams	3,000.00
GA	Malissa Naima Osburn	3,000.00
GA	Sakarah Grace Simpson	2,593.00
GA	Makaylah Grace Jenkins	2,486.09
HI	Aiden Rohner	3,000.00
HI	Aniyah-Arihanna Aj Gooodwin-Grate	3,000.00
IA	Tegan Marie Flink	3,000.00
IA	James Alexander McMurray	3,000.00
IA	Abigail Faith Casciato	3,000.00
IA	Grace Elizabeth Casciato	3,000.00
IA	Lauren M Greving	3,000.00
IA	Lorraine Ellen Glew	3,000.00
IA	Isaiah A Mayfield	4,700.00
IA	Gavin Milo Runyon	2,625.00
IA	Lily Xiachan Caigoy	1,916.00
ID	Julieona Nicole Shields	3,000.00
ID	Lauren Niamh Ashley	3,000.00
ID	Savannah Marie Jackson	3,000.00
IL	Harrison Green Arnold	3,000.00
IL	Zakery Benjamin Green	3,000.00
IL	Matthew Maximus Vasquez	3,000.00
IL	Kayleigh Marie Zerrusen	3,000.00
IL	Wade Fredrick Hudson	3,000.00
IL	Stephanie K Kriss	3,000.00
IL	Cohen Alexander Green	3,000.00
IL	Kaylah Renee Meyerhoff	3,000.00
IL	Madison Julianna Delossantos	3,000.00
IL	McKenzie A Pearl	3,000.00
IL	Chelsey Grace Stotler	3,000.00
IL	Logan James Mills	2,286.09
IL	Hailey Marie Yantis	1,374.00
IL	Lillian Willow McEvers	1,044.00
IN	Vaughn Johnson	3,000.00
IN	Kaden Ray Arnett	3,000.00
IN	Brandon Gonzalez	3,000.00
IN	Luke Thomas Woodburn	3,000.00
IN	Deanna Michelle Woodburn	3,000.00
IN	Austin J Wren	2,342.00
KS	McKenzie Jo McMahon	10,023.49
KS	Alexia Josephine Born	3,000.00
KS	Erin Rule	3,000.00
KS	Matthew Rule	3,000.00
KS	Nishan Tariq Thomas	3,000.00
KS	Bergen Quinn Mauerhan	3,000.00
KS	Audrey Estelle Chada	3,000.00
KS	Nia Nicole Gosier	3,000.00
KS	Haiti Schafers	789.09
KS	Chandra Malpartida	690.00
KS	Grace Jowers	641.00
KY	Samara Angel Neyens-Cabrera	3,000.00
KY	Kaitlin Olivia Morgan	3,000.00
KY	Charles Thomas Schneider	3,000.00
KY	Kalin Meyer	3,000.00
LA	Sarah Bennett Lemasters	3,000.00
LA	Lakayla Breanna Cleveland	3,000.00
LA	Faith Nycole Hughes	3,000.00
MA	Layla Odunaike	3,000.00
MA	Kaitlyn Nicole Thomson	3,000.00
MA	James Poirier	3,000.00
MA	Katelyn Iva Maniero	3,000.00
MA	Sophia Mendoza	3,000.00
MA	Paige Catherine Shvonski	3,000.00
MA	Kyra Barrows	3,000.00
MA	Stefano W Adelfio	3,000.00
MD	Kameron Aurora Yilma	19,189.09
MD	Roland Barnes Jr.	3,000.00
MD	Kennedy Neena Cordle	3,000.00

MD	Maverick Woodward	3,000.00
MD	Amanda Beth Taylor	3,000.00
MD	Dustin Lloyd Baker	3,000.00
MD	Kaia Simone Graham	3,000.00
MD	Monet Germany Coleman	3,000.00
MD	Kaitlyn Weir	3,000.00
MD	Sadie Aline Cloud	1,203.09
ME	Lauren Voteur	3,000.00
MI	Gavin Michael Runner	20,000.00
MI	Lianne Alli Fagan	3,000.00
MI	Kaylee Ann Williams	3,000.00
MI	Joscelin Marie Stewart-Hughes	3,000.00
MI	Seth Vance Ruzicka	3,000.00
MI	Bianca Megan Marie Dunsmore	3,000.00
MI	Ava Lorin Julvezan	3,000.00
MI	Benjamin Nikolaus Cook	3,000.00
MI	Nathaniel Thomas Passinault	3,000.00
MI	Luka Campbell	3,000.00
MI	Jeremiah Benny Jones	3,000.00
MI	Emma Gould	3,000.00
MI	Sophie Elizabeth Cook	3,000.00
MI	Troy Xavier Mengesha	3,000.00
MI	Connor James Brandon	3,000.00
MI	Bailey Michelle Vance	358.66
MI	Bailey Michelle Vance	358.66
MN	Abigail Rae Gerhard	3,000.00
MN	Callie JoAnne Olson	2,680.00
MN	Ella Rose Starzl	1,109.09
MO	Jaden Shane Flanery	3,000.00
MO	Killian David Flanery	3,000.00
MO	Alexandra Warren	3,000.00
MO	Megan A Hatfield	3,000.00
MO	Madison Kate Tutt	3,000.00
MO	Lynsey Grace Bockhorn	3,000.00
MO	Jackson Reese Bockhorn	3,000.00
MO	Liela Kay Murphy	3,000.00
MO	Nicholas Wesley Gardner	3,000.00
MO	Taiyo Gordon Nelson	3,000.00
MO	Ava Rosemary Nipper	3,000.00
MO	Chloe E Ulm	3,000.00
MO	Kylee Emerson Russell	3,000.00
MO	Gabrielle Elizabeth Gabelman	3,000.00
MO	Violet Alexa Grau	3,000.00
MO	Lauren Elizabeth Miller	3,000.00
MO	Adam Champagne	2,850.09
MS	Holly Marie Eckman	20,000.00
MS	Jakobi A Davidson	3,000.00
MS	Savannah Grace French	3,000.00
MT	Gwyneth O'Valley	3,000.00
MT	Ty Harper Goodemoot	3,000.00
NC	Maxwell Gavan Cabrera	20,000.00
NC	Elizabeth Nicole Davis	6,993.80
NC	Clayton Ryan Ulm	3,000.00
NC	Kailyn N Carmichael	3,000.00
NC	Garrett Silas Davis	3,000.00
NC	Adrian Jesse Hernandez	3,000.00
NC	Abigail Villalobos	3,000.00
NC	Noelle Lorene MacLaird	3,000.00
NC	Jasmine Murray	3,000.00
NC	Peyton Beth Adamec	3,000.00
NC	Ma'Liayha Faith Wilkins	3,000.00
NC	Alyssa Renee Johnson	3,000.00
NC	Mallory Denise Estrada Hernandez	3,000.00
NC	Isabel Patricia Parker	3,000.00
NC	Danika Christine Brewster	3,000.00
NC	Christopher Deon Joyner	3,000.00
NC	Imane Williams	3,000.00
NC	Alaina Grace Kaylor	3,000.00
NC	Kaylan Amiaya Brown	3,000.00
NC	Sarah Leary	3,000.00
NC	Loren Taylor	3,000.00
NC	Avery Reppe	3,000.00
NC	Lucas Maxwell Fields	3,000.00
NC	Kayleb Allen Ikaika Griffin	3,000.00
NC	Mark Damian Powell Jr.	3,000.00
NC	Aaliyah Iman Vann	3,000.00
NC	Antonio Martinez	3,000.00
NC	Maggie A Brinkmeyer	3,000.00
NC	Alysa Brooke Salter	3,000.00
NC	Melvin Anthony McRae Jr.	3,000.00
NC	Logan Beal	3,000.00
NC	Morning Joy Fields	3,000.00
NC	Kaylee Grace Richmond	3,000.00
NC	Imanyi Elliott	3,000.00
NC	Helen Leilani Willard	3,000.00
NC	Brody Isaac Gilbert	3,000.00
NC	Eric Thomas Fry II	3,000.00
NC	Benjamin Grafals	3,000.00
NC	Dacien Elijah Montford	3,000.00
NC	Sofia Helmick	3,000.00
NC	Charles Cameren McKinnon	3,000.00
NC	Jade K Inabinett	2,836.00
NC	Sammy Kekoa Shawgo	2,542.00
NC	Haylee Elizabeth Salter	2,065.00
NC	Callista Leighann Watkins	1,190.00
NC	Jala Anie Scovell	1,135.00
NC	Jacob Kenneth Blackmore	772.00
NC	Caleb Jay Edwards	742.09
NE	Collin Patrick Hurlburt	3,000.00
NE	Shawn MacDonald	3,000.00
NE	Anna Marie Barta	3,000.00
NH	Alexandra Rusler-Herebia	3,000.00
NH	Ashley Brewer	3,000.00
NH	Grace O'Brien	3,000.00
NJ	Tomory Dewaun Boyer Jr.	3,000.00
NJ	Sean W Cawley	3,000.00
NJ	Santino Donohue	3,000.00
NJ	Matthew William Lunger	3,000.00
NM	Natasha Cmerek	3,000.00
NM	Andrew Jeremy Ritter	3,000.00
NM	Sean Paul Fernandez	3,000.00
NV	Julian Springfield Spalding	3,000.00
NV	Jacob Thunder Hook	3,000.00
NV	Hannah Williams	3,000.00
NY	Amora Morales	3,000.00
NY	Jared Neil Layton	3,000.00
NY	Sarah Ann Vicari	3,000.00
NY	Tristan Joshua Blake	3,000.00
NY	Devin Ace McGhee	3,000.00
NY	Jayden Robert Onesi	3,000.00
NY	Jonathan Richard Slick	3,000.00
NY	Haley E Corrigan	3,000.00
NY	Michael Adu Frimpong	3,000.00
NY	Jayden A McGhee	3,000.00
NY	Ulric Jackson Claar	2,538.00
NY	Muhkaylah Reilly Ferguson	502.09
OH	Colin Putt	3,000.00
(APO)	Taliyah Jade Sonnier	3,000.00
(DPO)	Evan Wallace Moore	3,000.00
(FPO)	Ella Grace Perez	714.00

OH	Emma Marie Willett	3,000.00
OH	Zoey Rae Burns	3,000.00
OH	Kailee Marie Pasenow	3,000.00
OH	Isabelle McCalla	3,000.00
OH	Amelia Lawson	3,000.00
OH	Aiden Lee Stump	3,000.00
OH	Chase Mueller	3,000.00
OH	Michaella L Malone	3,000.00
OH	Dayton Thor Muckerheide	3,000.00
OH	Payton Marie Davis	3,000.00
OH	Ayla Roe	3,000.00
OH	Talmadge Amron Shearon	3,000.00
OH	Ellie Katherine Chippas	3,000.00
OH	Courtney Lyn Wyckhouse	3,000.00
OH	Austin Michael Blagg	3,000.00
OH	Sania Hardin	3,000.00
OH	Asia Watts	3,000.00
OH	Sarah Emily Smith	3,000.00
OH	Braden Curtis Downing	3,000.00
OH	Derrick Hardin	3,000.00
OH	Grace Lynn Willett	3,000.00
OH	Rylee Shadowens	3,000.00
OH	Claire Ava Grandstaff	2,658.00
OH	Audrey Katherine Schemmel-Moyer	1,352.09
OK	Leah Kae Hoyt	3,000.00
OK	Isaac David Lynn	3,000.00
OK	Traven Jtk Lee	3,000.00
OK	Kylie Gene Simpson	3,000.00
OK	Makayla Rayne Haughton	3,000.00
OK	Eric Paul Tucker	3,000.00
OK	Lydia Schultz	2,573.00
OR	Zoraya D Hernandez	3,000.00
OR	Emmalina Olivia Motes	3,000.00
OR	Nikita Darryl Rose	3,000.00
OR	Hayden Rupert Hardy	3,000.00
OR	Kendrick Nelson	3,000.00
OR	Arina Rose	3,000.00
PA	Mykell Reneta Rose Powell	3,000.00
PA	Eden J Kraus	3,000.00
PA	Tatum Stennett	3,000.00
PA	Marissa Jean Mackey	3,000.00
PA	Caroline Esther Salisbury	3,000.00
PA	Ainsley Sand	3,000.00
PA	Alexandra Blaise Miller	3,000.00
PA	Gabriella Hazard	3,000.00
PA	Abigail Grace Groy	3,000.00
PA	Jessica Lesh	3,000.00
PA	Angel Hicks	3,000.00
PA	David Michael Holland	3,000.00
PA	Jessica Marie Teichert	3,000.00
PA	Raphael Augustine Fordyce	3,000.00
PA	Hailey Baker	3,000.00
PA	Isabella Kendall Sand	3,000.00
PA	Cameron Bragg	3,000.00
PA	Joshua Andrew Grimenstein	3,000.00
PA	Sarah Irene Grimenstein	3,000.00
PA	Jacob Daniello	3,000.00
PA	Abigail Joseph	3,000.00
PA	Sean Michael Petrosky	3,000.00
PA	Tanner James Feagley	2,922.09
PA	Madalyn Lorraine Nowosielski	866.09
PA	Josilyn Kay Burkett	206.09
PR	Miguel Bigai	20,000.00
PR	Valeria D Colon	5,389.00
PR	Derek Xavier Santaella	3,000.00
PR	Lyari Maria Rodriguez	3,000.00
PR	Jamir Abel Borrero	3,000.00
SC	Trinity McMahon	20,000.00
SC	Jazmine Kaori Sepulveda Saladin	3,000.00
SC	Pierce Elliott Stanton	3,000.00
SC	Madison Mouzon	3,000.00
SC	Jazmine Harris	3,000.00
SC	Kaitlin Fronden	3,000.00
SC	Georney Miller	3,000.00
SC	Jnire Bostic	3,000.00
SC	Jasmyne Tierra James	3,000.00
SC	Lillian Cheryse McClinton	3,000.00
SC	Tajanae Eliza Barton	3,000.00
SC	Ursula Paige Cumper	3,000.00
SC	Inayah Lipscomb	3,000.00
SC	Isaiah Alexander Hye	3,000.00
SC	Sierra Michelle Lanfear	3,000.00
SC	Christopher Ross	3,000.00
SC	Johnnie Lee Jennings III	1,580.00
SC	Declan Walker Vallier	1,576.00
SD	Wyatt Haddad	1,564.23
TN	Case Ian Sullivan	3,000.00
TN	Alexa Reign Foxx	3,000.00
TN	Tia J Stretch	3,000.00
TN	Miranda Moore	3,000.00
TN	Hailey Elizabeth Reeve	3,000.00
TN	Chloe Marie Lamb	3,000.00
TN	Katie J Ryan	3,000.00
TN	Landon Isaac Speegle	3,000.00
TN	Tyler Edward Takacs	3,000.00
TN	Kennedy Billings-Sullivan	3,000.00
TN	Soulstice Harper	3,000.00
TN	Di' Anthoni Billey	3,000.00
TN	Baden Cooper Tull	3,000.00
TN	Analise Danielle Jetter	1,595.16
TX	Elisha Zion Demery	15,705.00
TX	Victoria Michelle Bowman	3,000.00
TX	Charles Michael Morehouse	3,000.00
TX	Kelsie Vicencio	3,000.00
TX	John Gilliam	3,000.00
TX	Donovan Crosby	3,000.00
TX	Danielle Rose Devins	3,000.00
TX	Adriel Josiah Ramos	3,000.00
TX	Hezekiel Josueh Ramos	3,000.00
TX	Elexis Wilson Mensch	3,000.00
TX	Ian N Stovall	3,000.00
TX	Sakeena S Gordon	3,000.00
TX	David A Lamb	3,000.00
TX	Harmony Maenique Hickman	3,000.00
TX	Baylee Dawn Forbes	3,000.00
TX	Lelia Ruth Poling	3,000.00
TX	Marcus Cristian Thomas	3,000.00
TX	Darielys Figueroa Matias	3,000.00
TX	Nathalie M. Figueroa Soto	3,000.00
TX	Jared Hampton Middleton	3,000.00
TX	Alexia Renee Thompson	3,000.00
TX	Alissa Nixon	3,000.00
TX	Qualee Marshall	3,000.00
TX	Tamia Nicole Martin	3,000.00
TX	Andrew Acosta	3,000.00
TX	Vicente Sandoval	3,000.00
TX	Preston Riley LeMacks	3,000.00
TX	Caleb Andres Garcia	3,000.00
TX	Isabel Grace Salmeron	3,000.00
TX	Lamaya Denise Green	3,000.00

TX	Lillian Odle	3,000.00
TX	Abbigale Deem	3,000.00
TX	Christene Lyn Chabot	3,000.00
TX	Dejanay Kelly	3,000.00
TX	Destiny Stewart	3,000.00
TX	Rekia Powers	3,000.00
TX	Adrian Felix	3,000.00
TX	Genesis Valcin	3,000.00
TX	Alexi Pauline Atchison	3,000.00
TX	Kimberly Isabel Field	3,000.00
TX	Krystle Lilyann Vazquez	3,000.00
TX	Katina Cheyenne Bohannon	3,000.00
TX	Serenity Grace Valcin	3,000.00
TX	Nolan Carter Hartman	3,000.00
TX	Tara Lynn Gates	3,000.00
TX	Mikayla Devins	3,000.00
TX	Anthony Acosta	3,000.00
TX	Waveland Eliza Schupbach	3,000.00
TX	Emma Arcos	3,000.00
TX	Joshua Palmer	3,000.00
TX	Aakelis James Bulluck	3,000.00
TX	Ily Austin Brown	3,000.00
TX	Scarlett Williams	3,000.00
TX	Cameron Wesley Isam	3,000.00
TX	Devyn Alyse Shaw	3,000.00
TX	Leon Baker III	3,000.00
TX	Ferris Xavier Daley	3,000.00
TX	Deborah Hurst	3,000.00
TX	Elena Michelle Rotthoff	3,000.00
TX	Kaylee Mariah White	3,000.00
TX	Katharina Angelette Brown	3,000.00
TX	Larra Yzabella Policarpio	2,640.00
TX	Isabella Steward	1,947.00
TX	Sebastian Barrera	1,701.00
TX	Alexander Sagebiel Flinchbaugh	1,527.00
TX	Tyler Paul Archie	1,503.00
TX	Shanice Smith	1,279.00
TX	Ryan Bradley Dandurand	802.09
TX	Ke La Durham	729.00
TX	Kinzee Diane Sperry	609.00
TX	Julia Marie Partain	554.00
TX	Taiylor Immicke	374.09
UT	Logan Lundell	12,339.00
UT	Denali Patricia Linton	3,000.00
UT	Riki Jilayne Henrie	3,000.00
UT	Caroline Elizabeth Salmeron	3,000.00
VA	Juliana Berlyn Anderson	3,000.00
VA	Landon Michael Greenwell	3,000.00
VA	Devlin Broderick Patton	3,000.00
VA	Gabrielle Morris	3,000.00
VA	Faith Lorraine Torrence	3,000.00
VA	Dominic Di Leonardo	3,000.00
VA	Logan Tull	3,000.00
VA	Kealani Daniels	3,000.00
VA	Addison Otte	3,000.00
VA	Eleanor Burnham	3,000.00
VA	Justin Griffin	3,000.00
VA	Alona Rayne Price	3,000.00
VA	Lauren Marie Peabody	3,000.00
VA	Ashley Nau	3,000.00
VA	Ciearra Renee Christopher	3,000.00
VA	Jayla Foreman	3,000.00
VA	Cassandra Joy Frances Lewis	3,000.00
VA	Justice Kenya Thomas	3,000.00
VA	Fiona G Williams	3,000.00
VA	Megan Kathleen Burley	3,000.00
VA	Olivia Foreman	3,000.00
VA	Dylan M Bencivengo	3,000.00
VA	Liam Avery Walton	3,000.00
VA	Olivia Renee Morris	3,000.00
VA	Kristina Elena Harrison	3,000.00
VA	Trinity J. Johnson	3,000.00
VA	Ella Rawlins	1,713.00
VA	Griffin C Cloud	1,636.00
VA	Skyler Elizabeth Yingling	574.09
WA	Andi Gail Morgan	3,000.00
WA	Bryten Hileman	3,000.00
WA	Samantha Lynn Hoffmann	3,000.00
WA	Juliana Lauryn Rothe	3,000.00
WA	Natalie Grace Bunker	3,000.00
WA	Maia Janai Storer	3,000.00
WA	Aliyah Bibens	3,000.00
WA	William Bradley Sperry	3,000.00
WA	Lillian Faye Weatherly	3,000.00
WA	Christine Leona Flores Da	3,000.00
WA	Jacob Ryan Sperry	3,000.00
WI	Christian Kenneth Matson	3,000.00
WI	Braedon Ellefson	3,000.00
WI	Courtney Lea-Ann Robaczewski	3,000.00
WI	Hannah Grever	3,000.00
WI	Edward Vincent Jones III	3,000.00
WI	Jaden Michael Kondor	3,000.00
WI	Caleb Gray	3,000.00
WI	Michael Daniel Deschler	2,468.00
WI	Mara Jade Landvatter	2,117.00
WI	Annabel Kate Reitzel	959.09
WV	Mia Paige McKee	3,000.00
WV	Remington Parker Sites	3,000.00

Addendum B

The Americanism Commission recommends the following dates for the events/meetings from our report, presented to the body for disposition.

MEETING DATE	EVENT/MEETING	CONFERENCE DATES
May 5-6, 2025	**Americanism Conference - 2025**	**September 26-28, 2025**
	(Boys State)	
	Baseball Regionals - 2025	**August 6-10, 2025**
	Baseball World Series – 2025	**August 14-19, 2025**
	ALB Fall Chairmen/Committee Mtg. 2025	**August 20-21, 2025 (Shelby, NC)**
	Children & Youth Conference - 2025	**September 26-28, 2025**
	Dept. Chaplains Conference - 2025	**September 26-28, 2025**
	Jr. Shooting Sports Conference - 2025	**September 26-28, 2025**
	Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Conference - 2025	**September 26-28, 2025**
	Oratorical Conference - 2025	**September 26-28, 2025**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Americanism Commission with the exception of one addendum. There are no resolutions. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to file the report of the Americanism Commission with the exception of one addendum. There are no resolutions. Is there any discussion? Yes, Mr. Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Mr. Commander, a question through you to the chairman. I've discussed this with you before, Mark, and I'm only talking about the future, and I hope that your commission does something about it. I am totally against the fact that your oratorical contest, that an individual can come back four times and apply for the championship of the oratorical program. Just too much. Because they go before, even though they're different judges, they have an opportunity to be ahead of the young persons coming along. A couple of times, but four times? Four different years they have an opportunity to get a scholarship? I'm totally against that and I hope your commission will do something about it.

AMERICANISM COMMISSION CHAIRMAN AVIS: We'll take that under consideration at the next time we meet, commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Is there any further discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, attached to the report is Addendum B. I move the actions of the Americanism Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Addendum B. Any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. At this time, the chair recognizes Internal Affairs Commission chairman, Robert E. Newman of Indiana, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Internal Affairs Commission
Robert E. Newman, Indiana, Chairman

Commander, thank you for the opportunity to serve as your chairman. Members of the National Executive Committee, fellow Legionnaires, ladies and gentlemen, you have my report of our actions and deliberations before you. The commission reviewed eight resolutions and our recommended action on each is in our report, except for the Distinguished Service Medal which will be acted upon in executive session this afternoon.

As we have heard reports from the different commissions during this meeting, we have a lot of great programs and initiatives that The American Legion is involved in. Because of this, it is vital that we provide opportunities to educate our members on these areas of focus. Last fall, we conducted the first National Regional Information Conference in Denver, Colorado. That one was followed by the second one in Boston, Massachusetts. These were very successful training and networking events. Both had just under 70 attendees. Tentatively, the next two regional conferences are being scheduled. Once the dates and locations have been finalized, we will communicate that information to everyone. We need leaders at all levels to encourage members to attend and help spread the word. The ultimate goal of these regional training conferences is to educate and create an environment where the needs of our organizations are met, and the members understand our legacy and prepare them for the future.

Don't forget, there are other training opportunities members can attend. Training Tuesday is held the last Tuesday of each month. During the National Convention we will have the subject matter expert training sessions on Saturday and Monday in the expo hall. Again, encourage members to take advantage of these training opportunities.

I would also like to highlight a few of our great programs within our report. First off, the NEF program helped 95 individuals in 14 posts in 2024, for a grand total of $313,697.98. We have approved 34 grants for individuals and posts this year, and we are well positioned to provide our members and posts with immediate assistance in the event if a national disaster occurs.

We all know what the American Legion Riders do for developing awareness, and their hard work does not go unnoticed, and they are finalizing plans for the upcoming Legacy Run as they ride for the Veterans & Children Foundation. Registration will be open on May 15th and the route will be announced then.

I would also draw your attention to the great work the Sons of The American Legion have accomplished. I commend every department for the supporting of this program. This past weekend, the Sons collected more than $74,344 in donations during their NEC meetings.

Finally, Operation Comfort Warriors program has granted five grants for $70,500 in 2025. This program highlights the great work The American Legion does on a regular basis.

Commander, I submit my report and our resolutions for the actions of the National Executive Committee with my deepest respect and appreciation for the support and encouragement we enjoy from this body.

Report: Internal Affairs Commission
Robert E. Newman, Indiana, Chairman

Chairman Robert E. Newman (IN) called the Internal Affairs Commission to order at 9:00 a.m., May 5, and at 8:30 a.m., May 6, in 314A, National Headquarters, Indianapolis, Indiana. We had twenty members and several guests.

The report consists of the following sections: Standing Committee Reports; Subcommittee Reports; Staff Action Reports; and Actions on Assigned Resolutions.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (ANNUAL SPRING MEETINGS REPORT)

Submitted by Joseph Navarreté (NM), National Commander, Sons of The American Legion

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SPRING NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING:

The Sons of The American Legion completed another successful National Executive Committee meeting this past weekend.

As of May 1, 2025, we have a total reported membership of 375,378 which is 93.55% of our 100% target of 401,263 members. We have also renewed 83.72% of our 2024 members.

Again, this year, we remain a strong supporter of the Child Well-Being Foundation, raising $229,086 as of April 17, 2025, for 57.7% ($0.58 per member) of our goal. During the National Executive Committee meeting this past weekend an additional amount of $38,804 was donated to the Foundation, with more coming prior to May 31st. The total, after the donations this weekend, is $267,890.

Twenty-two members attended MyLegion training on Saturday. This session focused on the Squadron level. National Committee and Commission Chairmen attended a leadership workshop on Friday. Training courses and mentoring from our current leaders provides our members with the knowledge that will better our dedication to the purposes and programs of The American Legion. We are in fact the largest "program" of The American Legion.

During the National Executive Committee meeting this past weekend, the SAL collected the following donations:

- NEF - $8,819 for a total of $72,284
- VCF - $18,957 for a total of $84,566
- COTA - $500 for a total of $7,264
- OCW - $7,264

The resolution recommendations for the SAL National Executive Committee can be found in ***Addendum B.***

CONCLUSION:

Our membership continues to grow. We hope to pass the 400,000 mark this year. Our members are providing support to our nation's veterans. Our work in assisting veterans in the local VA medical centers and hospitals continues to grow and will remain the top priority of the Sons of The American Legion. Members in every detachment have been actively supporting all the programs of The American Legion, such as "Be the One," homeless veterans assistance, Boys State, Junior Shooting Sports, Oratorical Contest, and scouting. Our growth is a sign of the strength and unity we share in this great program, and it reflects the impact we are making.

On behalf of the members of the Sons of The American Legion, I would like to thank the Internal Affairs Commission and the division staff for their help and guidance. A special thanks to Mr. Robert E. Newman, Mr. James Baca, Mr. Matthew E. Herndon, and Mr. Kevin Mook, through their perseverance and dedication the SAL program has grown to where we are today.

I am very pleased with the work and dedication of the National Executive Committee, our detachments, and our members from which our further growth is ensured.

The Sons of The American Legion Annual Spring Meeting report was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

I. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP AND POST ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE
MIKE COOKE (WY), CHAIRMAN

As of May 2, 2025, the 2025 membership total is 1,316,792 which is 90.86% of the traditional membership goal of 1,445,882 – 57,346 members behind this same time for the traditional membership report of 2024. These membership results do not include newly acquired 2025 DMS members or encumbered renewals. The 95% target date was on April 9. There were two departments who met this goal.

DMS is a valuable tool to the membership program. The total DMS members acquired is 62,415 and 26,478 encumbered DMS members have renewed for this membership year. Legionnaires have engaged and transferred 17,525 encumbered DMS members into local posts for the 2025 membership year.

Commander LaCoursiere set a goal for posts and departments to work towards a renewal rate of 90% which in-turn will increase the renewal rate for the organization. He also set a goal to recruit 75,000 new traditional members. We need to increase new members brought in each year if we are going to grow as an organization. To date, we have recruited 59,909. Our current renewal rate is 87.04% at the traditional post level.

With the Be the One initiative, it is imperative for posts to contact members to check on their wellbeing and show them they are valued members of this organization. Whether it is through Buddy Checks or contacting members about their membership dues, members need to feel wanted and valued. This should not only be utilized on current members, but expired members as well. This engagement tool shows members that The American Legion cares about their well-being. There is still a large pool of Legionnaires that can be contacted to renew their membership. There are more than 31,952 department headquarters post members and 275,921 members at the post level who were paid for 2024 that have not renewed for 2025.

The online renewal program is performing very well. There have been 205,985 members renew online for 2025. As members sign on to renew, they are encouraged to pay their dues for multiple years. To date, 49,813 Legionnaires have taken advantage of this option. Members can also select the auto-renew option. 159,378 members have signed up for auto renewal. We are continuously looking at ways of improving the members' experience and these options provide a cost savings for the organization since we do not have to mail renewal notices for these individuals for the upcoming membership year.

Currently we have 5,990 posts and 2,551 squadrons who use MyLegion to transmit dues online. This transmittal program is working well within Personify and continues to be a great workload reducer as well as a timelier service for our members. It allows for earlier posting of renewal transactions to the national database which results in reduction of duplicate renewal notices going to members who paid their dues to posts.

The report of the Membership & Post Activities Committee was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MARK R. CLARK (MO), CHAIRMAN

The committee met on May 4, 2025, in the Ohio Room at the Sheraton City Center Hotel and Conference Center.

Department ALR Programs are reporting strong growth and continue to formalize and professionalize their programs. Since our last meeting the Department of Louisiana and Montana have formalized their ALR Program as a department level program and our committee has been advising them as they continue to get organized. We still have departments who are reluctant to recognize the ALR as a department level program, but we are continuing to educate and motivate them to do so. A well-structured department level ALR program can properly align its priorities with the department priorities, making it a force multiplier.

The 2024 National Legacy Run was our first effort in support of the Veterans & Children Foundation. We raised over $930,000 for that great cause. We have set a goal of $1.2 million this year as we look to build on our momentum from last year.

While we ride for the VCF, our Riders still have a vested interest in the Legacy Scholarship Foundation. Seeing the continued positive results of our support of the Legacy Fund will be welcome news for our Riders who put their heart into raising funds for the kids all those years.

We have a great ride planned this year with some unique stops. We are expecting another successful Legacy Run to culminate this year's mission. Ken "Lucky" Nadeau (NM) will serve as our Chief Road Captain this year and he and his team are hard at work finalizing the route plan. We will be shooting some promotional videos to continue to build enthusiasm for this year's run.

Recommendations:

- Registration will open May 15th and close August 1st of each year.
- $750.00 is the minimum donation to earn a plaque.

We encourage American Legion Riders to participate in the Harley-Davidson Motor Company's Let's Ride Challenge – Ride for Heroes. Information on this program will soon be sent out to our Riders.

The Riders continue to advocate for the Be the One mission. It is becoming an ingrained part of our messaging in all our activities. We will continue to expand the reach of this vital program so we can change and save lives.

I am honored to serve as Chairman of the ALR Advisory Committee and on behalf of its dedicated members, we thank you Mr. Chairman and the members of the Internal Affairs Commission for your support and commitment to the ALR Program.

The report of the American Legion Riders Advisory Committee was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

AD-HOC COMMITTEE TO CELEBRATE THE NATION'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY
DANIEL J. SEEHAFER (WI), CHAIRMAN

The America250 national program officially kicked off April 18 with the Two Lights On for Tomorrow displays commemorating Paul Revere's ride. The Two Lights On effort was picked up by several American Legion posts and produced high social media traffic. The reel produced by Media & Communications received 9,529 views on Facebook and 2,676 impressions (highest impression count of the month) on Instagram.

In June, the 250th Anniversary of the U.S. Army is observed through multiple events and activities, which the Media & Communications Division is promoting and covering some. In October – the U.S. Navy and November the U.S. Marine Corps., celebrates their 250th anniversaries. Media & Communications is developing and posting on the national website all events to honor the 250th anniversaries of the service branches.

Promotion and coverage of these events are underway through Media & Communications, in support of the Homecoming 250 initiative in Philadelphia.

Will also promote initiatives at the local, state and national levels that advance civics education and responsible citizenship – WHAT RIGHT LOOKS LIKE – examples from communities.

All American Legion youth programs will be collectively themed around the 250th anniversary.

Rise of Our Flag bookazine -- $4.99 for single copies – combo with youth comic books in a special 250th anniversary collection has yet to be priced.

Apparel and merchandise is now being handled through Emblem Sales. Branding has been approved by the committee and Marketing.

Fundraising opportunities -- $250 in one donation to receive a specially designed poster for the post or individual, and a 250th Anniversary coin, and a letter of thanks.

The ad hoc committee will be reconnecting in June to line out all media deliverables and activities for the year leading up to July 4, 2026, and meet on a frequent basis throughout the mission, from that point on.

We expect to have a post-activation toolkit ready for use by July 4, 2025.

The report of the Ad-Hoc Committee to Celebrate the Nation's 250th Anniversary was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

SAL COMMANDER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PNC DONALD L. "JR" HALL, JR. (MD), CONSULTANT

Members of SALCA meet monthly in a virtual environment or in person during National SAL meetings.

A quorum was present during the Spring National Executive Committee Meeting of The Sons of The American Legion, held May 3-5, 2025. Members present were:

Joseph Mayne (MN) - Chairman
Charles Gannon (MD) - Vice Chairman
Eugene Sacco (CA) - Member
Roy Smith (IL) - Member
Michael Fox (CA) - Member
Frank MacDonald (MA) - Member
Clifford Smith (MA) - Member
Donald "JR" Hall, Jr. (MD) - Consultant

Actions Completed October 2024 – May 5, 2025:

- Approved post-convention NEC appointments. (Appendix A)
- Mike Monserud (IA) Selected as the Trailing Candidate for National Commander to be announced at the SAL National Convention in Tampa, Florida.
- Coaching of commander candidates continues. (Gene Sacco & JR Hall, facilitators)
- Chairman's workshop focusing on leadership and goal setting hosted by SALCA.
- Meeting with Legion National Staff and Legion Leadership in October 2024 and May 2025.

- Final version of Sons of The American Legion Outline of Authorization issued on May 3, 2025.
- Consolidated CONA Report (Committee on National Appointments) Spring NEC session 2025 issued to SALCA. Highlights are the Commission/Committee Quarterly Report, Chairman Review, and 2025-2026 recommendations.

Pending Action Items & SAL Working Projects:

- Instructed by Legion National Staff and Legion Leadership to abolish the National SAL Finance Commission.
- Instructed by Legion National Staff and Legion Leadership not to establish a National Security Commission.
- Create an Ad Hoc committee to assess the feasibility of creating a paid National Adjutant position for the Sons of the American Legion.
- Working with TAL Media and Communications and Marketing staff to enhance SAL branding.
- Continue working with TAL to establish an SAL PUFL and multi-year membership program.
- Create an Ad Hoc committee to assess the feasibility of creating a new national membership opportunity for eligible males.

NATIONAL APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS (APPENDIX A)
2025 POST NATIONAL CONVENTION MEETING – TAMPA, FLORIDA
(Pending approval by the SAL NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)

NAME	OFFICE	TERM
William Clancy, III (NY)	National Commander	2026
Anthony Wright (PA)	National Adjutant	2026
Jeremy Revell (VT)	National Vice Commander - Northeast	2026
Bryan Hine (TN)	National Vice Commander – Southeast	2026
Steven Honigfort (OH)	National Vice Commander - Central	2026
Chris Casey (NE)	National Vice Commander - Midwest	2026
Frank Meraz, Jr. (CA)	National Vice Commander - Western	2026
David Jolly (NY)	National Chaplain	2026
Timothy Van Patten, II (NY)	National Historian	2026
Gary Leach (CA)	National Parliamentarian	2026
Gregory Falco (NY)	National Sgt-At-Arms	2026
Harold Thompson, Jr. (NE)	Assistant Adjutant Emeritus	2026
Seth Rippe (NE)	Assistant Adjutant	2026
Robert Avery (NY)	Assistant Adjutant	2026
Scott Thornton (OH)	Assistant Adjutant	2026
Brian Waters (PA)	Assistant Sgt-At-Arms	2026
Thomas Arista (TX)	Assistant Sgt-At-Arms	2026
Cliff Barker (IA)	Assistant Sgt-At-Arms	2026
Timothy Brower (NY)	National Commander's Aide	2026

NATIONAL APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS
2025 POST NATIONAL CONVENTION MEETING
TAMPA, FLORIDA

Robert Higgins (LA)	Americanism	Member	2026
Shawn McCrary (WI)	Americanism	Consultant	2026
Jon Herrington (MS)	Americanism	Commander's Representative	2026
Jeffrey Trout (IL)	Children and Youth (C&Y)	Chairman	2026
Chris Reachard (DE)	Children and Youth (C&Y)	Vice Chairman	2026
John Lawrence (LA)	Children and Youth (C&Y)	Consultant	2026
James Stewart (DE)	VE&E	Chairman	2026
Noble Pulsipher (IN)	Legislative	Member	2028
Rodney Tolbert (MI)	Legislative	Member	2027
David Parker (IN)	Member Training and Develop	Consultant	2026
Jason Pepe (PA)	Membership and Squadron Act	Member	2026
Henry Hasselhan (NJ)	Membership and Squadron Act	Member - Northeast	2026
Scott Williams (VA)	Membership and Squadron Act	Member - Southeast	2026
Casey Hanson (SD)	Membership and Squadron Act	Member – Central	2026
Phil Stander (IL)	Membership and Squadron Act	Member – Midwest	2026
Matt Griffis (AZ)	Membership and Squadron Act	Member - Western	2026
Jimmy Edwards (IN)	Membership and Squadron Act	Consultant	2026
Richard Huntley (ME)	Convention and Meetings	Consultant	2026
Glen Johnson (IA)	Convention and Meetings	Consultant	2026
Mark Natalle (NJ)	Convention and Meetings	Consultant	2026
Robert Crevelli (CA)	Public Media and Comms	Vice Chairman	2028
William Matoska (MD)	Strategic Planning	Chairman	2026
Harl Ray (IL)	Strategic Planning	Vice Chairman	2026
Chris Cook (OK)	Strategic Planning	Member	2026
William Hill (MD)	Strategic Planning	Member	2026
Anthony Wright (PA)	Strategic Planning	Member	2026

William Clancy, III (NY)	Strategic Planning	Consultant	2026
Thom Skelly (TX)	Strategic Planning	Consultant	2026
Bear Weinzirl (MD)	Strategic Planning	Consultant	2026

The report of the SAL Commander's Advisory Committee was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

II. INTERNAL AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

AMERICAN LEGION 21ST CENTURY SUBCOMMITTEE
FRANCIS J. MACDONALD, JR. (MA), CHAIRMAN

Members of the committee are:
Francis J. MacDonald, Jr. (MA), Chairman
Danny P. Muth (TX) – Vice Chairman
Paul Gonthier (AL)
Wiliam H. Lienhop, Jr. (GA)
Michael W. Moses, Sr. (KY)
Eric V. Warthen, Sr. (MD)
Richard A. Schloendorn, Sr. (PA)

Ex-Officio Members:
Sandra E. Davis (MA), Consultant

National Staff Support:
Mark Woodsmall (IN)

Spring 2025 Meeting of the 21st Century Subcommittee:

On Monday, May 5th, 2025, at 10:00 AM, the 21st Century Subcommittee convened and met with new M&PA Committee Chairman Cooke to discuss the progress that the Committee has made since our last meeting. Chairman Cooke assumed the role of chairman in October of 2024. Chairman Cooke informed the subcommittee that since assuming his duties that he has chaired 3 full meetings during the 2025 calendar year, and some of the topics that were focused on. He also discussed how the full committee is broken into subcommittees. Those subcommittees are: 21st Century Strategic Plan, Goal Strategies and how they affect Target Dates, and Award Manual Updates. Their initial focus has been on how to ensure that the 21st Century Report and Be the One is disseminated down to the Post level.

After Chairman Cooke's presentation the subcommittee further discussed issues associated with the 21st Century Report. Subcommittee consultant, Sandra Davis (MA) mentioned that the initial report began to be developed in 2017 and subsequently released in 2019 and suggested that they work with Marketing Division to rebrand the report "Forging the Future." This was discussed with the Internal Affairs Director so that that division can become involved in rebranding. It was also discussed that the Posts must be engaged before educating them about the 21st Century Report to ensure their buy-in to incorporate it at their level. The subcommittee discussed interest in becoming more informed about the progress of the 21st Century Strategic Plan subcommittee of the M&PA Committee. Mark Woodsmall, our subcommittee support staff will provide the date and time of their next meeting so that members of our subcommittee can become aware of their progress and reduce the possibility of duplication of efforts.

Vice Chairman Danny Muth (TX) and member Eric Warthen (MD) discussed the need to ensure that with Be the One and the 21st Century Report that each should have a champion for them at the department level. Sandra Davis mentioned the Posts must be engaged prior to further educating them to ensure their buy-in. The discussion also revolved around the need for improving communication between all levels, and Michael
Moses (KY) discussed that in some instances the amount of department level emphasis was dependent on what the department commander was focused on. If that person is not focused on training/educating it stands to reason training and other needs may be lacking in emphasis.

The report of the 21st Century Subcommittee was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

AMERICAN LEGION TRAINING SUBCOMMITTEE
STEVEN C. SPERL (AZ), CHAIRMAN

The Training Subcommittee convened at 10:11 am in the Internal Affairs & Membership conference room at National Headquarters to evaluate national training strategy, review program implementation, and align priorities with ongoing organizational goals, emphasizing cohesion across national training efforts and delivering outcomes grounded in member impact.

Members present were:
Chairman Steven C. Sperl (AZ)
John F. DeBisschop, III (CT), Vice Chairman
Timothy J. Collmer (NY)
Eric W. Measles (CA)
Patricia Harris (NC)
John Knox (MI)
Carl Swisher (OH)
David Clinger (FL), Consultant

National Staff Support: Erin Bossen (IN)
Guest: Karl E. Stuvengen (WI)

Training Tuesday Update

The subcommittee reviewed the 2025 Training Tuesday sessions completed to date: *How to Run a Post*, *Columbia Protocol (Be The One)*, and the hands-on *Resolutions Workshop* series. These sessions averaged 210 participants each. Feedback emphasized the value of interactive segments and post-session support materials. The 2025–2026 calendar remains open for additions.

A curriculum comparison between Boston and Denver revealed consistent delivery of core sessions: Constitution and Bylaws, Legal, Post Operations, Be The One, and Resolutions. Additional sessions varied by location, including Mentorship, Programs, Parliamentary Procedures, Membership Retention, Buddy Check, MyLegion, and Post Opportunities (Awards). This variety informed recommendations for future standardization and customization based on department needs.

NRIC Review and Planning

The NRICs in Denver and Boston received strong feedback, particularly for their applied-learning format. Participants highlighted the need for improved pacing and stronger A/V coordination. The 2026 NRICs are confirmed for the Midwest and Southeast. Session continuity and alignment will be strengthened through updated presentation templates, consistent handouts, and unified branding protocols.

National American Legion College (NALC) Status

The NALC curriculum continues to undergo strategic revisions to align with Servant Leadership principles, Servant Leadership is not Weak Leadership. The updated approach moves away from excessive group work, instead emphasizing structured outcomes and participant-centered engagement. Task list progress remains steady, and facilitator selection is on schedule.

Training Resource Archive & Onboarding Toolkit

The new Instructor Onboarding Toolkit launched this summer, designed to set clear expectations across national-level training platforms.

Subcommittee Members were reminded to sign up for Interest Groups based on their expertise and availability. The selected groups will lead focused contributions to priority areas.

Strategic Integration

The group discussed long-range planning and the integration of recommendations from the 21st Century Report. Top priorities include mentorship, alumni tracking, and inclusive digital access. The Training Subcommittee previewed a draft white paper regarding the modernization of training providing support to every level of Legionnaire. The group affirmed the need to bridge national efforts with post-level impact by sharing adaptable materials and enabling local facilitation.

Next Steps and Assignments

The Training Subcommittee's summarized key action items: assigning workgroups for curriculum planning and instructor coordination. A follow-up email will include information for a proposed virtual planning session in late July 2025. The meeting closed with no additional business.

The report of the Training Subcommittee was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

AMERICAN LEGION TROPHIES, AWARDS & CEREMONIALS (TAC) SUBCOMMITTEE
JAMES R. BOJANOWSKI (NY), CHAIRMAN

The **Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials Subcommittee** was called to order by Chairman James R. Bojanowski (NY) at 10:15 a.m. on Monday, May 5, 2025, at National Headquarters, Room 301, to receive the 2024 Official & Unofficial Awards and review the 2025 *Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials (TAC) Manual* and other business of the TAC Subcommittee.

Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials (TAC) Subcommittee (NHQ – Room 301)

Members:	James R. Bojanowski (NY) Chairman	William R. Roy, (NH)
	James H. Britt (SC)	Roy E. Smith (IL)
	Frederick C. Craigie (NE)	Kirk D. Thurston, (ME), Consultant

Staff Support: Michele Steinmetz (CA) and Nicholas Arnett (IN)
Guest: Frederick C. Craigie (NE), National Executive Committee Member

National Staff Support: Nick Arnett

Discussion and Recommendations on TAC Manual

The Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials Subcommittee reviewed the previous meeting agenda, minutes, report, and other relevant documents prior to their 2025 subcommittee meeting. Staff also provided a summary of actions and updates per the direction of last year's subcommittee report and recommendations, which included data and analysis of underutilized awards. Subcommittee members discussed all 2024 official awardees, the 2025 Official Awards, the 2025 Unofficial Awards, and the 2025 edition of the *Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Manual*, noting a summary of edits and updates provided by staff. The subcommittee determined that national staff would need to craft messages to the relevant departments, committees/commissions and senior leadership so that they may assist with focusing efforts on promoting submissions for overall awards.

Motion to accept these subcommittee recommendations made by Roy E. Smith (IL), seconded by John H. Britt (SC). Motion carried.

The subcommittee requests that staff notify departments and senior leadership of the 2025 TAC Manual publication along with a summary of changes, as well as summary of underutilized awards. The subcommittee also requests staff to provide a summary of underutilized awards to the Media & Communications Division to include in future *Dispatch* articles.

Moreover, the subcommittee requests that staff to provide details and submission information regarding the International Amity Award in a message to all departments with foreign posts and to the office of the National Commander in order to create more awareness for future recipients in territories of any nations associated as wartime allies of the United States of America.

Furthermore, the subcommittee requests that staff provide details and submission information regarding the Canadian Friendship Award to any departments with posts residing in Canada, as well as any department that shares a border with Canada, in an effort to generate more submissions to award distinguished members or associates of authentic veterans organizations in Canada, such as the Army, Navy, Air Force Veterans in Canada (ANAVIC), for their recognition of outstanding service in the field of veterans affairs and in the development and perpetuation of the spirit of international goodwill between the United States and Canada. There were no 2025 American Legion Canadian Friendship Award nominees for the subcommittee to review.

Additionally, the subcommittee requests for staff to continue to encourage awards training and awareness opportunities at all relevant national training events, such as National American Legion College and National Membership Workshop, as well as continuing to encourage such topics and resources at any department operated Legion Colleges.

Lastly, the subcommittee requests for staff to coordinate with the Conventions Division and the Library Division to review the nature of the Arch M. Cantrall Trophy and Lemuel Bolles Trophy awards in order to provide more accurate information and distinguishment between those two awards within the TAC Manual.

Motion to accept these subcommittee recommendations made by Frederick C. Craigie (NE), seconded by Roy E. Smith (IL). Motion carried.

The subcommittee noted that there were no resolutions submitted for consideration.

OFFICIAL AWARDS APPROVED FOR 2024:

The American Legion Distinguished Service Medal Award: Awarded annually to an individual(s) or organization for their outstanding service to the nation and to the programs of The American Legion by nomination by department action or by the National Commander.
RECIPIENT: Jack Miller

American Legion Baseball Graduate of The Year Award: Presented to the major league baseball player who played American Legion Baseball as a teenager and best exemplifies the principles and purposes of the program in sportsmanship, citizenship, general good conduct, integrity and playing ability.
RECIPIENT: Paul Sewald, Arizona Diamondbacks

Bob Feller American Legion Pitching Award: Awarded annually to that American Legion Baseball player recording the greatest number of strikeouts during the regional tournaments and World Series of American Legion Baseball.
RECIPIENT: Tyler Ryden, Post 554, League City, TX (39 strikeouts)

Commissioner of Baseball Trophy: Awarded annually at the Major League World Series to that baseball team which becomes the National Champion because of playing in The American Legion World Series.
RECIPIENT: Post 70, Troy, Alabama

Dr. Irvin L. "Click" Cowger Memorial R.B.I. Award: Awarded annually to The American Legion Baseball player who is credited with the most runs batted in by the official score keepers of the respective regional tournaments and World Series of American Legion Baseball.
RECIPIENT: Nathan Ball, Post 165, Midland, Michigan (13 RBI's)

The Ford C. Frick Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department having within its jurisdiction the runner-up team in the National Finals of The American Legion Baseball program.
RECIPIENT: Post 165, Midland, Michigan

Frank N. Belgrano, Jr. Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department which has rendered the most outstanding service during the year to the program of the Boy Scouts of America.
RECIPIENT: Department of Missouri

George W. Rulon Baseball Player of the Year: A Plaque is presented to recipient by appropriate official upon conclusion of The American Legion Baseball World Series. Citation is presented to recipient at a special Hall of Fame ceremony at Cooperstown, NY, the following summer.
RECIPIENT: Cayden Smith, Post 165, Midland, Michigan

The Howard P. Savage, Jr. Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department having the baseball team which becomes the Champion because of playing in The American Legion World Series.
RECIPIENT: Post 70, Troy, Alabama

Jack Williams Memorial Leadership Award: Awarded annually to the manager and coach of the national championship team, as representative of the adult leadership Jack Williams stressed during his lifetime.
RECIPIENT(s): Post 70, Troy, Alabama (coaching staff – Ross Hixon, Hunter Mann, Tanner Wells and Matt Whitton)

James F. Daniel, Jr. Memorial Sportsmanship Award: Awarded to The American Legion Baseball player participating in the World Series that represents the principle of good sportsmanship emphasized by the program.
RECIPIENT: Gunner Justice, Post 70, Troy, Alabama

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Air Rifle National Championship Award: Presented annually to the national tournament champions of the individual and team categories in Sporter and Precision disciplines of The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program. (Originally named the American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Trophy)

RECIPIENT(s):	**Precision Team:**	Texas Hill Country Shooters
	Precision Individual:	Emme Walrath, Kenosha, WI
	Sporter Team:	Mariner HS JROTC
	Sporter Individual:	Alexandra Orr, Poquoson, VA

The American Legion Baseball "Slugger" Trophy: Plaque is presented to recipient, or designated representative, by appropriate official upon the conclusion of The American Legion Baseball World Series.
RECIPIENT: Sam Ovsak, Post 2, Fargo, North Dakota (.528 batting average)

Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department within the continental limits in the United States showing the greatest Americanism activity in use of The American Legion School Medal Awards.
RECIPIENT: Department of Nevada

The American Legion Baseball "Big Stick" Award: Awarded annually to that American Legion Baseball player having the highest total number of bases as determined by the official score keepers of the respective regional tournaments and World Series of American Legion Baseball.
RECIPIENT: Sam Ovsak, Post 2, Fargo, North Dakota (24 total bases)

Spafford National Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department of The American Legion having within its jurisdiction the winner of the National High School Oratorical Contest.
RECIPIENT: Department of Washington

Francis M. Redington Sportsmanship Award: Awarded annually to the athlete competing in The American Legion Junior Air Rifle National Championship who best exemplifies good sportsmanship and fair play.
RECIPIENT: Samantha Erick (VA)

Daniel J. O'Connor Award: Awarded annually to that Department attaining the greatest number of percentage points compiled from information contained in the Consolidated Post Reports and supporting Department narrative. (Originally named the William Randolph Hearst Trophy)
RECIPIENT: Department of Ohio

The American Legion and Scouting "Square Knot" Award: This award is designed to recognize American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion members who are actively involved in the Scouting program. This award is not meant to be a selective or limited award, but one that is available to any American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member who completes the requirements for the award. The Award is meant to recognize dedication and work required by an American Legion, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member to assist in furthering the Scouting program in The American Legion.
RECIPIENT(s): David R. Bennett (VA), Eric E. Searcy (MO), Jonathan T. Dooley (CO), Carl C. Frentz (TX), Richard Cayemberg (CO), Cheryl A. Cayemberg (CO), Jeremy B. Blevins (AL), Rafael Jovet-Ramos (FL), Ralgh Wainright (SC), Randy Eron (CO), Michael K. Henderson (CA), Michael K. Lanning (CA), Lawrence E. Kirven (CA) Gail F. Porter (WA), Donald W. Shedd (NH).

The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year Award: Each respective American Legion Department (State) selection committee will determine the Eagle Scout judge to be the best in their department. Then the Department will send that packet, along with a list of the members serving on that selection committee to The American Legion National Headquarters no later than April 1st. The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year will receive $10,000 scholarship, three runner-up scholarship awards will be granted in the amount of $2,500 each. The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year will travel to join the Youth Champion Delegates of The American Legion that is honored at the annual National Convention of the American Legion.
RECIPIENT: Lauren Tyree, Lincoln University, PA

The American Legion National Education Award: Awarded annually to an individual, group or organization which has conducted the best all-around promotion of the education programs of The American Legion, education programs that correspond to the goals of The American Legion or has promoted or advanced education programs at the national level.
RECIPIENT: Chad Johnson, Jobs for America's Graduates-South Dakota

The American Legion Canadian Friendship Award: Awarded by the National Commander with the advice and consent of the National Executive Committee at such times and places as may be consistent and appropriate. It shall be awarded to specific individuals who shall be war veterans within the accepted meaning of the term and members of authentic veterans' organization in Canada. It shall be awarded to such individuals in recognition of outstanding service in the field of veterans' affairs and in the development and perpetuation of the spirit of international good will and comradeship between the United States and Canada and between their veterans' organization and The American Legion.
RECIPIENT(S): **ANAVICUS –** Wayne Golden, Kevin Clement, Ken Rielly, Ron Roy, Lois Paterson, Patrick MacKinnon, Anthony Lunn, Donna Hartie, Debra Poncsak, George Carbert, Jan Holt, Len Brooks, Steve Ko, Jonathan Tremblay, Keith Langevin, Robert MacFarlane, Mark Horodecky. **INDIVIDUAL –** None Awarded for 2024

Department Award for 100% Post Children & Youth Reporting: Awarded annually to those Departments which achieve 100% of Posts indicating Children & Youth activity on Consolidated Post Reports.
RECIPIENT: Department of Delaware

National Employer of Veterans Award Recipient(s): Awarded to an employer in recognition of outstanding achievement in the employment and retraining of veterans.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Large Employer**	Werner Enterprises, Nebraska
2023	**Medium Employer**	Wolverine Services, Texas
Winners	**Small Employer**	HumCap, Plano, Texas

Note: The 2024 National Employer of Veterans Award Recipient(s) will not be announced until 2025 National Convention.

National Employment Service Award Recipient(s): Awarded in three categories: Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) of the Year; Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) of the Year; Employment Service (ES) Office of the Year.

RECIPIENT(s):	**LVER of the Year:**	John Willard, Texas
2023	**DVOP of the Year:**	Adam Colone, Indiana
Winners	**ES Office of the Year:**	Workforce Solutions of Central Texas

Note: The 2024 National Employment Service Award Recipient(s) will not be announced until 2025 National Convention.

Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons Award Recipient: The program is a joint project between the National Organization & the AETNA Company, to award those Posts that enhance the lives of disabled persons by providing opportunities for their participation in community activities.

RECIPIENT(s): Bobby Dodd Institute, Georgia
2023 Winner

Note: The 2024 Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons Award Recipient will not be announced until 2025 National Convention.

National Employer of Older Worker Award Recipient: The program provides an Employer of Older Worker Award for a company that consistently hires older workers, especially veterans and serves as an inspirational recognition of a company with a record of support and commitment to the hiring of America's older workers.

RECIPIENT(s): None awarded for 2023
2023 Winner

Note: The 2024 National Employer of Older Worker Award Recipient will not be announced until 2025 National Convention.

Michael Guty Homeless Veterans Outreach Award Recipient: The program provides the Michael Guty Homeless Veterans Outreach Award for a department of The American Legion that demonstrates involvement in homeless veteran iniatives that show outstanding support for activity in any or all of these areas: volunteerism, prevention, supportive housing, advocacy and fundraising.

RECIPIENT(s): None awarded for 2023
2023 Winner

Note: The 2024 Michael Guty Homeless Veterans Outreach Award Recipient will not be announced until 2025 National Convention.

National Department History Contest Awards: Awarded annually at the Fall Meeting of the National Executive Committee to those contestants entered in the National Department History Contest having submitted the One-Year History *Narrative* or *Yearbook* of the Department which best meets the standards established for that particular competition.

RECIPIENT(s): Digital – Department of Missouri

National Post History Contest Awards: Awarded annually to those contestants entered in the National Post History Contest deemed by a duly authorized panel of judges to have submitted the One-Year History of the Post which best meets the standards established for the competitions.

RECIPIENT(s): Digital – Pony Express Post 359, Saint Joseph, MO
Hard-Copy – Julius L. Shryer Post 430, Durant, IA

International Amity Award: Awarded by the National Commander with the advice and consent of the National Executive Committee at such times and places as may be consistent and appropriate. It shall be awarded to specific individuals who shall be war veterans within the accepted meaning of the term and members of an authentic veteran organization established in the territory of any of the nations associated as war-time allies of the United States of America. It shall be awarded to such individuals in recognition of outstanding service in the field of veteran's affairs and for service and contributions made in the development of international good will and comradeship between their organization and The American Legion.

RECIPIENT(s): None Awarded for 2024

Distinguished Public Service Award: Awarded annually by the National Commander with the advice and consent of the Commander's Advisory Committee at the time of the annual Washington Conference. It may be awarded to one or more person(s) of the United States Congress.

RECIPIENT(s): Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)

The Arthur D. Houghton Sons of The American Legion Trophy: Awarded annually to that Detachment of Sons of The American Legion in each of five membership categories (I – 200-1,000 members; II - 1,001-3,000 members; III - 3,001-6000 members; IV – 6001-12,000 members; V – 12,001 or more), each of said Detachments attaining the greatest percentage of increase over previous year's membership when compared with all Detachments in its category.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Category I**	Detachment of Idaho
2024	**Category II**	Detachment of New Mexico
Winners	**Category III**	Detachment of Wisconsin
	Category IV	Detachment of Arizona
	Category V	Detachment of Florida

General Henri Gouraud Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department in each of six categories established by the National Membership and Post Activities Committee, each of said Department having been the first in its respective category to attain or exceed its nationally assigned membership quota (effective 1986).

RECIPIENT(s):	**Category I**	**Department of Florida**
	Category II	**None qualified**
	Category III	**Department of Maryland**
	Category IV	**Department of Virginia**
	Category V	**Department of Colorado**
	Category VI	**Department of Puerto Rico**

General John J. Pershing Honor Award: Awarded annually to that Department having the greatest percentage of its posts receiving the Honor Ribbon for having 100 percent or more, of the post's previous year's membership enrolled for the coming year by December 31, and having reported such achievement to National Headquarters by not later than January 31.
RECIPIENT: Department of France

Henry D. Lindsley Trophy: Awarded annually to the Department attaining the highest percentage of membership over its preceding year's membership by March 31.
RECIPIENT: Department of Puerto Rico

The American Legion National Recruiter of the Year: Awarded annually to the individual certified with the highest number of new members recruited from among all of the departments.
RECIPIENT: Patricia E. Liddell, Georgia

Jerry L. Hedrick Membership Award: Awarded annually to the Department, not included among the several state Departments or the Department of the District of Columbia, attaining the highest percentage of membership as of March 31, over its preceding year's membership.
RECIPIENT: Department of Puerto Rico

O. L. Bodenhamer Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department designated to lead the parade at the time of the ensuing National Convention.
RECIPIENT: Department of Puerto Rico

The American Legion Air Force Academy Award: Awarded annually to that cadet of the graduating class at the Air Force Academy who demonstrates the highest proficiency in all academic subjects.
RECIPIENT: Cadet Taylor H. Edwards

The American Legion Coast Guard Academy Award: Awarded annually to that cadet of the graduating class of the United States Coast Guard Academy who is considered to have personally excelled in athletics.
RECIPIENT: Unreported

The American Legion Merchant Marine Academy Award: Awarded annually to that graduating midshipman of the Merchant Marine Academy, enrolled in the Pre-Commissioning Seminar Course, and selected by the Academy Faculty, as achieving the highest grade pertaining to a 1,000-word composition dealing with the subject of National Security.
RECIPIENT: Midshipman Josiah Jorda

The American Legion Military Academy Award: Awarded annually to cadet of the graduating class at the United States Military Academy with the highest standing in Chemistry.
RECIPIENT: Cadet Brian C. Lunn

The American Legion Naval Academy Award: Awarded annually to that graduating midshipman of the United States Naval Academy who stands highest in those English, History and Government courses taken to complete a Foreign Affairs major.
RECIPIENT: Midshipman Theresa A. Milio

National Commander's Blood Donor Awards: Presented to departments in different sized categories for participating in The American Legion's Blood Donor Program.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Category I**	**Departments with 85,000 or more members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of Florida
	Individual Participation:	Department of Florida
	Category II	**Departments with 65,000 to 84,999 members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of New York
	Individual Participation:	Department of New York
	Category III	**Departments with 40,000 to 64,999 members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of Wisconsin
	Individual Participation:	Department of Minnesota

Category IV	**Departments with 25,000 to 39,999 members:**
Post Participation:	Department of North Carolina
Individual Participation:	Department of Massachusetts
Category V	**Departments with 10,000 to 24,999 members:**
Post Participation:	Department of Nebraska
Individual Participation:	Department of Connecticut
Category VI	**Departments with less than 10,000 members:**
Post Participation:	Department of Montana
Individual Participation:	Department of Vermont

The American Legion National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award: To recognize an outstanding law enforcement officer as selected from Department law enforcement officer winners for distinguished on-and off-duty service. The accomplishments for which the award is presented shall have been in accordance with, or in furtherance of, established American Legion policies or programs and it shall have contributed to the preservation of law and order as well as the American way of life.
RECIPIENT: Cpl. Nicholas DeFelice, Owings, Maryland

The American Legion National Firefighter of the Year Award: To recognize an outstanding firefighter as selected from Department for distinguished on-and off-duty service. The accomplishments for which the award is presented shall have been in accordance with, or in furtherance of, established American Legion policies or programs and it shall have contributed to the preservation of law and order as well as the American way of life.
RECIPIENT: Captain Daniel Rawson, Delta Junction, Alaska

Paul H. Griffith ROTC Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department giving the highest degree of support to the ROTC program within its jurisdiction, based on criteria drawn up by the National Security Commission.
RECIPIENT(s): **Top 3 Departments:**
Department of Florida
Department of Texas
Department of Georgia

The American Legion Fourth Estate Award: Awarded to press, radio, TV, or other communications media; to associations of same, to owners, executive heads or staff members; such award to be in recognition of outstanding service to community, state, or nation, which service shall have been in accordance with or the furtherance of established American Legion policies and programs.
RECIPIENT: Broadcast: KARE 11 NBC (Minneapolis), "Broken Promises"
Print: Louisville, Kentucky Courier Journal, "Safer Sidelines"

The American Legion Patriot Award: Awarded to an outstanding citizen who has demonstrated a profound and exceptional commitment to military personnel and their families.
RECIPIENT(s): Michael "Rod" Rodriguez, CEO, GWOT Memorial

The American Legion Spirit of Service Award: Awarded annually by the Department of Defense and the six military departments that have identified the most outstanding men and women that have received press coverage in Armed Service News dispatches, the Pentagon Channel, their military base newspapers and their hometown publications.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Army:**	Sgt. Mayann Santiago
	Navy:	Petty Officer Pablo Rodriguez, Jr.
	Marine Corps:	Sgt. Davinsky Theodore
	Coast Guard:	Petty Officer Richard Galbierz
	Air Force:	Airman 1st Class Vernica Challenger
	Space Force:	Sgt. Christopher Paradine
	Air National Guard:	Staff Sgt. Jesyka Ware

Arch M. Cantrall Trophy: Awarded annually to that American Legion Band winning first prize in competition with all other American Legion bands during the annual National Convention of The American Legion.
RECIPIENT: Band of the Tonawandas, Tonawanda, NY

Glen R. Hillis Trophy: Awarded annually to that Color Guard winning first prize in competition with all other Color Guards during the annual National Convention of The American Legion.
RECIPIENT: Newport Harbor Post 291, Newport Beach CA

The Lemuel Bolles Trophy: Awarded annually to that band winning first prize in competition with all other bands during the annual National Convention.
RECIPIENT: Band of the Tonawandas, Tonawanda, NY

William F. Lenker National Service Trophy: Awarded annually to that State Department of The American Legion excelling in welfare work for war veterans, providing the membership of that Department shall be no less than 80% of the membership of the preceding year.
RECIPIENT: Department of Florida

Department of Veterans Affairs Health-Care Provider of the Year Award: To be awarded annually at the Washington Conference to one outstanding non-physician direct patient care provider in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), nominated and selected under such conditions as the Internal Affairs Commission should from time to time select as necessary and consistent with the effective administration of such an award.
RECIPIENT: Kimberly Nutt

Department of Veterans Affairs Physician of the Year Award: To be awarded annually at the Washington Conference to one outstanding physician in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), nominated and selected under such conditions as the Internal Affairs Commission should from time to time select as necessary and consistent with the effective administration of such an award.
RECIPIENT: Dr. Wiliam Bell, III

UNOFFICIAL AWARDS APPROVED FOR 2025:
Contained within this extensive program are a wide variety of prizes ranging from simple certificates and ribbons to valuable gifts and travel. The awards are designed to reward the membership success of dedicated Legionnaires at all levels of the organization and to encourage continued growth. By getting active in membership recruiting and by asking a veteran to join our ranks, one or more of the many prizes and awards listed below can be earned. The department membership chairman can be contacted for more information.

EARLY BIRD/NEF KICKOFF - SEPTEMBER 11, 2024: **Thirty-four** departments qualified for the **50%** target date they are**: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, France, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.**

FALL MEETINGS - OCTOBER 16, 2024: **Forty-two** Departments qualified for the **55%** target date they are**: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, France, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.**

VETERANS DAY – NOVEMBER 14, 2024: **Thirty-four** Departments qualified for the **65%** target date they are: **Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, France, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.**

PEARL HARBOR DAY – DECEMBER 11, 2024: **Eight** Departments qualified for the **75%** target date they are: **France, Hawaii, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Wisconsin.**

MID WINTER – JANUARY 15, 2025: **Nineteen** Departments qualified for the **80%** target date they are: **Arizona, France, Hawaii, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin.**

PRESIDENT'S DAY – FEBRUARY 12, 2025: **Nineteen** Departments qualified for the **85%** target date they are: **Arizona, Florida, France, Hawaii, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin.**

LEGION BIRTHDAY – MARCH 12, 2025 **Six** Departments qualified for the **90%** target date they are: Arizona, France, Hawaii, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota**.**

"BIG TWELVE" COMPETITION WINNERS:

Category I	**None Qualified**
Category II	**None Qualified**
Category III	**None Qualified**
Category IV	**South Dakota**
Category V	**None Qualified**
Category VI	**Hawaii**

CHILDREN & YOUTH – APRIL 9, 2025: **Two** departments qualified for the **95%** target date they are: France and Hawaii.

ARMED FORCES DAY – MAY 14, 2025: Departments qualified for the **100%** target date: **Not yet determined.**
By achieving **100%** of the department's **2025** membership goal, the department will receive a plaque recognizing this achievement.

DELEGATE STRENGTH – JULY 28, 2025: Delegate strength is determined by the membership in the hands of the National Treasurer 30 days prior to the National Convention. Total number of delegates for each department is based on five delegates at large, one delegate for each 1,000 members or major fraction thereof, and the members of the National Executive Committee.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER OF THE YEAR: Any department commander, who met or exceeds his/her 100% goal for 2025 by May 14, 2025, will receive a plaque recognizing his/her achievement. The 2024 winners are: **Michael A. Raymond (FL), Mark L. Devirgilio (HI), Douglas L. Huffman (ID), Peter P. Cruz (LT), Carmen I. Rosario (PR), Betty Leach (RI) and Sondra Dickerson (VA).** ***The winners for 2025 have not yet been determined.***

GOLD BRIGADE RECRUITER AWARD: A Legionnaire who recruits **50** or more NEW members by **May 14, 2025, will qualify for** enrollment in the elite **GOLD BRIGADE** of The American Legion.

POST HONOR RIBBONS: Post Honor Ribbons were shipped to **1,080** posts whose **2025** membership as of **December 31, 2024, exceeded their final 2025** membership.

CERTIFICATE OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE: These certificates were awarded for **148 posts for attaining a new all-time-high membership for 2025 by December 31, 2024.**

FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS ALL-TIME-HIGH: These citations are awarded to posts with five or more consecutive years of all-time high membership in 2025.

DISTRICT COMMANDERS "RACE TO THE TOP":
District commanders are the lynchpin of The American Legion's chain of command, serving as the vital link between the national and department organizations and all posts. As we are all aware, the local post is where the "rubber meets the road." If it doesn't happen at the post level, it doesn't happen at all. District commanders are the people charged with ensuring all posts in their district maintain their vitality.

Consequently, this unique award was created to provide a meaningful incentive for the five top district commanders in each category and reward their successful membership efforts. The winning district commanders and guests receive:

- Distinguished guests of the National Commander at National Convention.
- 1st class hotel accommodations for four nights at convention location.
- Legion cap that signifies they are Race-To-The-Top winners.

The following provides more specific information on how you can win.
Competition will be divided into five categories based on the membership of the district without regard to geographic locations. District commanders will compete in each of the following categories based on the final 2024 totals, and a top district commander for the national award will be selected from each of the five categories. Second and third place awards will also be presented in each category.

Category I	**Districts of:**	**15 to 1,499 members**
Category II	**Districts of:**	**1,500 to 2,999 members**
Category III	**Districts of:**	**3,000 to 4,999 members**
Category IV	**Districts of:**	**5,000 to 7,499 members**
Category V	**Districts of:**	**7,500 and above members**

Trip to 2025 National Convention will be presented to the top district commander and spouse in each category whose district membership on **March 31** represents the greatest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district**. Cannot be less than 100% to qualify.** First place award entitles you and your guest to attend the **106th** National Convention in ***Tampa, Florida.***
Second Place Awards will be presented to the district commander in each category whose district membership on **March 31** represents the second highest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district**. Cannot be less than 100% to qualify.** Winners will receive a **$500** check.

Third Place Awards will be presented to the district commander in each category whose district membership on March 31 represents the third highest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district. **Cannot be less than 100% to qualify.** Winners will receive a $**375** check.
This year's winners have not yet been determined.
DISTRICT COMMANDER NEW POST ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS:
District commanders who achieve the goal of creating new American Legion posts in their respective district and have the new Post's Temporary Charter Application on file at National Headquarters by May 31, 2025, qualify for a special recognition framed certificate.

DISTRICT COMMANDER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD W/DISTRICT HONOR RIBBON:
All district commanders whose **May Target Date** membership exceeds the previous year's membership by at least the number of posts in that district will be awarded the District Commander Achievement framed certificate. In addition, the district will receive a District Honor Ribbon for its district colors.

DEPARTMENT RECRUITER OF THE YEAR: Each American Legion post will have the opportunity to submit the name of the "Top Recruiter" for that post who has signed up the highest number of new members for the 2025 membership year by **May 14, 2025.** Department adjutants will determine the top new member recruiter for their respective department and certify their "Department Recruiter" to National Headquarters on or before **May 31, 2025.**
The "Department Recruiter" properly certified from each department, will be awarded a plaque with his/her accomplishment inscribed thereon.

NATIONAL RECRUITER OF THE YEAR: The individual certified with the highest number of new members recruited from among all the departments will be declared "National Recruiter of the Year". The winner of this award receives an all-expense paid trip to the **106th** National Convention **in *Tampa, Florida. The winner for 2025 has not yet been determined.***
The report of the Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials (TAC) Subcommittee was received and filed by the Internal Affairs Commission.

III. NATIONAL STAFF UPDATES

Please note: Financial information included in these reports are for management use only. It does not constitute a financial statement and has not been subjected to audit, review, or compilation by an independent Certified Public Accountant.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND

Since its creation in 1989, the National Emergency Fund (NEF) has awarded over$11M to American Legion members and posts. Up to$3,000 is available to Legionnaires and up to$10,000 is available for posts that lose the ability to conduct Four Pillar programs within their community. In 2024 we approved 109 grants (95 individual grants and 14 post grants) totaling$313,697.98.

2024 Individual Grants (95) $173,697.98 (Average member grant $1,828.40)
2024 Post Grants (14) $140,000.00 (Average post grant $10,000.00)

For 2025, we granted$119,290.76 in emergency assistance to 28 members and six posts.

2025 Individual Grants (28) $62,586.67 (Average individual grant $2,235.24)
2025 Post Grants (6) $56,704.00 (Average post grant $9,450.66)

Most of the grants were distributed for Hurricanes Helene and Milton that hit in late 2024. Overall, the NEF provided grants in 2024 for the departments of Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, New York, North Carolina, Philippines, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, and Tennessee. Eight grants were provided to California for the Southern California wildfires.

The NEF remains healthy with over $6.3M available (the market value as of December 2024).

OPERATION COMFORT WARRIORS (OCW)

Purpose:
Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) is an officially recognized program of The American Legion Charities, Inc., and its purpose is to assist wounded, injured or ill active-duty military personnel and veterans by providing morale-enhancing gifts to warrior transition units, VA and DoD medical care facilities, military installations, and 501(c)(3) and (c)(19) organizations which are part of The American Legion Family or such nonprofit entities sponsored by an American Legion legal entity.

Impact:
Nearly 2,000 servicemembers, veterans and their families were directly impacted by Operation Comfort Warriors in 2024, either by participating in an OCW-sponsored event or receiving care at a grant-receiving facility. $89,639.57 was distributed through 2 individual and 7 event grants. Thus far in 2025, 2 grants have been distributed in the amount of $17,000.00 impacting 500 servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

2024 OCW Grants (9) $89.639.57
2025 OCW Grants (2) $17,000.00

TRAINING INITIATIVES

Training Tuesday Series (Oct 2024–May 2025):
The Internal Affairs & Membership Division continued to deliver timely, relevant education through the *Training Tuesday* series, held on the last Tuesday of each month. Each session aligned with one of four focus areas: member engagement and benefits, post operations, suicide prevention (*Be the One*), and resolutions. Topics included financial readiness, managing posts, writing resolutions, and CPR/CSR submissions. All sessions were delivered via Microsoft Teams, accompanied by live Q&A, interactive components, and downloadable materials. Archived recordings and resources were made available on the Legion training webpage, with departments receiving targeted follow-up based on inquiries and requests.

National American Legion College (NALC):
Significant progress was made in planning and curriculum development for the National American Legion College (NALC). Survey tools were created to gather instructor and participant feedback, and instructor evaluations for the upcoming 2025 session are currently underway. Observational visits to department-level Legion Colleges in New York and Virginia provided insight into best practices and areas for alignment with national standards. Stakeholder input from the 2025 NALC survey informed curriculum updates with an emphasis on servant leadership, mentorship, and local-level leadership development.

National Regional Information Conferences (NRIC):
Two successful National Regional Information Conferences (NRIC) were held during this reporting period—one in Denver, Colorado, and the other in Boston, Massachusetts. Both events featured sessions on legal updates, membership retention, program leadership, resolution writing, and suicide prevention. Registration campaigns spanned email blasts, Dispatch announcements, and coordination with Member Engagement Coordinators. A centralized file-sharing system ensured presenters submitted and used standardized, branded slide decks. Post-event survey results indicated strong satisfaction with content and structure, with 96% of attendees confirming they left with actionable insights. Planning is currently underway for two additional NRIC events in the Midwest and Southeast for the 2025–2026 cycle.

NALC Alumni Association (NALCAA):
The NALCAA 2025 Annual Banquet is scheduled for August 25, 2025, at Dale Mabry Post 139 in Tampa, Florida. A formal venue agreement has been prepared, with plans in place to accommodate up to 100 guests. The venue will provide tables, chairs, and a dedicated bartender, while NALCAA will secure catering and entertainment independently. A modest facility fee of $.50 has been agreed upon for clean-up

services. Pending final signatures, the next steps include confirming catering arrangements, selecting entertainment, and distributing a Save the Date to the alumni network to ensure strong attendance and engagement.

Training Resource Development:
The Training Subcommittee reevaluated the effectiveness of the "Training in a Box" archive during this cycle. While an initial plan was implemented to assign legacy PowerPoint decks for quarterly review, overall engagement and consistency were limited. As a result, the subcommittee transitioned toward a centralized curriculum approach for *Training Tuesday* and the *National Regional Information Conference (NRIC)*, with content tailored to real-time feedback and evolving training needs.

To support cohesion across national-level training platforms, a draft instructor onboarding questionnaire was developed. This tool is designed to align expectations across *Training Tuesday*, *NRIC*, *NALC*, and the *National Membership Workshop*, ensuring presenters are equipped with clear guidance and consistent messaging. The subcommittee also continued supporting departments in developing localized training strategies and resource materials tailored to post-level operations and leadership education.

Communication & Engagement:
To improve communication flow and reduce redundancy, the Training Subcommittee facilitated the integration of the *Training Newsletter* into *The Dispatch*, providing members with streamlined access to updates, events, and new resources. Basic Training promotion was reinforced by embedding course links into new member onboarding emails and Post Leadership Resource Kits.

Departments received direct support in the form of archived session access, custom training materials, and topic-specific resources aligned with local leadership priorities. Following national events such as NRIC and Subject Matter Expert Training, session materials and supporting documentation were distributed promptly to sustain department-level engagement.

Strategic Integration:
Recommendations from the 21st Century Report continue to inform subcommittee planning and training design. Emphasis has been placed on mentorship development, deeper alignment between national and department-level training, and continued evaluation of leadership development content.

All responses from the 2025 Training Subcommittee survey were reviewed and analyzed. Recurring themes included membership engagement, officer responsibilities, legal training, district- and county-level education, and post conflict resolution. These focus areas are now reflected in the development of *Training Tuesday* sessions and the evolving NRIC curriculum.

To support alignment and resource sharing across all levels, the training coordinator has begun visiting additional Department Legion Colleges. These visits are designed to collect training plans, observe instructional methods, and document best practices that can inform national curriculum development and instructional tools.

Looking Ahead:
The Training Subcommittee will continue advancing national training initiatives through intentional design, consistent delivery, and member-driven refinement. Priorities for the remainder of 2025 include expanding *Training Tuesday* offerings through cross-program collaboration and timely, relevant content for post leadership, membership engagement, and officer development. The Instructor Onboarding Toolkit will be finalized and implemented to ensure consistent experiences across *Training Tuesday*, *NRIC*, *NALC*, and *Membership Workshop* sessions.

Subcommittee members are encouraged to engage in a focused review of national training resources, particularly the *Training in a Box* archive. While participation in the recent review cycle has been limited, the archive remains a valuable repository—especially for departments building their own training initiatives. The goal is not to retire the archive but to evaluate how it can be better utilized, modernized, and supported to meet today's training needs.
Additional efforts include refining the NRIC curriculum based on feedback from the Denver and Boston sessions and preparing for two 2025–2026 sessions in the Midwest and Southeast. Quarterly Subcommittee planning meetings will continue to support progress tracking and alignment. When invited, the training coordinator will visit Department Legion Colleges to gather instructional models and delivery strategies that can help shape and strengthen national curriculum development. There is also a renewed effort to connect subcommittee members more directly to curriculum areas aligned with their interests and expertise, ensuring shared ownership of future training priorities.

IV. RESOLUTIONS

INTERNAL AFFAIRS ACTION ON ASSIGNED RESOLUTIONS
Approved and Forwarded to the Resolutions Subcommittee:

Resolution No. 7 Rescinding of Internal Affairs Resolutions
Resolution No. 5 Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the United States
Resolution No. 6 250th Anniversaries of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps and Navy
Resolution No. 4 Assistance Conducting Department History Contest and Post History Showcase

Other Resolutions:
Disposition of all other resolutions is addressed in Addendum A.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your assistance and for giving us the opportunity to submit this report. Our commission is "Veterans Strengthening America."

Addendum A

Hold For Further Study
Register Resolution No. 2850 (VA) (DEC): **Investigation of the Department of District of Columbia**

Rejected
Resolution No. 17 (MN) (2024 National Convention): **Gender Neutral Cap Regulations**

Received and Recorded
Register Resolution No. 2860 (NH) (DEC): **Endorsement of Thomas E. Wiley for National Historian**
Register Resolution No. 2861 (AL) (DEC): **Endorsement of Ronald F. Bradstreet for National Vice Commander**

ADDENDUM B

Disposition of Action of Sons of The American Legion

In compliance with Resolution 21 "entitled", "Establish Procedure for Handling Matters Originating from SAL National Conventions and SAL National Executive Committees", adopted by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion at its meeting April 30-May 1, 1973, this is to report dispositions made by the Internal Affairs Commission of SAL actions taken at the SAL National Executive Committee May 3-4, 2025.

The below recommendations for the SAL National Executive Committee were reviewed by the SAL Resolution Screening Committee and the Internal Affairs Commission. The recommended actions are listed below.

RESOLUTION NUMBER	SOURCE	TITLE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
SAL Res. No. 1 Spring NEC, 2025	Public and Media Communications Commission	Change the Submission Deadline Date of the Sons of The American Legion Snapshots of Service Contest	Approved as Amended
SAL Res. No. 2 Spring NEC, 2025	Public and Media Communications Commission	Change the Submission Deadline Date of the Sons of The American Legion Videos of Service Contest	Approved as Amended
SAL Res. No. 5 Spring NEC, 2025	Membership and Squadron Activities Committee	SAL National Regional Membership Award	Approved as Amended
SAL Res. No. 7 Spring NEC, 2025	Membership and Squadron Activities Committee	Amend details for the Triple Nickel Presentation	Approved
SAL Res. No. 9 Spring NEC, 2025	Membership and Squadron Activities Committee	Detachment Recruitment Award	Approved as Amended
SAL Res. No. 10 Spring NEC, 2025	Detachment of Wisconsin	Update to Official History Book Contest Rules concerning Bindery	Approved

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: **SAL Resolution 1 - Spring, 2025**
Title: **Change the Submission Deadline Date of the Sons of The American Legion Snapshots of Service Contest**
Origin: **Public and Media Communications Commission**

WHEREAS, The "Snapshots of Service" contest was established during the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion meeting assembled in Indianapolis, IN on October 13-14, 2012; and

WHEREAS, All awards across the Sons of The American Legion have been given an expiration date of June 30, which is the end of the Legion year; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 3-4, 2025, that the "Snapshots of Service", a photo contest, be established to facilitate public relations for presentations and social media use based on the Four Pillars of our founding organization; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Sons of The American Legion Squadrons encourage member participation in "Snapshots of Service" to show the workmanship and service we provide for towards the programs of the Four Pillars of The American Legion; and, be it further

RESOLVED, Plaques will be awarded to the first two place Squadron winners (1st and 2nd) of each area of the Four Pillars: Americanism, VA & R, National Security and Children & Youth; and, be it further

RESOLVED, The rules and criteria for judging will be:

- **Photos must be based on the Four Pillars of The American Legion**
  - **Americanism, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Children and Youth, National Security**

SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■ As Amended
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Kevin Chaplin
KEVIN CHAPLIN, Chairman
SAL Public and Media Communications Commission

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: SAL Resolution 1 - Spring, 2025
Title: Change the Submission Deadline Date of the Sons of The American Legion Snapshots of Service Contest
Origin: Public and Media Communications Commission

- Photos must be in a digital jpg or tiff format
- Photos to become the property of the Sons of The American Legion
- Photos must not have a right of restriction
- Photos must contain members of the Sons with their covers or identifiable clothing on during the activity or event and a brief history of the event
- Squadrons may submit a maximum of 3 photos per category
- Plaques will be awarded the two best entries in each category
- Contest will run each year from the July 1st to June 30th of the following year
  - Photos need to be from this time period

Judging

- Quality of photo
- Best symbolizes the support for the Four Pillars by the Sons of The American Legion
- Have Sons of The American Legion member or members in it
- Must be submitted from a Squadron

; and be it further

RESOLVED, That SAL Resolution 8 – Fall 2012 is hereby rescinded; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this resolution become effective with the close of the 2025 Spring NEC of the Sons of The American Legion.

AL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■ As Amended
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Kevin Chaplin
KEVIN CHAPLIN, Chairman
SAL Public and Media Communications Commission

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: **SAL Resolution 2 - Spring, 2025**
Title: **Change the Submission Deadline Date of the Sons of The American Legion Videos of Service Contest**
Origin: **Public and Media Communications Commission**

WHEREAS, The "Videos of Service" contest was established during the National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion assembled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on August 26, 2022; and

WHEREAS, All awards across the Sons of the American Legion have been given an expiration date of June 30, which is the end of the Legion year; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 3-4, 2025, that the "Videos of Service", a video contest, be established to facilitate public relations, brand awareness and promotion of the Sons of The American Legion on social media platforms; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the rules and criteria for submissions and judging shall be published and maintained by the National Public and Media Communication Commission; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Sons of The American Legion Squadrons, Districts and Detachments encourage member participation in "Videos of Service" to show the workmanship and service we provide towards the programs of the Four Pillars of The American Legion and showcase our work in our communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That plaques will be awarded to the first two place winners (1st and 2nd) of each of these three categories: Program Support, Community Engagement, and Membership and Recruitment, for a total of six awards; and be it further

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AL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■ As Amended
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Kevin Chaplin
KEVIN CHAPLIN, Chairman
SAL Public and Media Communications Commission

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: SAL Resolution 2 - Spring, 2025
Title: Change the Submission Deadline Date of the Sons of The American Legion Videos of Service Contest
Origin: Public and Media Communications Commission

RESOLVED, That the award plaques will be procured by the Sons of The American Legion National Headquarters staff with funds allocated from the Public and Media Communications Commission SAL Awareness / Outreach budget line item not to exceed $250.00; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the contest will run each year from the July 1st to June 30th of the following year; and be it further

RESOLVED, That SAL Resolution 3 – Pre-Convention 2022 is hereby rescinded; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution become effective with the close of the 2025 Spring NEC of the Sons of The American Legion.

AL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■ As Amended
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Kevin Chaplin
KEVIN CHAPLIN, Chairman
SAL Public and Media Communications Commission

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: **SAL Resolution 5 - Spring, 2025**
Title: **SAL National Regional Membership Award**
Origin: **Membership and Squadron Activities Committee**

WHEREAS, No existing resolution can be found establishing this pre-existing award and there is no additional financial intent to perpetuate this award; and

WHEREAS, Efforts to maintain and grow our membership begin at the local squadron level; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative to annually recognize nationally the first detachment in each region that hit the 100% goal; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 3-4, 2025, that the National Executive Committee hereby establishes the National Regional Membership Award to recognize the first Detachment in each region to reach 100% of their goal with a framed certificate at each National Convention indicating such accomplishment; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That SAL Resolution 15, Spring 2024 NEC, which removed the criteria for an award which had not been established, is hereby rescinded; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution shall take effect immediately following the acceptance of it by The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee, to be awarded at the 2025 Sons of The American Legion National Convention in Tampa, Florida.

SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■ As Amended
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Committee, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Daryl VerStreate, Jr
DARYL VERSTREATE, JR., Chairman
SAL Membership and Squadron Activities Committee

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

William G. Hill
WILLIAM G. HILL, Chairman
SAL Internal Affairs Commission

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: **SAL Resolution 7 - Spring, 2025**
Title: **Amend details for the Triple Nickel Award Presentation**
Origin: **Membership and Squadron Activities Committee**

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion adopted Resolution NC2023-1 during its session on August 25-27, 2023, to create the Triple Nickel Membership Incentive Award Program; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 3-4, 2025, that the National Executive Committee hereby amends the award presentation for the Triple Nickel Membership Incentive Award to read as follows (with changes underlined):

RESOLVED, That any Detachment that meets the criteria of Resolution NC 1-F2023 will be awarded an Emblem Sales Gift Certificate in the amount of $555.00 to be used at the discretion of the Detachment, and a plaque comparable to those utilized for similar National awards with a cost of approximately $75 each, adjusted annually for inflation as necessary; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this amendment begins with the year 2025 membership and shall be presented annually at each National Convention.

SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

William G. Hill
WILLIAM G. HILL, Chairman
SAL Internal Affairs Commission

SAL Committee, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Daryl VerStreate, Jr
DARYL VERSTREATE, JR., Chairman
SAL Membership and Squadron Activities Committee

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: **SAL Resolution 9 - Spring, 2025**
Title: **Detachment Recruitment Award**
Origin: **Membership and Squadron Activities Committee**

WHEREAS, Membership is the lifeblood of the organization, and the recruitment of new members by all Detachments should be recognized at the national level; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 3-4, 2025, that the National Executive Committee hereby establishes the "Detachment Recruitment Award" for detachments with the most new members recruited; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That there shall be size categories which follow the Arthur D. Houghton Sons of The American Legion Trophy guidelines; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the size categories should be automatically amended in the future to align with the categories of the Arthur D. Houghton Award; and be it further

SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■ As Amended
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

William G. Hill
WILLIAM G. HILL, Chairman
SAL Internal Affairs Commission

SAL Committee, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Daryl VerStreate, Jr.
DARYL VERSTREATE, JR., Chairman
SAL Membership and Squadron Activities Committee

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: SAL Resolution 9 - Spring, 2025
Title: Detachment Recruitment Award
Origin: Membership and Squadron Activities Committee

RESOLVED, That the cut-off date shall coincide with the 105% membership target date for said year as determined by the National Organization; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the winners shall be awarded a RIBBON created by the National Membership Committee through National Emblem Sales; and be it further

RESOLVED, That SAL Resolution 7 – Spring 2019 is hereby rescinded; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution shall take effect immediately following the acceptance of it by The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee, to be awarded at the 2025 Sons of The American Legion National Convention in Tampa, Florida.

SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■ As Amended
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

William G. Hill
WILLIAM G. HILL, Chairman
SAL Internal Affairs Commission

SAL Committee, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

Daryl VerStreate, Jr.
DARYL VERSTREATE, JR., Chairman
SAL Membership and Squadron Activities Committee

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

The Sons of The American Legion
National Executive Committee
Held on
May 3-4, 2025
Resolution

No.: **SAL Resolution 10 - Spring, 2025**
Title: **Update to Official History Book Contest Rules concerning Bindery**
Origin: **Detachment of Wisconsin**

WHEREAS, The National History Book competition Rule V. 1. for judging the Appearance states that "Cover; The binder should be for loose leaf or 3-hole paper, and have a Sons of The American Legion emblem on the cover"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 3-4, 2025, that Rule V. 1. be changed to read "Cover; The binder should be for loose leaf or 3-hole paper, or conventional book binding techniques, and have a Sons of The American Legion emblem on the cover"; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this change become effective with the judging of the History Books at the 2025 National Convention in Tampa Bay, FL.

SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions Recommendation
Approved ■
Rejected □
Referred to: □
Other Action □

SAL Resolutions Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Nedley C. Fox
NEDLEY C. FOX, Chairman
SAL Subcommittee on Resolutions

SAL Commission, Chairman Name, and Signature
signature required

William G. Hill
WILLIAM G. HILL, Chairman
SAL Internal Affairs Commission

SAL Finance Commission Chairman Name and Signature
signature required

Jeffrey Van Horn
JEFFREY VAN HORN, Chairman
SAL Finance Commission

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Internal Affairs Commission with the exception of four resolutions and two addenda. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Internal Affairs Commission with the exception of four resolutions and two addenda. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 4: Assistance Conducting Department History Contest and Post History Showcase
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, National Executive Committee Resolution No. 27 (October, 1989), "Per Diem for Department Historian for Annual Conference & Workshop" provided two days per diem for historians to attend "a conference to review, augment and exchange ideas to encourage greater participation in the National History Contests"; and

WHEREAS, National Executive Committee Resolution No. 5 (October, 2017), "National History Contests Per Diem" authorized selected past department historians and past national historians "two days per diem to assist the national historian in conducting the annual history contests"; and

WHEREAS, National Executive Committee Resolution No. 20 (October, 2023), "Authorization for Conducting Department History Contest and Post History Showcase" created a department history contest and post history showcase that no longer require judges to assemble together to conduct history contests; and

WHEREAS, New criteria for assistance in conducting the department history contest and post history showcase is needed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 7-8, 2025, That the national historian is authorized to enlist the support of any past national historian or current department historian when conducting the department history contest and post history showcase at no expense to the national organization; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That National Executive Committee Resolution No. 27 (October, 1989) "Per Diem for Department Historian for Annual Conference & Workshop" and National Executive Committee Resolution No. 5 (October, 2017) "National History Contests Per Diem" are hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, this resolution has the approval of your Internal Affairs Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 4. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 5: Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the United States
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion is a globally respected civil society leader in the enduring values of the United States and has stood patriotically devoted to justice, freedom and democracy under the U.S. Constitution since the organization was founded; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion, with more than 11,500 local posts, is uniquely poised to execute multiple local, state and national initiatives to celebrate America's 250th anniversary and educate the public on the history and greatness of the United States since independence was declared on July 4, 1776; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion was invited to the national America250 Commission Advisory Council and has already begun to collaborate with the efforts of this congressionally charted, non-partisan body; and

WHEREAS, The America250 Commission, similar in structure to The American Legion, has more than 50 state and territory commissions that are leading regional efforts to commemorate the nation's semiquincentennial; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Ad Hoc Committee on the 250th Anniversary of the United States has explored multiple opportunities for collaborations at the local, state and national levels, as well as current American Legion Family programs and activities that impart patriotic values, civics education and honor for our nation; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion seeks to amplify awareness of the nation's 250th anniversary in a variety of ways, including:

- Theming and promoting the 250th anniversary of the nation through existing American Legion youth and Americanism programs, with enhanced emphasis on civics education and U.S. citizenship;
- Developing and launching initiatives to activate American Legion Family members around community service, civic behavior, health and wellness, and education to visibly and publicly amplify the significance of the nation's semiquincentennial;
- Active coordination and promotion of selected America250 Commission events and initiatives at the local, state and national levels, encouraging post and department engagement in their areas;
- Collaboration and promotion of local initiatives with American Legion connections that promote civics in local schools and communities;
- Fundraising initiative for members, posts, districts and departments to support the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation and other charities with appropriate premium contributor gifts suitable for display and/or collection that promote the nation's 250th anniversary;
- Robust marketing of existing American Legion children and youth material, historical material and patriotic emblem sales merchandise;
- Development and marketing of 250th anniversary apparel and merchandise through American Legion Emblem Sales;
- Active involvement and appearances at 250th anniversary commemorative events; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That The American Legion is hereby authorized to work with the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, the congressional caucus, the advisory councils and individual staff to enhance the celebration of America 250; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments are encouraged to actively participate in their state 250 commissions to enhance state and local efforts to celebrate America 250; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion, comprised of members whose selfless service to this great nation and its founding principles are criteria for membership, be historically referenced as a civil society leader which ensured that 250 years of a constitutional republic was justly and successfully celebrated.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, this resolution has the approval of your Internal Affairs Commission and the Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 5. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 6: 250th Anniversaries of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps and Navy
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The U.S. Army was founded on June 14, 1775, the U.S. Marine Corps on Nov. 10, 1775 and the U.S. Navy on Oct. 13, 1775, and

WHEREAS, The American Legion's membership consists of a substantial number of veterans and active-duty personnel from these three branches; and

WHEREAS, Celebrations of the 250th anniversaries of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps and Navy are scheduled nationwide, with major national commemorations planned in June in Washington, D.C., and in Philadelphia and Camden, N.J., October 9-16, 2025, and in November as part of Homecoming250; and

WHEREAS, American Legion posts throughout the country are recognized beacons of honor for those who have served in these three branches of service; and

WHEREAS, Community, state and national celebrations of these milestones present excellent opportunities for The American Legion to salute the proud legacy of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps and Navy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That The American Legion, at every level of the organization, actively participate and promote semiquincentennial observances of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps and Navy, working closely with military installations, schools, government offices, churches, the media and others to build awareness, sharing personal accounts of service, displaying historical artifacts and other items of interest and encouraging veterans to submit their stories on why they joined these branches of service on the national legiontown.org web platform.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, this resolution has the approval of your Internal Affairs Commission and Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 6. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Resolution No. 7: Rescinding of Internal Affairs Resolutions
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The Internal Affairs Commission reviewed its resolutions in accordance with the suggested review practices recommended by the National Conventions and the 1961 report of the Program Study Committee by the National Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, This review took place during the Internal Affairs Commission meeting held May 5, 2025, in Indianapolis, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, This study has found that resolutions should be rescinded because they have been superseded, accomplished, duplicated and/or are obsolete; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That the following resolutions are rescinded for the reasons indicated below.

No.	Year	Meeting	Title (Brief)	Reason
263	1922	Convention	Expulsion or Suspension of Member from any Post Reported to National Adjutant	Obsolete
21	1952	Spring	American Legion Editorial Appreciation Award	Obsolete
5	1964	Fall	American Legion Trophies, Awards or Citations Policy	Superseded
32	1984	Spring	Korean War Memorial	Accomplished
23	1984	Fall	Definition of Gold Star Mother and Gold Star Member	Superseded
21	1987	Spring	Korean War Memorial	Accomplished
8	2012	Fall	Authorizing Withdrawal from Paid-Up-For-Life Membership Trust for Administrative Expenses	Accomplished
10	2015	Spring	Commission Painting for Global War on Terrorism	Accomplished
98	2015	Convention	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished
13	2015	Fall	National World War I Memorial in Pershing Park, Washington, D.C.	Accomplished
359	2016	Convention	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished
13	2016	Fall	Appreciation to Peter Ole	Accomplished
86	2017	Convention	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished
106	2018	Convention	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished
56	2019	Convention	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished
36	2020	Fall	Mission Blue Post Assistance Program	Accomplished
6	2021	Fall	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished
9	2022	Fall	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished
11	2023	Fall	Appreciation to Host City	Accomplished

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of your Internal Affairs Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 7. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, attached to the report are Addenda A and B. I move the actions of the Internal Affairs Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Addenda A and B. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair recognizes Mike Cooke from Wyoming, chairman of the Membership & Post Activities Committee, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Membership & Post Activities Committee
Mike Cooke, Wyoming, Chairman

Good afternoon. National Commander LaCoursiere, members of the National Executive Committee, past national commanders, guests and friends, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. I take great pride in addressing a subject matter so near and dear to us all. It's membership. You have a copy of my written report which highlights several key areas of the 2025 membership campaign.

The 2025 membership campaign brought about some changes, some that we are familiar with and others that happen not very often. First, we saw a dues increase implementation. Second, we continued to average close to 200 posts closing, and that's not increasing very often. Traditional renewals continued to be on the decline. Really, not a recipe for growth, and a trend I am sure none of us in this room wants. We are 57,346 members behind this same time last year.

We have to move membership to the forefront of all of our efforts and to help every eligible veteran understand that in order for us, The American Legion, to be able to assist current and future veterans, we want them to join us.

We must continue to make retention and recruitment a priority in any membership plan. We can't wait for membership to just come in through the doors. We cannot solely rely on renewal notices to encourage our members. Retention of current members will only get us so far. That is why Commander LaCoursiere set a goal to recruit 75,000 new members. To date, we have recruited just shy of 60,000; 59,909. As we bring them in, we need to encourage and educate these new members on the great things The American Legion is doing for veterans, their families and their communities.

Now, we are all aware of the 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee report from 2019. I cannot stress enough how important it is for us to work towards the recommendations within it and pass it down to the post level and members. That report was developed to assist our leaders at all levels in developing, implementing strategies to improve recruiting, engagement of new members and training. So, I encourage you to go back home and continue to work within your respective departments, districts and posts to get the word out.

We cannot lose focus on our mission, and we have to understand the wants, needs and desires of our membership base. We must engage our members through effective and timely communication, but leadership at all levels must be committed and dedicated to training to ensure this is accomplished properly. Ultimately, we must strive for every post to be a pillar in the respective community.

The implementation of the multi-year renewal option had made working with renewals just a little easier for several years out. I am happy to report that we have had 49,813 members take advantage of this option. This equates to 5,249 new members to The American Legion. Of that number, 44,564 have chosen to renew into that option.

Conducting Buddy Checks on our members is more important than ever as well. We need to thank them for being a member and show them the value of being a member of this great organization. We must engage them with the great things The American Legion is doing. It is imperative to share the monthly Membership Impact Report with members. Share that with the communities to show The American Legion is an asset in the community, and it was brought up earlier to show that.

Whatever it is, we have to rally our members around it. Like we have done with the Be the One campaign, publicize it to the community. Show them how great we are and make them want to become a member. And don't forget, ask them to join and ask them to renew.

Commander LaCoursiere, thank you for allowing me at this time to address the NEC. This concludes my briefing.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Membership & Post Activities Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the report of the Membership & Post Activities Committee. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. The chair now recognizes National Adjutant Rodney K. Rolland of Georgia for announcements.

Announcements

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: The reception begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Sheraton Center Circle Suites, lower level. Dinner will be in the Meridian Ballroom at 6:30 p.m. Thank you, commander.

Executive Session

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: At this time, I would entertain a motion for the NEC to go into executive session.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, I move the National Executive Committee go into executive session. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded that the National Executive Committee go into executive session. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Motion carried. For the executive session, members of the National Executive Committee who are speaking for their department may stay. Alternates who are not representing their departments as the spokesperson for the NEC must leave. Past national commanders may stay. National officers may stay. The chairman of the Finance Commission and the Internal Affairs Commission may stay. All others are requested to leave immediately.

...At 2:19 p.m., Wednesday, May 7, 2025, the National Executive Committee entered Executive Session.

...At 2:27 p.m., the National Executive Committee returned to regular session, National Commander LaCoursiere presiding.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Is there any other business to come before today's session? Stand in place. The colors of our nation in place, by the numbers: One, two. Thank you, everybody. We're now in recess until 8:30 tomorrow morning.

...At 2:28 p.m., Wednesday, May 7, 2025, the National Executive Committee recessed to reconvene at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, May 8, 2025.

PROCEEDINGS

of the

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 8, 2025

...At 8:30 a.m., the National Executive Committee reconvened, National Commander LaCoursiere presiding.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: I call this meeting of the National Executive Committee to order. Please join me in a salute to the colors of our nation by the numbers. One. Two. Please uncover. Past National Commander Reverend Dan Seehafer for the invocation.

Invocation
Rev. Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin, Past National Commander

Family, we pray. Heavenly Father, we gather once again this morning as we continue with our spring meeting's agenda. But we gather with gratitude and thanksgiving for the freedoms we enjoy all made possible by the courageous men and women You lifted up for us who have served and continue to serve our nation. We thank You, then, for the dedication, the sacrifice and commitment of our veterans, especially those veterans called Legionnaires.

Continue, Lord, to guide our deliberations this day, that we may work together for the betterment of our communities and for the well-being of our fellow veterans and their families. We pray this once again in Your life-saving name and so it shall be. ...*Chorus of "Amen."*

Pledge of Allegiance

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Please remain uncovered. I call on National Sergeant-at-Arms Everett G. Shepard III of Connecticut to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our country.

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS SHEPARD: In unison. ...*The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: I now call on National Adjutant Rodney Rolland of Georgia for the roll call.

Roll Call

National Officers

National Adjutant
Rodney K. Rolland, Georgia

National Commander
James "Jim" LaCoursiere, Connecticut

National Vice Commanders
James C. Kellog, Minnesota
Gary B. Leach, California
Joseph A. "Joe" Lysaght, South Carolina
Roger P. Mathison, Wisconsin
Charles K. "Chuck" Robbins, New Jersey

Past National Commanders

John P. "Jake" Comer	Massachusetts	
Robert S. Turner	Georgia	(Excused)
Bruce Thiesen	California	(Excused)
Daniel A. Ludwig	Minnesota	
Joseph J. Frank	Missouri	(Excused)
Anthony G. Jordan	Maine	(Excused)
Butch L. Miller	Virginia	(Excused)
Hon. Alan G. Lance, Sr.	Idaho	(Excused)
Richard J. Santos	Maryland	
Ronald F. Conley	Pennsylvania	(Excused)
Hon. John A. Brieden, III	Texas	(Excused)
Thomas L. Bock	Colorado	
Paul A. Morin	Massachusetts	
Martin F. Conatser	Illinois	
Robert W. Spanogle	Michigan	(Excused)
David K. Rehbein	Iowa	

Clarence E. Hill	Florida	
Jimmie L. Foster	Alaska	
Fang A. Wong	New York	(Excused)
James E. Koutz	Indiana	
Daniel M. Dellinger	Virginia	
Michael D. Helm	Nebraska	(Excused)
Harold D. Barnett	Georgia	(Excused)
Charles E. Schmidt	Oregon	
Denise H. Rohan	Wisconsin	
Brett P. Reistad	Virginia	
James W. "Bill" Oxford	North Carolina	(Excused)
Paul E. Dillard	Texas	
Vincent J. Troiola	New York	
Daniel S. Wheeler	Virginia	
Daniel J. Seehafer	Wisconsin	

National Executive Committee Members

Department	Committee Member		Alternate	
Alabama	Hardwick O. Hall, Sr.			
Alaska	James E. Pisa			
Arizona	Andres Jaime, Jr.			
Arkansas	Mary V. Erdman			
California	Jere L. Ramano			
Connecticut	Robert S. Murray			
Delaware	Michael A. Havel			
D.C.	Christopher V. Herndon			
Florida	Jim V. Ramos			
France	Hans J. Stockenberger			
Georgia	Phil Youngblood			
Hawaii	Francis E. Riddell, Jr.			
Idaho	Robert L. Skinner			
Illinois	Roy Weber			
Indiana	Kenneth R. Cooper			
Iowa	Dennis J. Soppe			
Kansas	Dan K. Wiley			
Kentucky	William O. Moore, Jr.			
Latin America	Randall L. Butler			
Louisiana	Rudolph A. Bourg, Sr.			
Maine	Lloyd H. Woods			
Maryland	Melvin G. Smullen			
Massachusetts	Jodie L. Pajak			
Michigan	Larry C. Money			
Minnesota	William C. Barbknecht	(Excused)	Peggy Moon	
Mississippi	Murry Q. Toney, Jr.			
Missouri	George E. Scarborough			
Montana	Larry G. Dobb			
Nebraska	James A. Costello			
Nevada	L. James Stewart			
New Hampshire	Robert E. Dionne, Sr.			
New Jersey	Berley Hanna, Jr.	(Excused)	Eugene J. O'Grady	
New Mexico	Edward Cheatham, Jr.			
New York	Timothy S. Van Patten			
North Carolina	Davis S. Shore			
North Dakota	Steven D. Anderson			
Ohio	Ronald L. Chapman	(Excused)	Robert E. Schmitt, Jr.	(Excused)
Oklahoma	Charles S. O'Leary			
Oregon	Kevin John Owens			
Pennsylvania	E. Michael Stelacio			
Philippines	Michael S. Napsey	(Excused)	Carl A. Nord	(Excused)
Puerto Rico	Ramon L. Rivera	(Excused)	Antonio Arroyo	
Rhode Island	James Weinreich			
South Carolina	Jimmy E. Hawk			
South Dakota	Frederick N. Nelson			
Tennessee	Robert W. Hensley			
Texas	John C. Hince			
Utah	Terry D. Schow			
Vermont	Thomas J. Scanlon			
Virginia	Linden B. Dixon, Jr.			
Washington	Robert A. Clark			
West Virginia	William W. Kile			
Wisconsin	Robert L. Shappell			
Wyoming	Keith R. Davidson			

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: That completes the roll call.

Receipt of Resolutions, Motions, and Petitions

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Do we have any resolutions, motions or petitions to receive?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, there is one additional resolution to receive from the Subcommittee on Resolutions.

Resolution No. 3: Requirement of Background Checks for National Officers of The American Legion
Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions
Submitted by: Subcommittee on Resolutions

WHEREAS, The American Legion is committed to the highest standards of integrity, accountability and public trust in its leadership; and

WHEREAS, National officers of The American Legion represent the organization at the highest levels and are entrusted with significant fiduciary, legal and organizational responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, Background checks are a widely accepted and prudent measure to verify the character and qualifications of individuals assuming leadership roles, particularly in nonprofit and service organizations; and

WHEREAS, Implementing background checks promotes transparency and reinforces confidence in the leadership of The American Legion among its members, partners and the public; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That effective beginning with the 2026 administrative year, all candidates for national office, including but not limited to national commander, national vice commanders and national officers elected or appointed by the National Executive Committee, shall be subject to a criminal background check; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national adjutant, in consultation with legal counsel and appropriate staff, shall develop and implement procedures to conduct such background checks, ensure confidentiality of information and determine disqualifying criteria consistent with applicable laws and organizational policies; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a candidate's refusal to consent to a background check shall be considered grounds for disqualification from consideration or removal from office; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the results of the background checks shall be reviewed by a designated committee or officer(s) as determined by the National Executive Committee, and that any findings relevant to the integrity or qualifications of the candidate shall be reported to the National Executive Committee for appropriate action.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: Commander, this resolution has the approval of your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I so move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 3. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye.Opposed, nay. Carried.

Unfinished Business or Resolutions from Previous Day

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Do we have unfinished business of the preceding day or resolutions laying over from the previous day?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, there is unfinished business that needs to be taken care of, and it has to do with the Department of Nebraska. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: We have a motion and a second on the floor to discuss the package in regard to Nebraska that you were all asked to absorb and read last night. Bottom line is, is we have two options the way it's written up. We can either reject or we can move forward towards trial. The direct recommendation of the collective body has been to reject, but I'm throwing that out there for somebody to discuss and put it in the form of a motion. I can't make the motion.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MORIN: Move to reject. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: We have a motion and a second on the floor to reject any further action with Post 3 in Lincoln, Nebraska. Is there any further discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. opposed, nay. Carried. Are there any motions on the floor to remove members of standing or special commission, committees, boards, or subcommittees of the NEC? Hearing none, we'll move to the next order of business. Do we have any interim appointments?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, may I address the national adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, you may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify that the list of interim appointments is a true and correct list?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Thank you, Mr. Adjutant. Commander, I move that the list of interim appointments be approved without being read. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded that the list of interim appointments be approved without being read. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Confirmation of Interim Appointments

Edwin C. Holbrook (North Carolina), Americanism Commission, Consultant
(new appointment)
Ken Bourgeois (Latin America), Americanism Council, Member
(replaces Troy A. Mills – previously moved to National Security Council)
Martin E. Neal (Nebraska), Americanism Council, Member
(replaces Rolland Otte – declined appointment)
Michael P. Davis (Massachusetts), Finance Commission, 2026 Member
(replaces John D. Monahan [Connecticut] – resigned)
Walter W. Ivie (Texas), American Legion Charities, Inc., Vice Chairman
(replaces William S. Feasenmyer, Jr. [Virginia] – moved to member)
William S. Feasenmyer, Jr. (Virginia), American Legion Charities, Inc., Member
(replaces Walter W. Ivie [Texas] – moved to vice chairman)

William L. Stroud (Louisiana), Constitution & By-Laws Committee, 2027 Member
(replaces James R. Johnson – deceased)
Robert M. Shreve (Georgia), Legislative Commission, 2026 Member
(replaces Roger L. Tingler – resigned)
Nelson Izaak Blake (Massachusetts), Legislative Commission, 2026 Member
(replaces William J. Chisholm – deceased)
Christopher J. Manning (Massachusetts), Marketing Commission, 2026 Member
(replaces Michael P. Davis – resigned)
Kalynn Jacks (Georgia), Marketing Commission, 2027 Member
(replaces Robert M. Shreve – resigned)
Darrin L. Alderson (Iowa), Marketing Commission Executive Committee, Member
(replaces Michael P. Davis [Massachusetts] – resigned)
Christopher J. Manning (Massachusetts), Resolutions Screening Committee of the Marketing Commission, Member
(replaces Michael P. Davis – resigned)
Terry Abdelnour (Illinois), National Security Commission, 2027 Member
(replaces Kenneth J. Trumbull – deceased)
Robert A. Clark (Washington), National Security Commission Liaison Committee, Member
(new appointment)
John G. Hart (Connecticut), Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee, 2027 Member
(replaces Frank A. Poirer – resigned)
David K. Melka (Arizona), National Security Council, Member
(replaces Michael G. Maier – declined appointment)
James M. Watson (Georgia), National Security Council, Member
(new appointment)
James F. Army (Massachusetts), National Security Council, Member
(new appointment)
Scott M. Conner (Massachusetts), National Security Council, Member
(new appointment)
Robert Mason (Ohio), National Security Council, Member
(replaces William H. Edwards – resigned)
Tami Santerre (Utah), National Security Council, Member
(replaces Richard G. Fisher – resigned)
Joseph Henault (Rhode Island), Health Administration Committee, Consultant
(replaces James W. Weinreich – resigned)
Richard G. Fisher (Utah), Veterans Education, Other Benefits & Homelessness Committee, Member
(replaces Alexander Aerts – deceased)
Jack A. Platt (Indiana), Veterans Employment & Education Council, Member
(replaces Dennis W. Pettit – deceased)

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Commander, may I address the national adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, you may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify the list of cancellations of post and squadron charters is a true and correct list and everything has been done to try to revitalize these posts?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, I move the list be approved without being read. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to approve the list of cancellations of post and/or squadron charters without being read. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Confirmation of Cancellation of Post and/or Squadron Charters

Post Charters
Presented to the National Executive Committee for Cancellation Consideration

The research done on each Post prior to any recommendation made as an attempt to see whether these Posts could be revitalized is based on the following criteria: ***Community Size*** and ***Veterans Population***

One hundred twenty-seven (127) Posts have been submitted and recommended for cancellation consideration during the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee meeting proceedings in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 8, 2025

*** See Merging Post Information Below ****

DEPARTMENT	POST #	NAME	LOCATION
ALABAMA	0043**	General Walter E. Bare (to merge with William A. Wyatt Post 0722)	Birmingham
	0051**	Donaldson (to merge with Whitehead Post 0033)	Bear Creek
	0171**	B.W. Howell (to merge with General Gorgas Post 0001)	Birmingham

DEPARTMENT	POST #	NAME	LOCATION
	0188	Taylor-Stuart	Bay Minette
	0267**	Matthew Leonard (to merge with General Gorgas Post 0001)	Birmingham
CALIFORNIA	0075	La Puente	City of Industry
	0123	Santa Monica Bay Cities	Santa Monica
	0128	Lindsay	Lindsay
	0142	Fullerton	Fullerton
	0161	Harding-Noia	Antioch
	0537	City Service	San Diego
	0560	Houghton Park	Long Beach
	0594	George Van Vleet, Jr.	Fresno
	0608	Florin	Florin
	0619	S Sgt. Allan K. Walker, USMC	Warner Springs
	0620	Rocklin-Whitney Ranch	Rocklin
	0717	Raber-Del Toro	Garden Grove
	0776	Fallbrook	Fallbrook
	0796	Topanga Canyon	Topanga
	0857	Sgt. Thomas R. Macpherson	Seal Beach
	0862	Saddleback Valley	Saddleback Valley
	0867	Charles W. Turner	Chula Vista
	0879	High Desert	Lucerne Valley
CONNECTICUT	0032**	Hanrahan (to merge with Avon Post 0201)	Unionville
	0053**	James Palache (to merge with Avon Post 0201)	Farmington
	0203**	Eastford (to merge with Benson-Flugel Post 0111)	Eastford
	0211	Post University American Legion Family/Virtual	Post University
DELAWARE	0012**	Brandywine (to merge with William H. Furrowh Post 0011)	Wilmington
	0022**	Indian River (to merge with Dagsboro Post 0024)	Millsboro
FLORIDA	0225**	Herbert Surber (to merge with Allen Rawls Post 0077)	Floral City
	0410	Michael M. Gardino, Sr.	Rockledge
FRANCE	EG303**	Molesworth (to merge with London Post EG01)	Molesworth
GEORGIA	0055	Henry County	McDonough
	0094	Washington County	Sandersville
	0181	Pierce County, Inc.	Blackshear
	0309**	Ruben Woods, Jr., Inc. (to merge with C B Dowdell, Inc. Post 0558)	Buena Vista
	0332	Gary L. Lemonds, Inc.	Social Circle
ILLINOIS	0056**	Louis E. Davis (to merge with Carl S. Martin Post 0635)	Bloomington
	0145**	Highland Park (to merge with Deerfield Post 0738)	Highland Park
	0501**	Highwood (to merge with Deerfield Post 0738)	Highwood
INDIANA	0039	Randolph	Winchester
	0123	Harrison	Corydon
	0222	Clarence Wiles	Flora
	0225	Clay City	Clay City
	0249	Tillman H. Harpole	Indianapolis
IOWA	0465	Breen	Titonka
	0535	Leist-Veerkamp	Ottosen

DEPARTMENT	POST #	NAME	LOCATION
	0628	Woden	Woden
MAINE	0121	Monticello Memorial	Monticello
	0191	Earl Severance	Topsfield
MARYLAND	0155	Victory	Westernport
MASSACHUSETTS	0074	James J. McGrath, Inc.	Framingham
	0235	Frank J. Demars	Maynard
	0246	John J. Weir	Gilbertville
	0309	Beevers-Wilmot, Inc.	Salisbury
	0388	East Somerville	Somerville
MICHIGAN	0183**	Fisher Body Lansing (to merge with Capital City Post 0012)	Lansing
	0237	Oldsmobile	Lansing
	0353	Eau Claire	Eau Claire
	0460	Mount Moriah, Inc.	Lansing
	0537	Reinhard W. Roman	Conklin
MINNESOTA	0138	Moe-Indihar	Gilbert
	0370	Nelson-Otteson	Wolverton
	0539	Euclid	Euclid
MISSOURI	0056	Eagleville Memorial	Eagleville
	0122	Warren County	Warrenton
	0169	Lincoln-Anderson	Osborn
	0354	Lischwe-Brandel	Brinktown
	0369	Scott County Memorial	Benton
	0389	Aubuchon-Alsonbrook	Chaffee
	0541	Bay Community	Bay
MONTANA	0012**	Richland (to merge with Fairview Post 0114)	Sidney
	0127	Franklin Juneau	Browning
NEBRASKA	0181	Fort McPherson	Maxwell
	0336	Sorenson and Keiber	Crab Orchard
	0357	Verner A. Baird	Brunswick
NEVADA	0075	Diamond Jubilee	Logandale
NEW YORK	0206	Greece Memorial	Greece
	0299	Alan F. Waite	Yonkers
	0464	Leonard Morange	Bronxville
	0520	Butler Johnson	Elmsford
	1022	Van Deloo-Miller	Albany
	1035	Thomas B. Flynn, Jr., Inc.	Watervliet
	1358	Kings Highway	Brooklyn
	1509	Nepera Park Veterans	Yonkers
	1512	Town of Marbletown	Stone Ridge
	1578	Henry And Stanley Cichon, Inc.	Staten Island
NORTH CAROLINA	0037	Bertie County	Windsor
	0203**	Newport, Inc. (to merge with Morehead City Post 0046)	Newport
	0205	Pembroke	Pembroke
	0329	Owen Middleton	Kenansville
	0526	Abccm	Asheville
OHIO	0046**	Liberty (to merge with Sch-Loe-Man Post 0547)	Bellevue
	0099	Harry E. Pond	Toledo
	0132	Vernon McCune	Toledo

DEPARTMENT	POST #	NAME	LOCATION
	0227	Bridgeport	Bridgeport
	0305	Norcross-Myers	Custar
	0334	Arthur Daly	Toledo
	0560**	Franklin D. Roosevelt (to merge with Mahoning Valley, Inc. Post 0015)	Campbell
OKLAHOMA	0183	Emmett E. Epperson, Inc.	Ryan
SOUTH CAROLINA	0196	Myrtle Beach	Myrtle Beach
SOUTH DAKOTA	0030	George E. Sperbeck	Parker
	0201	Newman-Millage	Pukwana
TENNESSEE	0118**	Cunningham-McCoy (to merge with Gibson County Post 0287)	Milan
	0165	Robinson-McFadden	Bolivar
TEXAS	0013	Garrett-Baker, Inc.	Ingram
	0195	Chas P. Rankine, Inc.	Henderson
	0219**	Powell-Davisdson (to merge with Turnbow-Higgs Post 0240)	Dublin
	0237	Burt Fleming	Junction
	0250**	Glenn Humphrey (to merge with Lloyd Grubbs Post 0049)	Bridge City
	0303	Sam Russell	Wills Point
	0387**	Bill Blackshear (to merge with Doyle Williams Post 0488)	San Augustine
	0465	Kirbyville	Kirbyville
	0474	Ford-Mosley	Tyler
	0616	James C. Guillory	Orange
	0844	Anthony-Menefee-Steper	Henderson
UTAH	0103	Green River	Green River
VIRGINIA	0040	Blackstone	Blackstone
	0147	Free State	Kenbridge
	0208	Russell County Veterans American Legion	Lebanon
WASHINGTON	0006	Senator Henry M. Scoop Jackson, Inc.	Everett
	0040**	Ballard-Cochran, Inc. (to merge with Seattle, Inc. Post 0001)	Seattle
	0058	Arthur Kincaid	Monroe
WISCONSIN	0177	Gille-McGlynn	Gratiot
	0265	Leo Van Roy, Inc.	Darboy
	0312	Carlson-Alguire-Hougland, Inc.	Peshtigo
	0388	General William Mitchell, Inc.	Milwaukee

Sons of The American Legion Squadron Charters
Presented to the National Executive Committee for Cancellation Consideration

Forty-one (41) Squadrons have been submitted and recommended for cancellation consideration during the 2025 Spring National Executive Committee meeting proceedings in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 8, 2025.

** *See Merging Post Information Below* **

DETACHMENT	SQDN #	NAME	LOCATION
ALABAMA	0171	B.W. Howell	Birmingham
	0188	Taylor-Stuart	Bay Minette
CALIFORNIA	0075	La Puente	City of Industry
	0161	Harding-Noia	Antioch
	0537	City Service	San Diego
	0620	Rocklin-Whitney Ranch	Rocklin

DETACHMENT	SQDN #	NAME	LOCATION
COLORADO	0062	Mark Anthony Evans-Lawton Moffat, County	Craig
	0200	Bruce Alan White	Grand Junction
GEORGIA	0181	Pierce County	Blackshear
	0332	Gary L. Lemonds	Social Circle
ILLINOIS	0335	River Grove	River Grove
	0391	Lombard	Lombard
INDIANA	0161	Ryan A. Balmer	Mishawaka
	0242	Santa Claus	Santa Claus
	0249	Tillman H. Harpole	Indianapolis
	0279	Miller Dunes	Gary
	0454	Paul Leon Wolek Memorial	New Chicago
MISSISSIPPI	0051	Itawamba County	Fulton
	2002	D'Iberville	D'Iberville
MISSOURI	0389	Aubuchon-Alsonbrook	Chaffee
NEW HAMPSHIRE	0024	Croteau-Coutts-Ford	Marlborough
	0079	Manchester	Manchester
	0085	Griggs-Strickland	Gilsum
NEW YORK	0520	Butler Johnson	Elmsford
	1358	Kings Highway	Brooklyn
	1578	Henry And Stanley Cichon	Staten Island
NORTH CAROLINA	0235	Hooks-Orr	Matthews
OHIO	0099	Harry E. Pond	Toledo
	0305	Norcross-Myers	Custar
SOUTH CAROLINA	0002	Abbeville	Abbeville
TENNESSEE	*0118***	Cunningham-McCoy (to merge with Gibson County Sqdn 0287)	Milan
	0290	Hendersonville	Hendersonville
TEXAS	0013	Garrett-Baker	Ingram
	0195	Chas P. Rankine	Henderson
	*0219***	Powell-Davidson (to merge with Turnbow-Higgs Sqdn 0240)	Dublin
	*0250***	Glenn Humphrey (to merge with Lloyd Grubbs Sqdn 0049)	Bridge City
UTAH	0103	Green River	Green River
WASHINGTON	0100	Army Sgt. Justin D. Norton	Lacey
WYOMING	0025	Moorcroft	Moorcroft
	0047	Phillips-Edwards	Pinedale
	0060	Donald W. Eisenhauer	Pine Bluffs

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, may I again address the national adjutant in regard to confirmation of dates for future meetings?

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Yes, you may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Adjutant, are there dates of future meetings that require approval of the National Executive Committee?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ROLLAND: Yes, there are.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, I move that the dates be approved without being read as they are published in the digest. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to approve the dates of future meetings without being read as they are published in the digest. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried.

Confirmation of Dates of Future Meetings

Previously Approved by NEC

2025 NATIONAL CONVENTION - TAMPA BAY, FLORIDA	AUGUST 22-28
2025 FALL MEETINGS – OCTOBER 6-9	
Commissions and Committees	October 6-7
Commanders and Adjutants Conference	October 6-7
National Executive Committee	October 8-9
2026 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE	March 1-4
2026 SPRING MEETINGS – MAY 4-7	
Commissions and Committees	May 4-5
National Executive Committee	May 6-7
2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION – LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY	AUGUST 28-SEPTEMBER 3
2026 FALL MEETINGS - OCTOBER 5-8	
Commissions and Committees	October 5-6
Commanders and Adjutants Conference	October 5-6
National Executive Committee	October 7-8
2027 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE	February 28-March 3
2027 SPRING MEETINGS - MAY 3-6	
Commissions and Committees	May 3-4
National Executive Committee	May 5-6
2027 NATIONAL CONVENTION – KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI	AUGUST 27-SEPTEMBER 2
2027 FALL MEETINGS - OCTOBER 4-7	
Commissions and Committees	October 4-5
Commanders and Adjutants Conference	October 4-5
National Executive Committee	October 6-7
2028 NATIONAL CONVENTION – COLUMBUS, OHIO	AUGUST 25-31
2029 NATIONAL CONVENTION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA	AUGUST 24-30
2030 NATIONAL CONVENTION – SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH	AUGUST 23-29

Contract Signature Authorization

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Can I get a motion to authorize myself, as the national commander, to delegate signing of contracts to the national adjutant and the national treasurer?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN WOODS: So, moved. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: We have a motion and second authorizing authoritative signatures. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. *...National Vice Commander Lysaght assumed the chair.*

Closing Remarks
James A. LaCoursiere, Jr., Connecticut, National Commander

Good morning, members of the NEC, past national commanders, national officers, distinguished guests. It truly has been a real honor and privilege to chair the meetings this weekend and everything. But as I said last night during dinner and as I've been saying in my travels, it's all right here in my heart. I can't say it enough. I'm very grateful for the opportunity to serve and be the face of The American Legion this year. But it's not me. It's all of us working together. Working together to enhance The American Legion. Working together to build up our communities and the great United States of America.

The American Legion, we do a lot of great things. And I enjoy in my travels being able to break bread with family. It's like I tell my family, I may not be home, but anytime I'm with the American Legion Family and breaking bread, I am with family. So, for that I'm very grateful.

The same ask I've been asking for all year, taking the baton from my dear friend Commander Seehafer, that's maintaining our number one mission of Be the One. Be the one to save lives and change lives. Be the one to be there for our brothers and sisters in their time of need. Be the one to make a difference in our community, our state and our nation. Be the one to mentor our youth. Be the one to be the strong voice for all veterans and their families throughout the great United States of America. Together we can all do that. Together we can all Be the One. Am I correct? *...Chorus of "Yes."*

This is what I'm very proud of. At The American Legion, we do so much very serious work, very serious work. But I also enjoy the camaraderie we all have, the tight bonds, relationships and the opportunities that we get to share laughter, have fun together any chance we can. Because we always put our serious work first, but the second we get that chance to relax together, it's all about fun. And keeping that in mind, that was the reason last few dinners that we had together and everything, we didn't do the entertainment. We had fun together; am I correct? *...Chorus of "Yes."*

It's all about fun, but at the same time, while having fun, we're raising money for our causes. So, I thank you for reaching deep in your pockets. While you're still in the room, if you want to reach deeper, go ahead. I won't hold you back. *(Laughter)*

I will not refrain from anybody reaching in their pockets. But keeping things in fun, I just want to close it out and sincerely say thank you and let you know, I intend on keeping the fun rolling right up to the eleventh hour, pretty much. And just so you all know, the Commander's Banquet, how many people are intending on to go to Tampa this year? Keeping your hands up, if you can drop them if it doesn't pertain to you, but how many people like Jimmy Buffett? All right. A lot of hands came right back up, all right. Well, that is going to be our theme for the banquet, Jimmy Buffett. So, if you look down at your suits and ties right now that you're wearing, forget it. It will be Jimmy Buffett attire, Hawaiian theme. Yeah, look at that. *(Applause)*

With one exception, with one exception, because I learned it from Past National Commander and Past National Adjutant Daniel Wheeler, anytime he made announcements for the Commander's Banquet, he always had that one exception, that one exception where they can wear the flip-flops with Past National Commander Paul Morin. So, the one exception is Paul Morin will be in a tuxedo that evening. *(Laughter)*

Just to share with you, we're going to do things Jimmy Buffett style, but at the same time we're going to raise some money for VCF and everything. So surely Emblem Sales will have some Hawaiian-style shirts with The American Legion on them; those will be available soon. Feel free to purchase them, partake in them.

Let's finish the year out taking care of The American Legion family, taking care of our communities, our states and our great nation, but let's do it with a smile on our face and keep it right in the heart. God bless each and every one of you, and may God bless the great United States of America. Thank you, everybody. *(Standing applause) ...National Commander LaCoursiere resumed the chair.*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, I move that your closing remarks be received and filed. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded that the national commander's closing remarks be received and filed. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, nay. Carried. I now call on Chairman William W. Kile of West Virginia for a final report of the Subcommittee on Resolutions.

Final Report of the Subcommittee on Resolutions
William W. Kile, West Virginia, Chairman

Mr. Commander, your Subcommittee on Resolutions has considered all resolutions that have come before the committee. I would like to stress the importance to the members of the National Executive Committee in keeping their departments informed of the actions taken by the National Executive Committee. The resolutions passed during this meeting will be available in a few days on the Digital Archive at archive.legion.org.

I would like to take this time to thank the members of the committee who have done an outstanding job and attended every session. My special thanks go to my vice chairman, Lloyd Woods of Maine; Robert Skinner of Idaho, Dan Wiley of Kansas, Michael Stelacio from Pennsylvania, and Linden Dixon from Virginia. I thank you very much for your dedicated service.

Appreciation is also extended to Howard Trace and his staff who served our committee. I also want to thank the document center, directors and chairmen of the commissions and committees on their work in order to bring the reports and resolutions to you.

Mr. Commander, it is a pleasure to serve as chairman of your Subcommittee on Resolutions. We would like to thank the National Executive Committee in the reporting of various resolutions. You have been most cooperative. Mr. Commander, I move that this report be received and filed. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: It's been moved and seconded to file the report of the Subcommittee on Resolutions. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by aye. opposed, nay. Carried. I was asked prior, under the good of the organization, if I can recognize NEC Member Mary Erdman.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ERDMAN (AR): Thank you, commander. I have paper with me to make sure I got this right, but it's something that's on my mind and I'd like to bring this up.

The *New York Times* has 11.5 million subscribers and they also have 350,000 digital subscribers. There was an article recently that was published that anybody with a computer could read, and I read it. And it had to do with the name, changing the name of Veterans Day and also the firing of VA employees.

And what they wrote was they had contacted organizations. They had one organization responded that the name change would cause "more than 99 percent of living veterans ... would be left without a holiday commemorating their service."

Another organization says, "Veterans don't need rewritten history, they need the respect and benefits they earned."

A spokesman for another non-partisan advocacy organization endorsed Veterans Day and said it was "dedicated to all veterans who fought for peace." And in February, that group's national commander criticized the plans for firing tens of thousands of jobs from the VA.

A spokeswoman, they said a spokeswoman from The American Legion, organization created after World War I and calls itself, and this is a quote, "and calls itself 'the nation's most the influential, effective and dependable advocate of veterans affairs' declined to comment on the idea of a name change. They also declined multiple requests for comment in February responding to the firing of thousands of federal employees, of which roughly 30 percent are military veterans."

I was informed, because I did ask somebody about this, and I was informed that The American Legion didn't respond because they go directly to the people in Washington. My concern, commander, is that the perception that this brings. And you know, I don't know, maybe I'm the only one that didn't know that we go directly to the people in Washington instead of commenting publicly. Maybe you all know that, but I didn't know that. And I've got a feeling that, probably, the general public doesn't know that either.

And my concern is that this perception is that we don't care. And that bothers me because, especially now when we need members, you know, we're losing them, we're not gaining a whole lot more members, this isn't going to help us at all. So, what I would like to ask in the future is that we can be more public. I know that we can speak out, I know we're not afraid to speak out. Because I remember when

Commander Dellinger was commander, he spoke out and we got the VA secretary at that time fired. So, I know that we can speak out and I would like to see us do that in the future for the benefit, so that people know that we do care. Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: I will respond to that, though. The American Legion, we've been using our voice properly and productively when the time is appropriate. We have doors wide open for us right now with Congress. We're working very well with Congress. We're the largest veteran service organization with more opportunities working with Congress right now. And that's because we're not throwing out statements without researching and putting our facts together and everything. We do have statements, though, that have been released, and we are working directly with Congress right now as we speak.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ERDMAN: Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: The chair recognizes Past National Commander Morin.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MORIN: Comrade commander, as we all know, this is a challenging time in Washington, D.C., and our mission in Washington, D.C. is review, study and go slow. And I think that under the direction of our Washington, D.C. executive director, Mario, he's done an outstanding job of keeping us out of these crossfires that are happening. Being in the middle of a crossfire is not a good idea at this time. We've been able to get into the secretary, I think we're the only VSO that has had five meetings with the secretary of the VA. We have contact within the White House with the veteran liaison. We've been out of the media. We do not win by being in the media all the time.

As Mary said, there's a right time, and when we do it, we do it right, as she quoted in Commander Dellinger's year, when we asked for the secretary's resignation, and we won that battle. I'd ask, because of the concern of Mary for this whole body, that you allow Mario to address this body in how he is operating within our Washington office. I'd ask you to recognize Mario.

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Chair recognizes Mario Marquez.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARQUEZ: Good morning. Ms. Mary, I heard you loud and clear. Before I get into a formal reply, the commander released a message on May 1 to address this specific situation that Mary's bringing up right now. I don't know how many of you read that message, but it was a message aimed at getting out, as best as we could, an understanding to our membership the operating environment that we are dealing with.

You know, I've only been in the Legion for a lot less time than you have, but I've been around for a while. The operating environment, the political landscape is extremely hostile. Congress is divided and divisive. The media is reaching out, but it's only certain media outlets. So, there's a lot of baiting going on from different sides, trying to get reactions.

What I've identified is a lot of the initial information is incorrect. And so, I can't afford to be wrong publicly. So, what I do is, as soon as we get word of a situation, is we put our team to work, and we try to identify the facts.

For the Veterans Day issue, the president cannot change Veterans Day on his own. It requires an act of Congress. When that came out, it took us a few hours, because it was an evening when we got the word, then we traveled here. I had emailed the White House at the same time, and I asked for clarification, and expressed our opposition to a name change and what that would do for generations of veterans. I also offered a solution: So why don't you work The American Legion and others, if you want to recognize World War I and World War II, and we'll give you some solutions that all veterans will be happy with, but don't touch Veterans Day.

By the time I landed here in Indianapolis, they had already backtracked, withdrawn the idea, and eventually momentum caught up. The problem with the media that we're dealing with, Mary, is a lot of times is they're going off the first. Let's say a tweet comes out at 10 a.m. They want answers within minutes. I need more than minutes at times, and a lot of the time to really validate what's going on, what the issue is.

We're having meetings with the Small Business Administration, Department of Labor, Office of Personnel Management, because we have to understand the laws that apply to veterans employment, veterans benefits and things like that in a more advanced nature. So, the totality of the situation is pretty intense, unlike I've seen before.

There was a political article a few weeks ago that talked about the Washington, D.C. atmosphere. It said it's not that organizations are fearful of the administration; it's that everybody is trying to catch up with the last executive order. They're trying to find out a way to successfully and positively work with the organization because, if not, none of the industries, and I'm talking all the industries, not just veterans affairs, are going to be able to be effective and get things that they need done.

So, the other thing that has crippled us a little bit is that Congress has not been able to get along with this, and we rely on Congress immensely, and they rely on us too.

To your point, though, Miss Mary, I agree. We're going to try to do a little bit better job on how we message membership on the things that we're doing, because it is super important for our members to understand that we have their back, bottom line. But at the same time, there is belief that, for the organizations that speak out, they're being blacklisted, they're being pushed out of the room, and they don't have a seat at the table and they're not in the conversation.

So, I'm trying to balance all of that, ma'am, so that we have a voice at the table. I promise you we have a voice at the table and that we're going to work to get our voice out there a little bit more. It's probably not going to be media articles, because a lot of times it's one side of the media and we try to do balanced media engagement so that we're not represented, like in that article, was incorrect. There was another organization mentioned in that article that did the same thing we did exactly. They were actually misquoted. They never said a statement publicly.

So, we've had problems with that particular publication. But it is up to us to make sure we find good middle ground so that we can participate with them and make sure that the right, accurate information is being presented. So, there's a lot more than that, ladies and gentlemen, going on, it's been a pretty intense five months, but your staff is dedicated, your staff is pretty fired up. They're worried just like you are. They're in it every day. And so sometimes our decisions are by the minute and the hour, not by the day or by the week. If you ever have questions, please, I encourage you to call me or my directors in Washington, D.C. We would love to give you direct factual information 24/7 so that we can make sure that we are better informed.

A couple of weeks ago I met with the national commander and national vice commanders. We put out some information similar to this and some talking points. So, we'll continue to push that out, we'll start reaching out to departments more directly. If you have any information or questions you'd like, I'll do the best I can to get you more.

Now that the secretary has testified this week, I think it has opened the door for more transparency between Congress and the VA, and that will make our job a lot easier. Because the fact that those two weren't communicating was making our job extremely difficult. When the secretary spoke out and testified in front of Congress, now he can be held accountable, and we can also engage a little more differently than we have to this point. Do I have any other questions? *(Applause)*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thank you. Chair recognizes Terry Schow.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER SCHOW (UT): Sir, many of us were in Washington when Secretary Collins addressed this, and I'm mindful of two things he told us. The secretary told us there were 470,000 employees in the VA. Prior to the PACT Act they had 400,000 employees, so they've plussed up 70,000. The second thing he told us; they have a budget of $350 billion. That budget has doubled in the past ten years.

I think the thing that Secretary Collins is trying to do, and I think rightfully so, and many of us in this room have worked in the veterans game a long time, what is the appropriate number? How long should veterans have to wait or not? But he committed to us in Washington that no front-facing people will be affected in the cuts. That means doctors, nurses, social workers, those kinds of folks. Interior designers, maybe not. DEI people, maybe not.

But I remind all of my folks back in Utah, remember those numbers, 470,000 employees now. They're one of the top two federal agencies in terms of number of employees. The VA has more employees than the Army has soldiers. That's a pretty remarkable number. So, I think it's important to take a look at that at a time when they're trying to realize what the right numbers are. But I think Secretary Collins, his heart is in the right place.

My years of dealing with the media have taught me a couple of things. Number one, they're always looking for a negative opinion about something that just happened, always looking for a negative opinion. We should not be the bullet in that gun that shoots somebody that causes us harm down the road. So, I commend Mario for his great work. Thank you. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Thanks, Terry. Please stand and uncover. I call on Past National Commander Dan Seehafer for the benediction.

Benediction
Rev. Daniel J. Seehafer, Wisconsin, Past National Commander

Family, we pray. Heavenly Father, we thank You for the leadership You have not only gathered here throughout the world, but especially brought here within this organization, even in this very room. I would say we had a moment just a few moments ago. That's how we do it here. Yes, we are a family, a family that is truly compassionate about veterans issues, and yes, we are a family that continues to change and save lives.

Lord, You are the one who then opens our hearts for this kind of work. Where, for example, need to say this, we talked about it just yesterday, where $21 billion was secured for veterans this past year. I'm talking about free of charge, accredited by us, The American Legion reps, and that was for VA disability benefits. Where over 1.4 million veterans were served by Buddy Checks over these last four years. Where almost 100,000 units of blood was collected in our blood donor program last year once again. Where $3.2 million in American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grants were distributed since 2007. Where over $8 million in scholarships to young men and young ladies were awarded this past year, as well as then 13,000-plus participants in our American Legion Boys State programs last year and, again, 10 million young athletes who have played American Legion Baseball since 1925.

Lord, I certainly don't have to list these numbers for You. You know all these things. Nor are we simply bragging. But I'm telling You, Lord, it is for our leadership right here and those who are listening by stream, it's for us to actually take a moment and reflect, especially when life brings us those low valleys. But that's when You give us an example like PNC Miles. He didn't quit. He lost his legs in service. He didn't quit. He wasn't homebound, if you will, but what did he do? He continued to serve. May You empower us to do the same: Serve. Serve. Being the one so that others, too, would join us for You and our beloved country. In Your life-saving name, and so we do pray. *...Chorus of "Amen."*

NATIONAL COMMANDER LACOURSIERE: Please cover. The colors of our nation in place, hand salute. Two. I now declare the meeting of the NEC adjourned. Thank you, everybody.

...At 9:11 a.m., Thursday, May 8, 2025, the National Executive Committee meeting of The American Legion was adjourned. Sine die.

ABBREVIATIONS

A

ALA ..... American Legion Auxiliary
ALB ..... American Legion Baseball
ALR ..... American Legion Riders
ANAVICUS ..... Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada – United States
ASAP ..... as soon as possible
ATM ..... automated teller machine

B

BASE ..... Base Assessment and Servicemember Experience

C

C&P ..... compensation and pension
CCJ ..... Council on Criminal Justice
CDC ..... Centers for Disease Control
CEO ..... chief executive officer
CHIPS Act ..... Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors Act
Cit Nat ..... Citizenship and Naturalization
CNSC ..... Citizenship and Naturalization Subcommittee
CONA ..... Committee on National Appointments
COPE Act ..... Caregiver Outreach and Program Enhancement Act
COVID ..... coronavirus disease
COYE ..... Committee on Youth Education
CPR ..... Consolidated Post Report
CSM ..... commander sergeant major
CSR ..... Consolidated Squadron Report
CWF ..... Child Well-Being Foundation

D

DAV ..... Disabled American Veterans
DEC ..... Department Executive Committee
DEI ..... diversity, equity, and inclusion
DMS ..... Direct Membership Solicitation
DOD ..... Department of Defense
DOL ..... Department of Labor
DSO ..... Department Service Officer
DVNF ..... Disabled Veterans National Foundation
DVOP ..... Disabled Veterans Outreach Program

E

EDT ..... Eastern Daylight Time
EST ..... Eastern Standard Time

G

GWOT ..... Global War on Terrorism

H

HOPE ..... Helping Out Patriots Everywhere
HR ..... House Resolution
HUD ..... Department of Housing and Urban Development
HVAC ..... heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, House Veterans' Affairs Committee

I

INS ..... Immigration and Naturalization Service

J

JROTC ..... Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps

L

LtCol ..... lieutenant colonel
LtGen ..... lieutenant general
LVER ..... Local Veterans Employment Representative

M

M&PA ..... Membership and Post Activities
MIA ..... missing in action
MISSION Act ..... Managing Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Networks Act
MOU ..... memorandum of understanding

N

NACL ..... National American Legion College
NALCAA ..... National American Legion College Alumni Association
NCO ..... non-commissioned officer
NDAA ..... National Defense Authorization Act
NEC ..... National Executive Committee
NEF ..... National Emergency Fund
NHQ ..... national headquarters
NRIC ..... National Regional Information Conference

O

OCW ..... Operation Comfort Warriors
OVBD ..... Office of Veterans Business Development

P

PACT Act ..... Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act
PCAFC ..... Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers
PCS ..... permanent change of station
PGA ..... Professional Golfers' Association
PNC ..... past national commander
POW ..... prisoner of war
PTG ..... Post Traumatic Growth
PUFL ..... Paid-Up-For-Life

Q

QPR ..... Question, Persuade and Refer

R

RBI ..... runs batted in
RFP ..... request for proposal
ROAR ..... Regional Office Action Review
ROTC ..... Reserve Officers' Training Corps

S

SAH ..... Specially Adapted Housing
SAL ..... Sons of The American Legion
SALAA ..... Samsung American Legion Scholarship Alumni Association
SALCA ..... Sons of The American Legion Commander's Advisory
SBA ..... Small Business Administration
SBTF ..... Small Business Task Force
Sgt ..... sergeant
SHA ..... Special Housing Adaptation
SOME ..... So Others Might Eat
SOP ..... standard operating procedure
SVAC ..... Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee
SWS ..... System Worth Saving

T

TAC ..... Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials
TAL ..... The American Legion
TAP ..... Transition Assistance Program
TFA ..... Temporary Financial Assistance
TFM ..... Task Force Movement

U

UNCLOS ..... United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
USA ..... United States Army
USAA ..... United Services Automobile Association
USAF ..... United States Air Force

USERRA ..... Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act
USMC ..... United States Marine Corps

V

VA ..... Department of Veterans Affairs
VA&R ..... Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
VAMC ..... Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center
VARO ..... VA Regional Office
VAVS ..... Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service
VBA ..... Veterans Benefits Administration
VCF ..... Veterans & Children Foundation
VE&E ..... Veterans Employment & Education
VET TEC ..... Veteran Technology Education Courses
VETS ..... Veterans Employment and Training Service
VFW ..... Veterans of Foreign Wars
VHA ..... Veterans Health Administration
VIP ..... Veteran Institute for Procurement
VRE ..... Veteran Readiness and Employment
VSO ..... Veterans Service Organization

W

WTC HP ..... World Trade Center Health Program

Y

YCLE ..... Youth Cadet Law Enforcement

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