NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
October 8-9, 2025
Indianapolis, Indiana

Resolution No. 9: Notice of Benefits of Descendants from the Correction of Military Records
Origin: Resolution No. 12 (CA) 2025 National Convention
Submitted by: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, U.S. Navy sailors were unjustly punished in the 1940s because they were African American, at a time when institutional racism was worse, segregation was the norm, and African Americans were disproportionately disciplined for infractions that arguably did not rise to the severity of their treatment or their punishment; and

WHEREAS, The two famous courts-martial of African American sailors were the "Port Chicago Fifty" for protesting unsafe ammunition handling practices after the deaths of 320 servicemen and the "Philadelphia Fifteen" for writing a letter to a newspaper describing shipboard abuse and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, In 2022, The American Legion Department of California adopted the resolution titled, "2022-015: Exonerate The "Port Chicago Fifty" and "Philadelphia Fifteen"; and

WHEREAS, It was announced on June 16, 2023, that "The Department of the Navy Announces Correction to Records of the 'Philadelphia 15" and on 17 July 2024, that "the Secretary of the Navy Exonerates 256 Defendants from 1944 Port Chicago General and Summary Courts-martial"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 8-9, 2025, That the secretary of the Department of Defense shall contact all the descendants of the exonerated sailors to ensure that those descendants get any available benefits that they may be currently entitled.