PROCEEDINGS
of
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
2019 NATIONAL CONVENTION

August 3–6, 2019

Orlando, Florida

116th Congress, 1st Session

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE NATIONAL ADJUTANT, DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

TRANSMITTING

2019 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, PURSUANT TO 36 U.S.C. 50308 AND 44 U.S.C. 1332

December 31, 2019–Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE
WASHINGTON: 2019

LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

December 31, 2019

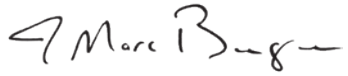
Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Speaker:

As business manager of DAV (Disabled American Veterans), and as secretary of its national convention, I hereby certify as to the authenticity of the reports and proceedings of our national convention, held in Orlando, Florida, August 3-6, 2019, and submit them to you through the office of this organization located in Washington, D.C., to be printed as a House document as originally authorized by 44 U.S.C. 1332 and in fulfillment of 36 U.S.C. 50308.

The national convention proceedings include an independent audit report of all receipts and expenditures as of December 31, 2018, as described in 36 U.S.C. 10101.

Sincerely,



J. MARC BURGESS
National Adjutant
Chief Executive Officer

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NATIONAL OFFICERS 2019–2020
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

National Commander
Stephen Whitehead, 16095 Excel Way, Rosemount, MN 55068

Senior Vice Commander
Donald Day, 3112 Farragut Road, Brooklyn, NY 11210

1st Jr. Vice Commander
Andrew Marshall, 750 Tomoka Drive, Palm Harbor, FL 34683

2nd Jr. Vice Commander
Joseph Parsetich, 1801 1st Street South, Great Falls, MT 59405

3rd Jr. Vice Commander
Nancy G. Espinosa, 1369 Country Park Drive, Kaysville, UT 84037

4th Jr. Vice Commander
Daniel Contreras, 13733 E. Rosecrans Avenue,
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

National Judge Advocate
Michael E. Dobmeier, 404 25th Avenue South,
Grand Forks, ND 58201

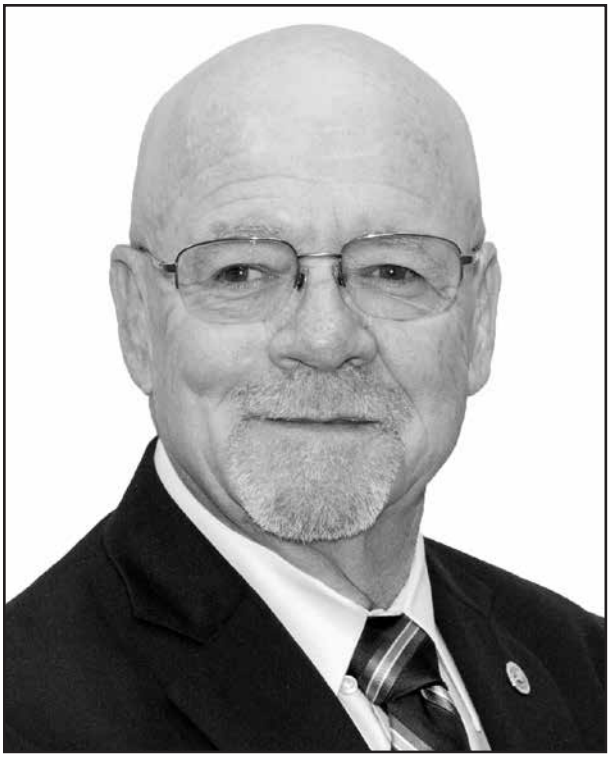
National Chaplain
Michael Dover, 13222 Warm Springs Road, Ellerslie, GA 31807

Past National Commander
Dennis R. Nixon, 2521 Meandering Way, China Spring, TX 76633

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2019–2020

First District	Helen Bennett, Marshfield, Massachusetts
Second District	Keith A. Robinson, Rochester, New York
Third District	Ernest S. Boisvert, Woonsocket, Rhode Island
Fourth District	Benjamin G. Flynn, Hartly, Delaware
Fifth District	Michael T. Iacavazzi, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Sixth District	Robert D. Cox, Roanoke, Virginia
Seventh District	Jack L. Johnson, The Villages, Florida
Eighth District	Jerry L. Bratton, Oxford, Mississippi
Ninth District	Thomas Walls, Blythewood, South Carolina
Tenth District	James R. Dempsey, Dexter, Michigan
Eleventh District	Will Davis, Columbus, Ohio
Twelfth District	Kevin J. Walkowski, Wind Lake, Wisconsin
Thirteenth District	Terry W. Sanders, Bedford, Indiana
Fourteenth District	Warren Tobin, Jamestown, North Dakota
Fifteenth District	David R. Thornburg Jr., Waukee, Iowa
Sixteenth District	Kirk H. Johnson, Marina, California
Seventeenth District	Timothy J. Talley, Bovina, Texas
Eighteenth District	Julian V. Crawford, Honolulu, Hawaii
Nineteenth District	Saranna Rae Hack, North Pole, Alaska
Twentieth District	Thomas Parker, Lorena, Texas
Twenty-first District	John F. Donovan, Conway, Arkansas

Stephen Whitehead
National Commander
2019–2020
Disabled American Veterans



Dennis R. Nixon
National Commander
2018–2019
Disabled American Veterans

NATIONAL OFFICERS 2018–2019
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

National Commander
Dennis R. Nixon, 2521 Meandering Way, China Spring, TX 76633

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Stephen Whitehead, 16095 Excel Way, Rosemount, MN 55068

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National Judge Advocate
Michael E. Dobmeier, 404 25th Avenue South,
Grand Forks, ND 58201

National Chaplain
Michael Dover, 13222 Warm Springs Road, Ellerslie, GA 31807

Past National Commander
Delphine Metcalf-Foster, 187 Nantucket Lane, Vallejo, CA 94590

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2018–2019

First District	Coleman Francis Nee, Boston, Massachusetts
Second District	Keith A. Robinson, Rochester, New York
Third District	Robert A. Nicodemus, Enfield, New Hampshire
Fourth District	Benjamin G. Flynn, Hartly, Delaware
Fifth District	Samuel Blow Jr., Melrose Park, Pennsylvania
Sixth District	Robert D. Cox, Roanoke, Virginia
Seventh District	John C. Raber, Bradenton, Florida
Eighth District	Jerry L. Bratton, Oxford, Mississippi
Ninth District	Tincie M. Lynch, Marietta, Georgia
Tenth District	James R. Dempsey, Dexter, Michigan
Eleventh District	David C. Uetterling, Defiance, Ohio
Twelfth District	Kevin J. Walkowski, Wind Lake, Wisconsin
Thirteenth District	George Hall, Harold, Kentucky
Fourteenth District	Warren Tobin, Jamestown, North Dakota
Fifteenth District	Jim Shuey, Omaha, Nebraska
Sixteenth District	Kirk H. Johnson, Marina, California
Seventeenth District	Paul W. Jackson, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Eighteenth District	Julian V. Crawford, Honolulu, Hawaii
Nineteenth District	Harvey E. Dixon, Boise, Idaho
Twentieth District	Thomas Parker, Lorena, Texas
Twenty-first District	Danny Oliver, Coweta, Oklahoma

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS

1921–22:	Robert S. Marx, Cincinnati, Ohio (deceased 1960)
1922–23:	C. Hamilton Cook, Buffalo, New York (deceased 1935)
1923–24:	James A. McFarland, Dalton, Georgia (deceased 1942)
1924–25:	Frank J. Irwin, New York, New York (deceased 1942)
1925–26:	John W. Mahan, Bozeman, Montana (deceased 1947)
1926–27:	John V. Clinnin, Chicago, Illinois (deceased 1955)
1927–28:	William E. Tate, Atlanta, Georgia (deceased 1949)
1928–29:	Millard W. Rice, Minneapolis, Minnesota (deceased 1980)
1929–30:	William J. Murphy, Santa Ana, California (deceased 1931)
1930–31:	H. H. Weimer, Chicago, Illinois (deceased 1955)
1931–32:	E. Claude Babcock, Washington, D.C. (deceased 1958)
1932–33:	William Conley, Los Angeles, California (deceased 1941)
1933–34:	Joe W. McQueen, Kansas City, Missouri (deceased 1969)
1934–35:	Volney P. Mooney Jr., Los Angeles, California (deceased 1945)
1935–36:	Marvin A. Harlan, El Paso, Texas (deceased 1970)
1936–37:	M. Froome Barbour, Cincinnati, Ohio (deceased 1985)
1937–38:	Maple T. Harl, Denver, Colorado (deceased 1957)
1938–39:	Owen Galvin, Minneapolis, Minnesota (deceased 1956)
1939–40:	Lewis J. Murphy, South Bend, Indiana (deceased 1966)
1940–41:	Vincent E. Schoeck, Detroit, Michigan (deceased 1966)
Aug.16, 1941– Aug.15, 1943:	Lawrence R. Melton, Dallas, Texas (deceased 1978)
Aug.15, 1943– Sept. 20, 1943:	William J. Dodd, Jersey City, New Jersey (deceased 1957)
1943–44:	James L. Monnahan, Minneapolis, Minnesota (deceased 1980)
1944–45:	Milton D. Cohn, Buffalo, New York (deceased 1968)
1945–46:	Dow V. Walker, Newport, Oregon (deceased 1957)
1946–47:	Lloyd F. Oleson, Ventura, California (deceased 1982)
1947–48:	John L. Golob, Hibbing, Minnesota (deceased 1976)
1948–49:	Jonathon M. Wainwright, San Antonio, Texas (deceased 1953)
1949–50:	David M. Brown, Akron, Ohio (deceased 1982)
1950–51:	Boniface R. Maile, Grosse Pointe, Michigan (deceased 2002)
1951–52:	Ewing W. Mays, Little Rock, Arkansas (deceased 1994)
1952–53:	Floyd L. Ming, Bakersfield, California (deceased 1975)
1953–54:	Howard W. Watts, Indianapolis, Indiana (deceased 1977)
1954–55:	Alfred L. English, Shelbyville, Tennessee (deceased 1987)
1955–56:	Melvin J. Maas, Chevy Chase, Maryland (deceased 1964)
1956–57:	Joseph F. Burke, Bayonne, New Jersey (deceased 1970)
1957–58:	Paul E. Frederick Jr., Cincinnati, Ohio (deceased 2015)
1958–59:	David B. Williams, Boston, Massachusetts (deceased 1994)
1959–60:	Bill H. Fribley, Crestline, Kansas (deceased 1994)
1960–61:	William O. Cooper, Dallas, Texas (deceased 1990)
1961–62:	Francis R. Buono, Whitestone, New York (deceased 1977)
1962–63:	Peter L. Dye, Denver, Colorado (deceased 2013)
1963–64:	Douglas H. McGarrity, Allen Park, Michigan (deceased 1986)
1964–65:	William G. Dwyer, San Diego, California (deceased 1982)
1965–66:	Claude L. Callegary, Baltimore, Maryland (deceased 2014)
1966–67:	John W. Unger Sr., Danville, Illinois (deceased 1970)
1967–68:	Francis J. Beaton, Fargo, North Dakota (deceased 1969)
1968–69:	Wayne L. Sheirbon, Seattle, Washington (deceased 1999)
1969–70:	Raymond P. Neal, Daly City, California (deceased 1980)
1970–71:	Cecil W. Stevenson, Jonesboro, Arkansas (deceased 2013)
1971–72:	Edward T. Conroy, Bowie, Maryland (deceased 1982)
1972–73:	Jack O. Hicks, Larue, Ohio
1973–74:	John T. Soave, Detroit, Michigan (deceased 1984)
1974–75:	Walter T. Greaney, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts (deceased 1994)

1975–76: Lyle C. Pearson, North Mankato, Minnesota (deceased 2013)
1976–77: Frank J. Randazzo, East Meadow, New York (deceased 2010)
1977–78: Oliver E. Meadows, Godley, Texas (deceased 2005)
1978–79: Billy O. Hightower, Grand Junction, Colorado (deceased 2015)
1979–80: Paul L. Thompson, Baltimore, Maryland (deceased 1993)
1980–81: Stan Pealer, Holts Summit, Missouri (deceased 2018)
1981–82: Sherman E. Roodzant, Santa Ana, California
1982–83: Edward G. Galian, New York, New York (deceased 2002)
1983–84: Dennis A. Joyner, Apollo, Pennsylvania
1984–85: Chad Colley, Barling, Arkansas
1985–86: Albert H. Linden Jr., Camp Springs, Maryland
1986–87: Kenneth G. Musselmann, Huntington Beach, California (deceased 2009)
1987–88: Gene A. Murphy, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
1988–89: Billy E. Kirby, Clifton, Texas
1989–90: Vernon V. Cardosi, Saugus, Massachusetts
1990–91: Joseph E. Andry, Westerville, Ohio (deceased 2010)
1991–92: Cleveland Jordan, Washington, D.C. (deceased 2019)
1992–93: Joseph C. Zengerle, Washington, D.C.
1993–94: Richard E. Marbes, Green Bay, Wisconsin
1994–95: Donald A. Sioss, Miller Place, New York
1995–96: Thomas A. McMasters, III, Sterling Hts., Michigan (deceased 2008)
1996–97: Gregory C. Reed, Indianapolis, Indiana
1997–98: Harry R. McDonald Jr., Crestview, Florida (deceased 2008)
1998–99: Andrew A. Kistler, Franklin, Pennsylvania (deceased 2018)
1999–00: Michael E. Dobmeier, Grand Forks, North Dakota
2000–01: Armando C. Albarran, San Antonio, Texas
2001–02: George H. Steese Jr., Fresno, California
2002–03: Edward R. Heath Sr., Mechanic Falls, Maine (deceased 2005)
2003–04: Alan W. Bowers, Royalston, Massachusetts
2004–05: James E. Sursely, Apopka, Florida
2005–06: Paul W. Jackson, Colorado Springs, Colorado
2006–07: Bradley S. Barton, Tualatin, Oregon
2007–08: Robert T. Reynolds, Alexandria, Virginia
2008–09: Raymond E. Dempsey, Des Plaines, Illinois
2009–10: Roberto Barrera, Del Rio, Texas
2010–11: Wallace E. Tyson, Fayetteville, North Carolina
2011–12: Donald L. Samuels, Gallatin, Tennessee
2012–13: Larry A. Polzin, Sylmar, California
2013–14: Joseph W. Johnston, Williamsburg, Ohio
2014–15: Ron F. Hope, Clemmons, North Carolina
2015–16: Moses A. McIntosh Jr., Hephzibah, Georgia
2016–17: David W. Riley, Semmes, Alabama
2017–18: Delphine Metcalf-Foster, Vallejo, California
2018–19: Dennis R. Nixon, China Spring, Texas

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 98TH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS HELD AT

Orlando, Florida

August 3, 2019–August 6, 2019

Joint Opening Session

- - -

The Joint Opening Session of the Disabled American Veterans 98th National Convention and the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary 97th National Convention convened in the Gatlin B-C Ballroom on the First Level of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Saturday, August 3, 2019, and was called to order at 8:30 a.m., by National Commander Dennis R. Nixon.

COMMANDER DENNIS R. NIXON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER NIXON: Welcome to Orlando. (Applause) I now call to order the 98th National Convention of DAV and DAV Auxiliary. National Adjutant Marc Burgess will read the Call to Convention.

ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS: The Constitution and Bylaws of DAV, Disabled American Veterans, state that the supreme legislative powers of this organization shall be vested in an annual National Convention, composed of the national officers and representatives of the state departments and chapters.

In accordance with these directives, I, Marc Burgess, National Adjutant and Secretary for this event, declare the 98th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans to be convened in Orlando, Florida, at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, August 3, 2019. Consideration and disposition of business brought before this Convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. Housekeeping. I would like to ask everyone in attendance to please silence your cell phones or other mobile devices. I will now ask the MacDill Air Force Base Honor Guard from nearby Tampa to deliver our national standard. Present Colors.

(Whereupon, the Colors were presented and posted by the MacDill Air Force Base Honor Guard.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Air Force veteran Doris Gonzales, who currently works as a clinician at the Viera, Florida, VA Outpatient Clinic, who will now perform our National Anthem.

(Whereupon, the National Anthem was performed by Doris Gonzalez, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now please join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, after which the members of the MacDill Air Force Base Honor Guard withdrew.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in thanking the MacDill Air Force Base Honor Guard (Applause) and Doris—and Doris for their wonderful participation in getting our 98th National Convention started the right way. (Applause)

I'd like to call on national chaplain, the Reverend Michael Dover, to lead us in prayer.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL P. DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Well, good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we still ourselves before you. Help us to listen before speaking. Help us to fully understand the issues we must fight. Help us to value and appreciate the ones we are about to meet as we strengthen our friendships and make new friends.

To all give your wisdom and knowledge that we are better prepared to protect the benefits our veterans so richly deserve. May your light enfold us. May your spirit guide us. And may your grace abound in us. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you.

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, sir.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Again, welcome to the 98th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans. I am proud to introduce our 2019 National Convention Chairperson. Jim Sursely, a combat-disabled veteran of the Vietnam War, was elected national commander of DAV at the organization's 83rd National Convention in Reno, Nevada, in 2004.

A native of Rochester, Minnesota, Sursely enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1966. He volunteered for duty in Vietnam in 1968 and was assigned to the Americal Division's 17th Armored Calvary.

During a combat mission in January 1969 he detonated an enemy land mine which resulted in the traumatic amputation of his legs above the knee and his left arm above the elbow.

Following emergency helicopter evacuation to the 95th Evacuation Hospital at Da Nang, hospitalization in Japan and extensive recuperation, he was medically discharged.

Sursely returned to Rochester and attended Rochester State Junior College for a year before moving to Florida to attend Seminole Community College. In 1977 he became a licensed real estate agent and has successfully pursued a real estate career for nearly 40 years.

Sursely has served as a leader at the local, state and national levels and is a past board member of the DAV Charitable Service Trust. In 2015 Sursely was elected to the Board of Directors of the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation, where he continues to serve.

He was honored as the DAV Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year in 1993 and received the DAV Freedom Award at the 2001 National Disabled Winter Sports Clinic.

Ladies and gentlemen, your 2019 Convention Chairperson, Jim Sursely. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Convention Chairman advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONVENTION CHAIRMAN JAMES E. SURSELY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONVENTION CHAIRMAN SURSELY: Thank you, Commander Nixon, for that kind introduction.

National Commander Nixon, National Adjutant Burgess, National Line Officers, Auxiliary Commander Timmerman, Auxiliary National Adjutant Kemper, Auxiliary National Line Officers, distinguished guests and my fellow DAV members, I would like to acknowledge my home chapter in central Florida, DAV Chapter and Unit 16, as well as the entire Department of Florida DAV and state Auxiliary. Would you please stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the delegation from Florida stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONVENTION CHAIRMAN SURSELY: If there is anything we can do during this convention to help anybody out or point you in the right direction, please don't hesitate to ask. Everyone from the Department of Florida would be happy to assist you.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 98th DAV and Auxiliary National Convention right here in the "Theme Park Capital of the World," where in 2018 its tourist attractions and events drew more than 75 million visitors.

When it comes to Orlando attractions, the fun starts on International Drive, also known as I-Drive, which is close to Universal Orlando Resort and SeaWorld Orlando in the heart of Orlando's tourism district.

There you can enjoy a view of Orlando from aboard The Wheel at ICON Park—a 400-foot-tall observation wheel. You can also opt for a traditional amusement park at Fun Spot America, or explore wonders and marvels at Sea Life Orlando Aquarium, just to name a few.

Plenty of other one-of-a-kind attractions are waiting for you in the International Drive area. And speaking of one-of-a-kind, be sure to visit Gatorland. One of Orlando's oldest attractions, it features an enthralling mix of real animal encounters and rides you won't want to miss.

I would advise you not to dangle your feet in the waters of Gatorland (Laughter) and to be careful when you reach out to different things at Sea Life Aquarium. I tried both a few years ago and it didn't turn out so well for me, (Laughter) as you might have noticed.

You have probably already noticed how hot it can get here in Orlando. Why do you think we have all the water park attractions? It's not just for the tourism money. Please be careful and be sure to drink enough water during your stay.

And you don't have any excuses not to because Pepsi took it upon themselves to donate 3,600 bottles of water, so thank you to Pepsi. (Applause) And now it's our job to make them disappear.

On a serious note, let's keep in mind the reason we are here. We have a lot of business to take care of over the next several days in fulfilling the promises to our men and women who served our nation with honor and pride.

But let's not forget to have some fun while we are here. Also, if you have so much fun that you want to relocate to the area, as the commander mentioned, I am a real estate agent (Laughter) and would be happy to talk, if you don't mind it coming with a small commission. (Laughter)

So this week, instead of just visiting with us, I invite you to take advantage of and live our Southern Hospitality by taking things slow and easy and, most of all, enjoy yourself—and keep plenty of water on hand. Let's work for our common goal of having a successful convention in the land of sunshine—and a little bit of rain. May God bless you and God bless America. (Applause)

To Commander Nixon, National Adjutant Burgess, Auxiliary Commander Timmerman and Auxiliary Adjutant Kemper, thank you all for your service. And I wish you all a great stay and the best of luck with the important business we have ahead of us.

Thank you, again, Commander. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Convention Chairman withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Jim. (Applause) Thank you, Jim. It's an honor to have you with us here today.

Before we go any further, we are extremely grateful to be able to host our national convention right here at the beautiful Rosen Single Creek. It's with that in mind that it gives me great pleasure to introduce Army veteran, president and chief operating officer for Rosen Hotels and Resorts, Mr. Harry Rosen.

His list of accomplishments is simply too long to list them all. But in 2010 he was inducted to the Visit Florida Hall of Fame and he continued to rake in the accolades. In 2018 he received Orlando Business Journal's Inaugural Lifetime Achievement in Diversity and Business Award and was named the I-4 Business Magazine Business Leader of the Year.

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm welcome to Mr. Harris Rosen. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Rosen advanced to the podium.)

MR. HARRIS ROSEN: Thank you, sir. First want to say, "Harris Rosen, reporting as ordered, sir." (Laughter) So I want to welcome everyone and I hope and pray that everything is going well so far. Yes?

(Response of "Yes" and applause.)

MR. ROSEN: Okay. I'm going to do something a little bit different. This is not my traditional welcome talk. I didn't sleep very well last night because I was dreaming about things that happened 55 years ago.

Yes, 55 years ago I was 24 years old. I had just gotten out of the Army. I had my first job at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, referred to it as the "Waldorf Hysteria." (Laughter) And I booked my first group and it was the Disabled American Veterans. (Applause) Here I am today. (Laughter)

The group booked with us, although my boss, the director of sales, said, "Harris, it's very unlikely that a military group will be able to stay at the Waldorf." But I negotiated with him very, very good rates. And DAV came to the Waldorf in August of 1966. They had a wonderful time and I enjoyed being with them so very much.

Years went by. And here we are today achieving what many would suggest is the American dream. Parents came from Eastern Europe, Austria, Russia and settled on the Lower East Side of Manhattan where I was born and raised.

Somehow, Cornell University accepted me. Don't know how, but they did. Went through ROTC. Graduated in 1961 as a second lieutenant and with a degree from the School of Hotel Administration. Went immediately overseas. Served a short tour in Asia. Got an ITT, an intertheater transfer, to Germany. Came home and got a job at the Waldorf Astoria, my dear God, 55 years ago.

And here I am welcoming DAV once again. My hope and my prayer is that in 2025, in August, I will be doing this one more time. I hope and I pray that this is a wonderfully successful conference. I hope that you achieve everything that you hope to achieve.

I want to thank you all for your service and I want to say God bless you all and I hope to see you again in 2025. God bless. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Rosen withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you so much for your hospitality, your time here today and especially your service, Mr. Rosen. (Applause)

Mayor Jerry L. Demings is a native of Orlando. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from Florida State University and his Master of Business Administration degree from Orlando College, now Everest University.

He served as Orlando's first African-American police chief and first African-American Orange County director of public safety. In 2008 he was elected the first African-American sheriff and constitutional officer in the history of Orange County and was reelected in 2012 and 2016.

On August the 28th, 2018, Mayor Demings was elected the first African-American mayor of Orange County and was sworn in as mayor on December the 4th, 2018. He is the chief executive of over 8,000 county employees with a budget of over $4 billion. Let's welcome Mayor Demings. (Applause) Welcome Mayor.

(Whereupon, Mayor Demings advanced to the podium.)

MAJOR JERRY L. DEMINGS: Thank you. Good morning to all of you. It is indeed an honor and a privilege for me to welcome you here to the great city of Orlando and the county of Orange.

Before I go any further let me just also recognize a great American in Mr. Harris Rosen. He is a true humanitarian here in this community who really participates in many of the philanthropic endeavors in our community. And we honor him for his community service as well as his service to these great United States of America, so join me in please giving him another round of applause. (Applause)

I would like to also take this time to acknowledge and thank each veteran that is here today and those across the nation for your distinguished service and commitment. Just a week or so ago we hosted the National VFW convention here in the metro area, as well.

On behalf of Orange County and our six members of the board of county commissioners we applaud you for the sacrifice that you have made for our great nation. You are truly our heroes and I am forever grateful for that.

Thanks to organizations like the Disabled American Veterans these patriots and their families will never be alone. The Disabled Veterans provides lifetime support of our veterans and their families. Through your work you have helped more than one million veterans in positive, life-changing ways.

The DAV has provided transportation services to more than 615,000 veterans and has assisted many veterans with the coordination of more than 250,000 benefit claims. For that, I say thank you, as well.

Orange County aspires to be that, be a prototype community of tomorrow, which is what Walt Disney said in many ways. We are proud to be a community with a culture of innovation, collaboration and inclusiveness. And we want our local veterans to know that they are truly a part of this culture in our community.

As of May of this year we have almost 70,000 veterans in Orange County; however, only 17,000 of them are receiving benefits. That means 73% of Orange County veterans are not receiving compensation or pension benefits.

Why the disparity? Many veterans are not aware of the benefits that they quality for and many do not know how to access those benefits or community resources.

Here in Orange County we have two groups that are very instrumental with the advocacy and support of our local veteran population. They are the Orange County Veterans Services Office and our Orange County Veterans Advisory Council.

Our Veterans Services Office helps local veterans with their VA benefits and eligibility requirements. It also provides an array of services and direct access to organizations that support the veteran community.

Another way we support and help our local veterans is through our Orange County Veterans Advisory Council. We have members of the council here with us today. I would like to recognize Retired United States Marine Corps Sergeant Fred Robinson. Fred, would you stand?

(Whereupon, Mr. Robinson stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

MAYOR DEMINGS: And Retired United States Army Command Sergeant Tommy Maldanado.

(Whereupon, Mr. Maldanado stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

MAYOR DEMINGS: Our council is comprised of active-duty service members, veterans of our armed forces, along with various community partners. These partners allocate for our local veterans and provide them with community resources, support and assistance, as needed. The council also hosts our annual Memorial Day event in commemoration of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

In June I was honored to participate in the celebration of life for Army veteran Stephen Spicer. I did not know Mr. Spicer personally and I didn't have the opportunity to thank him for his service to this great country, because at some point in his life he fell on hard times and became homeless in our community.

He had no living relatives. But that mattered little to local veterans from the VFW and American Legion. As we celebrated Mr. Spicer's life and service to this great country, I reflected on the "band of brothers" who made sure that Mr. Spicer received a funeral with full military honors. I am sure all of you would have done the same to celebrate the life of one of your own.

Thanks to Mr. Spicer's caregivers and our local veterans' community, Mr. Spicer was laid to rest in the most dignified manner befitting of a soldier who served this country. (Applause)

As you gather over the next three days for this important convention, I hope you set aside some time to explore the excellent hospitality and entertainment amenities that we have here to offer all of you. Orange County is the top destination for more than 75 million visitors who come here from around the world each year.

On behalf of Orange County, thank you for making Central Florida your destination for this year's convention. And I thank you, again, for your service. To all veterans in the room, may God bless you and may God bless these great United States of America.

(Whereupon, Mayor Demings withdrew from the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you so much. Thank you, Mayor Demings, for giving up some of your time to be here with us today. (Applause)

MR. DANIEL CLARE: And now your DAV Auxiliary Staff and National Officers: National Adjutant Pat Kemper of Kentucky; (Applause) National Chaplain, Aura-Lee—Aura-Lee Nicodemus of New Hampshire; (Applause) your Judge Advocate, Paula Raymond of Illinois; (Applause) Fourth Junior Vice Commander Ann Marie Hurley of Massachusetts; (Applause) Third Junior Vice Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh of California; (Applause) Second Junior Vice Commander Darlene Spence of Texas; (Applause)

First Junior Vice Commander Lynn Helms Prosser of South Carolina; (Applause) and your Senior Vice Commander, Diane Franz of Florida; (Applause) and your Auxiliary National Commander, Ellen Timmerman of New Mexico; (Applause) and Auxiliary Past National Commander Craig "Hub—Hub—Hub" Johniken of Texas. (Applause)

And now your DAV National Officers: your Past National Commander and Chairman of the Board of Directors, from Vallejo, California, Delphine Metcalf-Foster; (Applause) from Ellerslie, Georgia, your National Chaplain, "In His Service for You," the Reverend Mike Dover; (Applause) the pride of Grand Forks, North Dakota, our National Judge Advocate, Mike Dobmeier; (Applause) your Fourth Junior Vice Commander, from Kaysville, Utah, Nancy Espinosa; (Applause) your Third Junior Vice Commander from Great Falls, Montana, Joseph Parsetich; (Applause) your Second Junior Vice Commander, from Palm Harbor, Florida, Andy Marshall; (Applause) your First Junior Vice Commander from the small town of Brooklyn, New York, Donald Day; (Applause) and last but by no means least, your Senior Vice Commander from Rosemount, Minnesota, Stephen "Butch" Whitehead. (Applause)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER STEPHEN "BUTCH" WHITEHEAD: It is my great honor to formally introduce a friend, a mentor and a personal hero.

Dennis Nixon is a very proud United States Marine who enlisted in 1964 at 17 years old. He was wounded on June 5, 1969, in Da Nang during his second tour in Vietnam. On that fateful day, he stepped on a land mine, which resulted in severe shrapnel injuries to his leg and throughout his body.

Dennis was eventually transported to Corpus Christi Naval Hospital in Texas where he began his recovery. After enduring eight surgeries, his left leg was amputated above the knee. He was medically retired from the Marine Corps in 1970. In 1972 Dennis joined the DAV as a national service officer in Waco, Texas. There he was appointed NSO assistant supervisor in July of 1975 and NSO supervisor in October of 1992.

In 2000 he was one of the original nine area supervisors appointed by the national adjutant. He retired in 2008 after 36 years of service to fellow veterans and their families, obtaining the benefits they have earned. (Applause)

Dennis has served in various leadership capacities at the chapter and department level, as well as the national level, serving fellow veterans on the National Executive Committee and the DAV Charitable Service Trust Board of Directors.

He has also continuously volunteered to train department and chapter service officers and, even today, is sought out to advise and mentor NSO apprentices in Waco.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure that I introduce your National Commander, Dennis Nixon. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. Thank you. You know DAV has some great writers. They sure do make us look good. (Laughter)

Hello, everyone. Welcome to Orlando. I don't know about all of you, but I am excited to get this 98th National Convention underway. If you are, let me hear it. (Cheers and applause)

Adjutant Burgess, Executive Director Jesinoski, Executive Director Reese, fellow veterans, families, friends and honored guests, thank you so much for giving up some of your time to be here and for that great welcome.

A lot has changed since Judge Robert Marx and his fellow World War I veterans started DAV in 1920, but one thing has remained the same: our steadfast commitment to the single purpose of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

The work we have accomplished this past year and throughout our nearly 100-year history is important but not done.

Before I go any further, I want to highlight the people who are out there on the front lines each and every day. If you're a national, chapter, department or transition service officer, please raise your hand.

(Whereupon, the individuals named raised their hands and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Hospital service coordinators, community volunteers and DAV Transportation Network drivers, let me hear from you.

(Whereupon, the individuals named cheered and raised their hands and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you so much for your hard work. And thank you to all of your chapter and department leaders. You keep DAV strong and your service to veterans and families is vital to our mission. (Applause)

When I first took the reins as national commander in Reno last August, I spoke about DAV's mission of service. And it's humbling to see the continuous hard work by our national staff, our members and all of our leaders at the chapter, department and national levels. And it's inspiring to witness what we can do when we band together. Thank you. (Applause)

Last year, with the help of DAV, service members and veterans and their families received more than $20 billion in benefits. Let's take a moment to allow that to register.

Statistics can get tossed around a lot and not always given the amount of thought they deserve. They can be hard to put into context, but the folks in this room understand the significance of that particular figure.

It represents justice. It represents promises being kept. It substantively changes lives and allows veterans to care for themselves and their families. That wouldn't be possible without you, our service officers and members nationwide. (Applause)

In spite of the operational tempo and hazards our fighting men and women face, the size of the U.S. military decreased from just over 2 million in 1990 to under 1.3 million in 2017. Less than one-half of 1% of the U.S. population on any given day is responsible for the defense of our nation and the values we hold dear.

This downward trend is expected to continue in the decades ahead, meaning less and less of the American public will have friends and family who have served, let alone worn the uniform of service themselves. And the burden of defending our freedom will be placed on the shoulders of the few.

To help bridge the military-civilian gap, DAV worked diligently in 2018 to promote the organization through our public service announcement campaign. In 2018 our program grew to $90.8 million in estimated media value, representing a 3% growth from 2017.

This program relies on donated media from television, radio, print, outdoor and transit outlets. The extensive media exposure resulted in more than 8.2 billion impressions.

This was made possible by national television outlets ABC, CBS and ESPN; national print placements in the Wall Street Journal, as well as First for Women and Ebony magazines; and regional placements by TIME, Money and Golf Digest.

As the gap between our military and civilian populations continues to widen, these message help to serve as a conduit to connect the American public with the sacrifices of men and women in uniform.

DAV has also promised that we would continue to be the leading voice for unique issues concerning our sisters-in-arms.

Several bills based upon the recommendations from our 2018 report Women Veterans: The Journal Ahead have been introduced to improve services for women veterans and fully recognize their military service. (Applause)

On May 2, 2019, DAV testified before the Subcommittee on Health of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee regarding cultural barriers impacting women veterans' access to health care. And lawmakers are listening.

In May, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee convened a bipartisan women veterans task force, based in large part on the research and recommendations we highlighted in our report, aimed at identifying and tackling inequities faced by women veterans. (Applause)

Another important service is the DAV Transportation Network. There are many veterans in your communities who are ill and injured, unable to drive or get a ride, who need help getting to the VA medical appointments.

While we have a great number of volunteer drivers, we still need more. The challenges are still there. Many of our volunteers are getting older. The baby-boom generation is working much longer, so consider working with your communities and speak with citizens about becoming volunteer drivers.

Last year DAV launched a new site called volunteerforveterans.org to give veterans and volunteers a new platform to request and give assistance. This nationwide resource is designed to connect volunteers with opportunities to lend a helping hand to veterans and their families, caregivers and survivors. It's essentially a database to match volunteers with volunteer opportunities serving veterans.

Those opportunities are as limitless and varied as the needs of our nation's veterans, particularly those changed by wartime service. While the program is gaining traction in our community, we need more individuals to sign up—especially those who have volunteer requests.

Veterans, caregivers and survivors in need of assistance or mentoring can post opportunities based on their specific needs. Individuals who know veterans, caregivers and survivors who are in need of help can act as their advocates to populate opportunities on their behalf. So please, visit volunteerforveterans.org and sign up today. While you're at it, please encourage others in your community to do the same.

Another major legislative priority was and remains, full and faithful implementation of the VA MISSION Act, which was signed into law last June.

The new Veterans Community Care Program replaced the Veterans Choice Program. The law is intended to expand access, improve quality and strengthen veterans health care by requiring the VA to develop integrated health care networks, be the coordinator and primary provider of care for enrolled veterans and maintain oversight over the whole patient to ensure quality at every step of the individual's health care.

During my decades working as a service officer, I saw firsthand how critical VA benefits and services are, not just for disabled veterans but also their families and caregivers who sacrifice so much.

My own wife, Maxine, has selflessly dedicated so much of herself to me and our family. I want to ensure that she and the many others, have adequate support when I'm gone.

Another major victory, made possible with all of your help, is the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, now the law of the land. (Applause)

In June the Senate unanimously passed legislation to grant presumption of exposure to Agent Orange Blue Water Vietnam veterans, and the President signed this critical, long-overdue bill into law on June 25 with an effective date of January the 1st, 2020.

However, within a week of the bill becoming law, the VA issued an order of stay on all Blue Water Navy claims until January. DAV strongly disagrees with this decision and has called on the VA (Applause)—and has called on the VA to end the stay and begin processing and adjudicating these claims immediately to help veterans get the health care and benefits they have earned before it's too late. (Applause)

Righting this wrong for Blue Water navy veterans is long overdue. I thank everyone in the room today for their continued support and determination to see this bill got passed, and for your support as we press the VA to end the stay. (Applause)

Over the last year we have been busy people. Thanks to our members, DAV has a lot to be proud of, but there is still much more to do. We must continue our efforts in addressing veterans employment, especially employment for disabled veterans and their spouses and veteran under-employment.

I hope you leave Orlando with the goal of recruiting other veterans into our organization. The camaraderie we share in uniform is here in this room. It's a feeling that only we can understand, but we can share this with our fellow veterans. (Applause)

Leading an organization like DAV isn't easy, but it's one of the greatest honors of my life. It has been a very gratifying experience. And I made a lot of friends in the past years. The memories of my year as your commander will last a lifetime.

I am proud of what we have accomplished together, but we remain hungry for more. (Applause) We will march forward to meet the needs of our returning veterans and their families.

Barry Jesinoski, Randy Reese and Marc Burgess, I am incredibly proud of you and your teams both in Cold Spring and in Washington. I hope you share in that sense of pride, because what you and your teams do every single day is second to none. The hard work that goes into supporting the DAV mission isn't easy, but it hasn't slowed any one of you down one bit. (Applause)

We must continue to fight so Congress will take these issues seriously. Please, take this message home with you. Encourage your fellow members and veterans to join DAVCAN.org, the Commander's Action Network. We saw success last year because we kept talking and kept pushing. Let's aim to do it again. And let's continue to fight. (Applause)

In keeping with tradition, I hope you will allow me to honor you with my final salute for all you do to maintain our mission of providing a lifetime of support for our veterans and their families and survivors.

(Whereupon, Commander Nixon saluted the membership which was recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: May God bless all the young men and women currently in harm's way. May his mercy shine upon those changed in military service. And may God bless the United States of America. Semper fi and let's get to work.

(Whereupon, Commander Nixon withdrew from the podium followed by a standing ovation.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER WHITEHEAD: Commander, under your leadership this has been an incredible year for DAV. Thank you. You set an inspiring example for all of us. I move to accept the national commander's report. May I have a second?

(Whereupon, a member from Chapter 3, Waco, Texas, seconded the motion from the floor.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER WHITEHEAD: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Butch. (Applause) Now I can relax. (Laughter) And now let me introduce the governing body of this fine organization, your DAV National Executive Committee. Ladies and gentlemen, please stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the members of the DAV National Executive Committee stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: And I ask that the Auxiliary National Executive Committee stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the members of the DAV Auxiliary National Executive Committee stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: It now gives me great pleasure to introduce my leadership partner and friend of all of our nation's veterans and their family members, families, DAV and families—DAV Auxiliary National Commander Ellen Timmerman.

Ellen is eligible for membership through her husband, Tim, a Vietnam veteran and her father, A. Burl Jackson, a World War II Navy veteran. Timmerman joined the DAV Auxiliary in 2005 and immediately sprang into action. She is a member of Unit 32 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She has served as unit commander and 11 terms as unit adjutant.

Ellen's theme "Together we can get it done" encompasses her passion for DAV and Auxiliary growth, while emphasizing the importance of unity within the organization and in our communities.

When not busy representing the organization or cheering on her grandchildren at school events, Ellen is an avid quilter and often donates them to fundraisers or gives them to family and friends.

Friends, please welcome DAV Auxiliary National Commander Ellen Timmerman. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, the DAV Auxiliary Commander advanced to the podium.)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER ELLEN TIMMERMAN: Thank you, Commander Nixon. I'm honored to have the opportunity to speak to you today about topics that are critically important. The significance of these topics is not limited to myself; rather, they are essential to all veterans' families.

Each and every one of us in this room share the common responsibility to stay informed and aware of all facets of the organizations and the veteran-related issues so we can serve veterans and their families.

Being here today and looking out at all of you in this room, I'm reminded of the hope and the camaraderie that first attracted me to this wonderful organization. We are part of something bigger than ourselves. And we are in it together. (Applause)

Membership is the lifeblood of our organization. And without new members we run the risk of losing out on new ideas from fresh perspectives that could help our Auxiliary to move forward.

However, we've found ourselves struggling to promote growth and active involvement within our membership. I'd like to challenge each of you to reflect on your history with this organization and think about what initially motivated you to become an active member in our community.

Our goal is to promote the growth of the DAV Auxiliary by becoming more welcoming and supportive of new members and ideas while still maintaining the tradition of the organization. This proves challenging when considering the broad diversity of our members.

Encourage and train members to take active roles and leadership positions within the organization. Every member has something special to contribute. Urge each other to use these strengths to maximize the efforts of our ranks. Encourage suggestions and new ideas at all levels of the organization. And embrace the membership age span.

We should welcome individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Inspire a spirit of change to attract new and younger members. This means reaching them where they are and stepping out of our personal comfort zone. Identify the unique challenges facing those we serve and develop programs to meet their needs.

The Auxiliary has been an integral pillar in the push for comprehensive caregiver benefits for veterans of all eras.

With the passage and implementation of the VA MISSION Act, we need to keep our members aware of changes and benefits as well as continuously listen to new and developing needs of our members. We can do this by promoting caregiver and community awareness for veterans and their families.

We can't stress the benefits and meaning of membership enough. The voices who join our cause impact our ability to improve the lives of veterans, survivors and heroes who rely on us.

The power of our numbers lends more strength to our voice on critical legislative issues. I hope all of you are working to build relationships with your local DAV chapters to help to reach our goal to fill our ranks. Two organizations working hand-in-hand is better than one.

As new people join our cause (Applause)—as new people join our cause, be sure to welcome them and take the time to explain some of the things your unit does for your veterans and their families, as well as what you do in your communities.

If you do this, they will be better prepared to help and even recruit more junior members. We all want to feel that we are valuable and truly an asset—and juniors are no different. Embolden them and support them to be active by giving them meaningful ways to contribute.

I hope all of you are taking advantage of the information available for use to inspire and encourage our fellow members and citizens. These items, found on the Auxiliary website, are for everyone to use—and you don't even have to sign in.

Let's strengthen both DAV and Auxiliary by working together and supporting each other. The DAV Auxiliary is making a difference. Each of us have the capability to make a difference every single day—and we do. (Applause)

I say these words with conviction: I am truly thankful for your service to our country and for the sacrifices each of you made during and as a result of your military service. Most importantly, thank you for giving me the opportunity to enjoy the freedoms we have in this great country. (Applause)

Before I conclude, I have a very important and special presentation to make. (Applause)

The Past National Commander's Outstanding Auxiliary Member of the Year Award recognizes the contributions and dedication of an Auxiliary member whose efforts enhance the goals of the DAV and the Auxiliary and community activities that are truly above and beyond the ordinary.

This year's recipient is Kathy Dunham, a member of Unit 22 in Nolan, Texas. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Ms. Dunham was presented with her award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Kathy is not only the founder of Unit 22 in Texas, but she also served two terms as its commander. And she served as the Department of Texas community service chairperson this past year.

Kathy has worked tirelessly for veterans and their family members in her area of Texas and throughout the state. In 2016 she started a monthly ice cream social for the veterans at the William Courtney State Veterans Home in Temple, Texas.

Kathy also started a clothing drive within her unit that collects and donates them to veterans and homeless shelters in both Killeen and Austin, Texas. Kathy's love for people doesn't end there as she also started the area's first women veterans clothing closet. (Applause) The program provides attire for transitioning, under-employed and homeless female veterans for job interviews, school or church.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome this year's Outstanding Auxiliary Member of the Year, Kathy Dunham. (Standing Ovation)

MS. KATHY DUNHAM: Wow. Oh, thank you. It's beautiful. Gosh, can you believe it? I am so humbled and honored to be here, especially to be with such a great, like-minded crowd. And I might cry. I'm not sure.

I want to thank you all for this award and thank you, thank everybody for all of your support that you've given me. I belong to, as a lifetime member to three different service organizations, and I have to say that they pale in comparison to the DAV service that we do.

I never meant to bring attention to myself; I've just always tried to bring attention to the veterans and their families, especially to our female veterans, our unsung heroes. (Applause) And I've also tried to bring little Nolanville on the map with our charter and our unit, and I guess I might have done that.

But I don't know of any other veterans service organization that does the service we do within our communities, with our CSOs, NSOs, DSOs. Our VAVS program is, it's just untouchable. We're the only one that does something like that. And as such, also, our LVAP program, all of the hours and volunteer hours, donations, miles and everything that we put into that gives us a really strong leg to stand on, I feel.

And this Midwinter Conference I got to go to Washington, D.C., and see our commander and our legislative team speak before Congress, and I was so impressed. The professionalism and just the way that they handle themselves with the bills and everything, I thought it was so awesome.

And I think everybody should go home and have all of your members get on the Commander's Action Network. And it doesn't take members. Anybody in the community can be in Commander's Action Network. And I think it makes us a lot stronger when the community is with us and working with us for the bills and the legislation that we keep all of our benefits intact for our veterans.

And I suppose while I have this forum I should apologize to all the people that I've held captive and made them listen to me sing this year. I'm trying to quit, so—I can't promise anything but.

I just, I'm overwhelmed. I just never thought that I would be here. And I thank everybody so much. This means everything in the world. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Dunham withdrew from the stage.)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you, Kathy. And thank you Commander Nixon for your friendship and your partnership. It's been an honor to serve alongside you. And God bless you and your families. Thank you so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the DAV Auxiliary Commander withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you so much. You guys should be jealous. I got to walk her down the aisle four times. (Laughter)

James M. Byrne currently serves as General Counsel, performing the duties of the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Veterans of Affairs. Previously, Mr. Byrne served as an executive with Lockheed Martin Corporation.

Before joining Lockheed Martin, Mr. Byrne served in the career Senior Executive Service positions at the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction and the United States Office of the Special Counsel.

Mr. Byrne has over 25 years of experience in the public sector, including service as a deployed Marine infantry officer and Department of Justice international narcotics prosecutor.

Mr. Byrne earned his J.D. from Stetson University College of Law and is a Distinguished Graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where he received an engineering degree. Please give a warm welcome to Mr. James Byrne. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Mr. Byrne advanced to the podium.)

MR. JAMES BYRNE, ESQUIRE: Thank you very, very much. Well, good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. BYRNE: I am thrilled to be here representing the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Honorable Robert Wilkie, our 10th Secretary of the Department. Dennis, thank you for that kind introduction.

Two combat tours in Vietnam. Over 43 years of dedicated service to veterans and this amazing organization, semper fidelis and thank you. (Applause)

It's a team sport, and I need to also recognize some other great folks as part of the DAV organization. Auxiliary National Commander Ellen Timmerman and Adjutant Pat Kemper; (Applause) National Adjutant Marc Burgess; and Executive Directors Barry Jesinoski at the National Headquarters and Randy Reese at the D.C. Headquarters, also my lunch buddy. (Applause)

So it is great to see all of you here in Orlando—I would say sunny Orlando but we've had, it's not been so sunny the last couple days—for your 98th National Convention. And as I understand it, next month will be DAV's 99th birthday, so to all of you, congratulations, 99 years. (Applause)

So this is the third opportunity that I've had in twice as many months to share some time with DAV: last February in Washington, D.C., and a similar audience; and then at the end of March with John Kleindienst and other DAV leaders for that Miracle on the Mountain, the Winter Sports Clinic in Colorado.

So for over three decades you've been changing fellow veterans' lives for the better out at Snowmass. And I have some wonderful memories from that experience.

But what strongly sticks out with me was the number of participants that candidly came up to me during that Miracle on the Mountain and told me about this program saving their lives. It saved their lives. Very powerful. And it sticks with me today.

So that experience, that program and others are an incredible part of your long history of advocating for veterans of every era with local, state and national leadership, serving and supporting veterans across the country in the most meaningful ways.

Over $112 million in grants to local community organizations, helping veterans overcome challenges with spinal cord injuries, amputations, traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress, substance abuse, homelessness and more.

Free claims representation for over a million veterans and their survivors.

Twenty-three thousand DAV and Auxiliary volunteers gave more than 1.3 million volunteer hours to veterans in 2018, serving our brothers and sisters hospitalized in VA medical centers.

And just last year DAV volunteer—(Applause) and just last year DAV volunteer drivers gave over 625,000 veterans rides to VA facilities, logging nearly 18 million miles. (Applause) And so to put 18 million miles in perspective, that's 72 trips around the globe or 37 trips to the moon and back. Wow. A lot of mileage. Lots of mileage. Imagine all of the tall tales and jokes that were told to those veterans over those miles, 18 million miles.

So Secretary Wilkie had the privilege of meeting one of those great people in Milwaukee back in January, Auxiliary member Patty Davis, who is one of your transportation program managers. Is Patty here today? (Applause) If you are, Patty, stand up. I've got lights.

(Whereupon, Ms. Davis stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

MR. BYRNE: I see somebody pointing so she is here, somewhere over here. Thank you. Twenty-one years, 35,500 volunteer hours. And since last October, Patty, you and your team in Milwaukee and Southern Wisconsin have driven over a quarter-million miles getting 14,000 veterans to and from appointments. Patty, thank you and your team. (Applause)

And thank you to all of the DAV and Auxiliary volunteers for all they do to support veterans.

Dennis and Ellen, I have to tell you, I imagine that Judge Marx, the first national commander and Mrs. John Paul Jones, the first Auxiliary commander, they would be immensely proud of DAV and what they're doing for veterans today.

When it comes to showing the nation what it means to care of veterans, it's business as usual, doing great things, at DAV. It has been so for nearly a century.

Well, I want to share with you that it's not business as usual at the VA. It hasn't been so for a while. As you kick off the convention I want to make sure we fully appreciate what is happening for veterans at the VA these days.

We are in the midst of one of the greatest transformations of VA in many decades. Many of you have heard that, but without a little context those words might ring a little hollow, so indulge me for a minute while I explain. So I'd like to frame that assertion with some historical context.

I'd say that there have been three truly transformational moments in VA's history, periods of deep, fundamental change in how our country cares for veterans.

And the first transformation started when President Lincoln signed legislation establishing the National Homes for Disabled Volunteer veterans and then the next day he charged the nation to care for those who have "borne the battle." A year later, a first facility opened in Maine. And from that grew the largest integrated health care system in the United States, all for veterans.

The next transformational moment, World War I and World War II, where 5 million World War I veterans came home to a chaotic, inefficient system of four separate organizations trying to serve veterans. DAV was there, and others and they ushered in legislation that consolidated efforts under a single veterans bureau.

And then several years later in World War II General Omar Bradley, under his leadership the VA, provided 16 million World War II veterans who were coming home, being demobilized from within the United States and the Pacific and European theaters, provided them with access to health care, home loan guarantees and education, equipping them to shape and balance the 20th century, drive our post-war economic boom, and teach a lesson that we do well remembering today. And that lesson is good today: When America invests in veterans, everyone wins. (Applause)

Additionally, General Bradley formed VA medical school academic affiliations that serve VA and the entire country still today.

And not many know that he was behind the Hometown Program of 1945. That program meant World War II veterans could get community care with a doctor of their choice and buy drugs from their local pharmacists. And I doubt the word "privatization" crossed anyone's lips back then. It was about meeting veterans' needs where they lived.

So medical journalists back then reported that Bradley had transformed the VA quote "from a national scandal to a model establishment" unquote. And other headlines praised VA's quote "revolution." And other headlines such as, "VA brings new hope to disabled veterans;" and "Medical care of veterans rated at top."

Bradley turned VA on a dime, completely overhauled operations and reformed the system.

Those transformational moments that I just discussed were about fundamental change at VA—not a change in the mission but a change to make sure we're better serving veterans. And that's exactly what's happening at VA today.

President Trump and Secretary Wilkie have done more reforming in this department of improving care and benefits delivery in the last two years than we've seen in decades. We have revolutionized how VA serves—(Applause) we have revolutionized how VA serves veterans by making it our job to answer your needs.

Today, customer service is our top priority, a permanent part of our core values, as Mr. Wilkie would say. VA-wide trust has climbed from 59% in mid-2016 to 72% today and on our way to our goal of 90%.

Outpatient surveys show your trust in the VA at 88%, and we're inching closer to our goal of 90%.

And just last week Secretary Wilkie announced that the White House is looking to export our customer service efforts to the rest of the government. It's great news. VA's leading the way in customer service.

We're also implementing the MISSION Act across the country, a turning point for how you access your VA health care. And under the MISSION Act you can get care in your community if a VA facility is too long of a drive. Under the MISSION Act you can get care in your community if VA doesn't have the care that you need.

Under the MISSION Act you can finally get what your neighbors have always had, and that's the option to get urgent care close to home without driving hours to a VA facility. (Applause)

And the MISSION Act is not about, and has never been about, privatization any more than Bradley's Hometown Program was. It's about what's best for you. It's about giving you choice. It's about promoting independence in your and your families' health care decisions.

It's the VA's job to work with you to get you the care you need inside or outside VA.

And today we're working hand-in-hand, also, with the Department of the Defense on several initiatives, to include transition assistance, our electronic health records modernization effort and the President's plan to reduce veteran suicide.

I have the privilege of representing the VA, co-chairing the VA-DOD Joint Executive Committee. And together we're working to assure transitioning service members are enrolled in benefits and services that they've earned.

We're building on best practices so active-duty service members in the transition process can train as a VA service representative, for example, and be hired by VBA when they leave the service.

We have joint VA-DOD oversight of our electronic health records initiatives. It's a VA-DOD compatible health record system. And so what actually does that mean? Let me tell you what it means.

Imagine a single health record solution integrated across all of DOD, VA, and community care components. Imagine your community clinicians, local pharmacists, labs, and other specialties seeing the same health care information that the VA sees and knowing the full and complete story of your service-related injury and the treatments that you are receiving. That's where we're going. And it's happening right now. (Applause)

Over 78 billion—and that's right, billion with a b, 78 billion—of your medical records have been compiled electronically from VA medical centers. That's lab results, pharmacy prescriptions, inpatient and outpatient diagnoses and procedures and other data.

And we recently transferred 23.5 million health care records to Cerner Data Center we share with the Department of Defense, a stage for the electronic record to go live at the Spokane Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center next year. And it's one step closer to that interoperable electronic health record for a lifetime of seamless care.

When it comes to preventing veterans suicide, we are also hand-in-hand with DOD. And for our part we're screening—every veteran walking through our door for health care, we're screening them for mental health as well. And we're providing same-day mental health care if that is needed. (Applause)

We're leveraging innovative technologies like REACH VET that analyzes health record data to identify veterans who may be at risk so we can offer preemptive care, in some cases even before a veteran has a suicidal thought.

And every medical center offers emergency stabilization for former service members with other than honorable discharges who come to us with an emergent mental health need.

But the problem is bigger than one program; it's bigger than one department, or even the whole of government. And in January President Trump directed that the VA, DOD and the Department of Homeland Security work together to ensure newly discharged service members and veterans have access to any needed mental health care for at least one year following their discharge. (Applause)

And in March the President created a task force to write a national strategy for reducing veteran suicide. Mr. Wilkie co-chairs that task force. It's not focused on the final tragic act. It's focused on the factors that lead up to a veteran choosing to end their life, like mental health, homelessness and addiction.

And we're going to need DAV's help. We're going to need the help of other VSOs and NGOs to solve this nationwide tragedy affecting veterans and non-veterans. And we can make progress together. We've done it with veterans homelessness.

Here in the great State of Florida we've worked with local groups and officials to effectively end veterans homelessness in the counties of Flagler, Miami-Dade and a few other counties in this great Sunshine State.

We're also making—we're also working with DOD to make significant reductions in the use of opioids—reducing prescriptions by over 50% over the last six years, and continuing to make progress and looking at other options like aqua therapy, yoga, tai chi.

That culture is changed and we're giving veterans healthier alternatives as a result.

Let me say a quick word that was mentioned earlier about Blue Water Navy. We'll be ready to implement benefits on the first day of 2020. We're hiring and training and writing policies and procedures to process claims; obtaining the final legal rulings, compiling ship log data information to make the reviews faster. And we're ready to work with Congress on any funding issues that might arise.

We're going to prioritize claims for veterans with terminal illnesses, for homeless veterans, for those facing serious financial hardship and for veterans over 85 years of age.

And in the meantime, what you all can do is help make sure that any of you or fellow veterans who have claims for conditions related to Agent Orange exposure are submitting them and putting them in the cue.

General Bradley wrote in his memories about his time at VA, quote, "We were not able to magically upgrade VA overnight." "But I believe it's fair to say," he wrote, "that within two years we had launched it on the right track."

Thanks to the great support from the President, Congress, and VSOs like DAV and others, we are back on the right track, back on the right path, transforming the VA for veterans.

Next year is a big, big year for DAV and, by extension, a big year for all veterans and, indeed, all Americans. It is your centennial year.

It will be a time to celebrate everything DAV's accomplished for veterans and our country over those 100 years—everything you and those on whose shoulders you stand have accomplished since those earliest days in Cincinnati.

I am incredibly honored to be here again before you. And I wish you to have a great and productive convention. Thank you for having me, and God bless all of you and your families. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Mr. Byrne withdrew from the stage during a standing ovation.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Mr. Byrne. And I believe I speak for all the veterans in this room when I thank you for joining us here today and for your support.

DAV's commitment to fulfilling our promises to the men and women who served is clear through the work of the national Transportation Network. Throughout the country our hospital service coordinators and volunteers organize and facilitate critical transportation, making it possible for ill and injured veterans to receive the care they need and earned at the VA medical facilities.

Since 1987, DAV headquarters, chapters, departments, the National Service Foundation and Columbia Trust have purchased 3,517 vehicles (Applause) at a cost of more than $80 million. This is a major investment in helping our brothers and sisters get access to the care that they need.

All told, last year this program provided more than 625,000 free rides for veterans to and from their critical VA appointments, covering nearly 17.7 million miles.

Throughout our history DAV has received unparalleled support from numerous sources, but there has been only one partner who has faithfully been with us since the beginning. That partner is Ford.

Joining us today is a special guest—(Applause) joining us today is a special guest with more news about the long-standing Ford-DAV partnership.

(Whereupon, "Mustang Sally" played as Ms. Cabrera advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yisel Cabrera is a community relations manager at Ford Motor Company out of our nation's capital. Ms. Cabrera is responsible for developing philanthropic, charitable and community relations programs that meet the goals of the Ford Motor Company Fund and the Ford Motor Company.

She also oversees all projects undertaken and proposed in operation Better World Cities, and maintains relationships with community leaders to confirm Ford's commitment to enhancing the quality of life in the communities they serve. (Applause)

MS. YISEL CABRERA: Thank you, National Commander Nixon. I am so honored to be here with you and the men and women of DAV this morning.

I've been fortunate enough to attend this convention on behalf of Ford Motor Company for three years in a row now, and each time I've been incredibly impressed by the work you are doing to help improve the lives of your fellow veterans.

As a refugee and an immigrant to this country, I have great admiration for those who serve in our military, and I am fortunate to work with many veterans at Ford Motor Company. On behalf of my family and all of us at Ford, I want to thank you for the sacrifices that you have made in order to protect our freedom and way of life. (Applause)

Ford has a long history of supporting veterans and active-duty military. Together with nonprofit partners across the country we run and support a range of programs aimed at helping veterans train for new careers, receive mental health services, and transportation for medical visits.

We also support initiatives that honor past and present members of the military and raise awareness of veterans' struggles.

As many of you know, Ford and the DAV have a relationship that dates back to 1922 when Henry Ford, himself, provided 50 Model T's so that veterans could attend the Second DAV National Convention in San Francisco. By the way—(Applause) this is a fun fact: The first national convention of the DAV was held in Detroit in July of 1921. And so I hope that we can get you back there sometime soon. (Applause)

Ninety-seven years after Ford first began supporting the DAV, we are still here helping the DAV ensure that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them and educating the public about their great sacrifices.

Assisting veterans is one of Ford's signature community missions. But our commitment goes far beyond writing checks. We personally connect at a grassroots level with Ford dealers, employees and other partners to help veterans in need.

Our investments are rooted in Ford's long-standing commitment to make a positive impact on society and builds on Henry Ford's legacy of helping create strong communities where Ford does business.

And I also want to thank you for supporting Ford. According to the IHS vehicle registration study, when American military families buy a new vehicle, they prefer Ford trucks, utilities and cars over any other brand.

And that is no surprise to us because since 2001 DAV members and their families have purchased more than 25,000 vehicles from Ford through the Ford X Plan Partnership Recognition program, resulting in more than $15 million in savings for DAV members through the years. (Applause)

And this year Ford is pleased to offer all DAV members a $1,000 Private Offer to be used in addition to their X-Plan pricing on all new Ford and Lincoln vehicles on sales through December 2019. (Applause)

And for those that stop by our booth and fill out a survey, you will have the opportunity to win some really cool prizes, including a die-cast Ford Raptor signed by Bill Ford, a chance to win gift cards and other great prizes by spinning the prize wheel, just for filling out a short survey.

So make sure you stop by, get your picture taken in our new Ford photo booth, and say hello to our team.

And now I'd like to ask National Commander Dennis Nixon and National Adjutant Marc Burgess if they would please join me at the podium. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Commander and Adjutant Burgess joined Ms. Cabrera at the podium.)

MS. CABRERA: Ford began donating vehicles to DAV in 1996. And last year Ford vehicles assisted more than 615,000 military veterans to reach their medical appointments.

Today I am proud to announce that we are donating eight new Ford Flex utility vehicles for use by the DAV in eight cities around the country. (Applause) This year's recipients, as you can see, are VA

medical centers in Fayetteville, Arkansas; Marion, Illinois; Wichita, Kansas; Biloxi, Mississippi; Columbia, Missouri; Salisbury, North Carolina; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Columbia, South Carolina. (Applause)

We are happy to be able to provide these vehicles to show our appreciation for all of the sacrifices you have made to protect our freedom.

And now, on behalf of every Ford Motor Company employee, I'd like to present you with this ceremonial check which represents the value of the vehicle donation.

(Whereupon, Ms. Cabrera presented a ceremonial check to the Commander and Adjutant Burgess, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

MS. CABRERA: This gift means that Ford Motor Company has donated a total of 231 vehicles to DAV since 1996, representing a value of nearly $6 million. (Applause)

We are also proud to support the families of DAV through the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program. It is my pleasure to present this ceremonial check to National Commander Nixon in the amount of $45,000 to support this outstanding academic program. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Cabrera presented a ceremonial check in the amount of $45,000 to the Commander and Adjutant Burgess, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MS. CABRERA: And National Adjutant Burgess and Commander Dennis Nixon would please stay here with me. I would like to ask, also, National Auxiliary Commander Ellen Timmerman to please join us at the podium. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the DAV Auxiliary Commander joined them at the podium.)

MS. CABRERA: DAV has a wonderful history and a bright future because of the strength of its leadership. In recognition of your hard work and dedication over the past year, I would like to present each of you with a gift from Ford Motor Company.

AUXILIARY COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you.

(Whereupon, Ms. Cabrera presented gifts to the DAV Commander and the DAV Auxiliary Commander, after which the commanders withdrew from the podium.)

MS. CABRERA: Thank you, again. (Applause) Thank you for your hard work and leadership. You have made a difference in the lives of many veterans over this past year. (Applause)

In closing, on behalf of the approximately 196,000 men and women of Ford Motor Company, it is truly an honor to be here and to be of service to you, the men and women of DAV.

Thank you for your bravery. Thank you for your loyalty. And thank you for helping to preserve our freedom. Please enjoy the rest of the convention, and may God bless each and every one of you and our great country. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Cabrera withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Let's give Ms. Cabrera and Ford a huge DAV thank you for all they do for our veterans. (Applause) It is important that future generations understand the sacrifices and service veterans have made to our nation. Serving those who put their country above themselves is a passion for some outstanding young people. DAV is proud to incentivize and recognize tomorrow's leaders who have made a commitment to our cause.

Each year, with the continued support of the Ford Motor Company Fund, DAV honors these budding patriots with scholarships for higher education in recognition and appreciation for their volunteer services to our American veterans.

The Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Fund is named after one of the most revered leaders in the history of our cause, Jesse Brown. Jesse was a Marine veteran who was wounded in Vietnam in 1965. But that didn't stop his life calling of service to others.

He joined the DAV in 1967 and became our organization's first African-American Executive Director before being selected in 1993 by the President of the United States to become the first African-American Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

This year we have selected eight of the nation's outstanding young volunteers to receive cash awards from the program. This remarkable and important program not only incentivizes volunteerism but also connects future leaders with veterans and encourages a lifelong commitment on their behalf.

Now, let's get to know one of these young leaders and this year's top Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship winner a little more.

(Whereupon, the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship video was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now, please join me in welcoming DAV National Voluntary Services Director John Kleindienst to the stage. (Applause) And now it's my extreme pleasure to welcome our top recipient, Hailey Curnett, of Benton, Arkansas, to the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, John Kleindienst and Hailey Curnett joined the Commander for the presentation, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Hailey Curnett, a volunteer at the Central Arkansas Veterans Health Care System at the John L. McClellan VA Medical Center campus, has donated more than 1,400 volunteer hours serving veterans over the past five years.

Hailey was also awarded the hospital's Volunteer of the Year Award in 2015 and 2016 and dedicated 2017 to mentoring incoming youth contributors.

She has managed to accomplish all of this while maintaining a 4.0 GPA, working a steady job and keeping up with her love of running track, where she has won two state championship titles in the 4 by 800 and 4 by 400 meter relays.

Hailey plans to attend Arkansas State University to study nursing. (Applause)

MS. HAILEY CURNETT: I would like to start off by saying thank you to all the veterans out here who served and gave me the opportunity to be a volunteer, because it has been the most wonderful experience of my life. (Applause)

I would like to thank the National DAV, Department of Arkansas DAV, Central Arkansas Veterans Health Care System, Volunteer Services and my mom who is my greatest role model in life.

I would also like to express—(Applause) thank you. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude for the opportunity to receive the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship.

Spending the last four years volunteering with nurses and other health care providers, I have found a love for caretaking. With this scholarship I plan to attend Arkansas State University, where I would like to earn a Bachelor of Science in nursing. I hope to enjoy—I hope to continue my journey serving our nation's veterans at the VA.

Not only has volunteering inspired me to pursue a career in nursing, volunteering at the VA has inspired me to serve my country, as well. I have always known that I wanted to join the military. After spending 1,500 hours volunteering alongside veterans, I found plenty of encouragement to do so. (Applause)

It has been a truly humbling experience being a volunteer and serving our veterans. I hope to inspire others to volunteer and that they will find the experience as exciting and fulfilling as I have.

Thank you, again, for this amazing opportunity. And wish me luck at basic training this October. (Applause) Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Kleindienst and Ms. Curnett withdrew from the stage and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Members of DAV and the Auxiliary are, without a doubt, among the most dedicated and caring volunteers in our nation. They don't volunteer for the recognition. They do it because of their compassion toward our veterans and a desire to assist in fulfilling our promises to those who have served.

It is now my pleasure to announce the winners of the 2019 George H. Seal Memorial Award.

The winner of this year's DAV George Seal Memorial Award lives right here in the Sunshine State, Navy and Vietnam veteran state. Hmm. It is my pleasure to introduce John Markiewicz, a Navy veteran of the Vietnam War.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: John Markiewicz, a member of Chapter 1 in Jacksonville, Florida, has volunteered for 17 years and has given more than 2,600 hours in service to his fellow veterans at the Lake City VA Medical Center.

Markiewicz has volunteered in recreation therapy, the VA Voluntary Service Program, hospice and the community learning center; and he has acted as a VAVS committee representative and hospital service coordinator.

Markiewicz has also been instrumental in recruiting additional volunteers from various DAV chapters and units to the medical center. He is an excellent source of reliable information for those interested in volunteering with DAV and encourages the growth of all the DAV chapters and units he encounters. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Markiewicz advanced to the podium to accept the award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. JOHN MARKIEWICZ: I want to thank all of you for the consideration of this award and I really do appreciate it. I have done a lot of volunteer work at VA hospitals in Lake City for many, many years.

I have a couple of guests in the back, the voluntary services chief from Gainesville, (Indistinguishable), right up front here, Nicky Evans and Michael Cary. I really appreciate having worked with them over all these years. They've made it very possible for me to do this. In fact, a few times I think they made the impossible happen, so, again.

I also want to thank the Department of Florida for the funding that they have given me over the years—Al Linden and Andy Marshall—that's allowed me to do a lot of the things that I've done because of availability of funds.

And finally, I want to thank all of the chapters in South Georgia and North Florida that come to the VA every month and do bingo and bring their gifts and donations and all. Without them we wouldn't have much of a program.

It's really about the veterans. It's all about helping veterans and doing things for our veterans. And that's the biggest lesson I have learned in my 27 years with the VA—we're here to help the veterans and give them better lives. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Markiewicz withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. Congratulations. Keep up the good work.

This year's DAV Auxiliary George H. Seal Memorial Trophy winner is Clara Lewis, a passionate volunteer at the West Texas VA Health Care System in Big Spring, Texas. Sadly, Ms. Lewis was unable to grace us with her presence at this year's convention.

She is a member of the DAV Auxiliary Unit 47 in Big Spring, Texas, and began her volunteer work through the DAV Auxiliary an inspiring 44 years ago, amassing over 43,600 volunteer hours.

Her impact has been so great that on July 18, 2018, West Texas VA Health Care System medical center staff dedicated a portion of the facility to Clara Lewis—or as the Clara Lewis Outpatient Waiting Area in honor of her contributions. (Applause)

Our next guest represents a company that goes above and beyond the call of duty to serve those who have served. The United Services Automobile Association, better known as USAA, has been a steadfast supporter of veterans, service members and their families, dating back to its founding in 1922. I am proud to introduce our next guest, USAA's Lead Account Manager Military Affinity, Mr. J.D. Thornock. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: J.D. Thornock is the Lead Account Manager Military Affinity at USAA, responsible for supporting and developing relationships with the middle- to large-scale military service organizations to drive enterprise growth and enhance a multi-channel member experience.

J.D. is a United States Marine. He fought in both Iraq and Afghanistan where he led teams of Marines in combat as a fire-team leader, squad leader and platoon sergeant. Some of his biggest passions are helping combat veterans transition from the service to civilian life and helping civilians understand the value and perspective veterans offer. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Thornock advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. J.D. THORNOCK: Good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. THORNOCK: I can't believe it's already been a year since Reno. What a privilege it really is for me to be here with you again on behalf of USAA.

This is my third convention with you and it is the highlight of my summer. I absolutely love meeting you, learning from you. And I really love hearing your stories. Learning about you and hearing your stories just makes me even more proud to be an American, and it's a privilege to be here.

Since my time in the Marine Corps, DAV has been there helping me just as they've been there helping each of you. How grateful I am to be associated with the DAV. No other organization helps the individual veteran more than DAV. It is fortunate that USAA has teamed up with DAV to continue to forward this important mission.

As part of our partnership USAA is also the presenting sponsor of the annual DAV 5K. And USAA is sponsoring the annual Winter Sports Clinic and Summer TEE Tournament. It is fantastic to see the excitement that people have for supporting veterans during the 5K.

What I love even more is seeing the passion of living spark up in the eyes of disabled veterans attending the sports clinics. As you will see in the following video, the sports clinics are a privilege to be a part of but, more importantly, you will get a glimpse of the impact that these clinics have on the lives of our nation's heroes.

(Whereupon, the USAA/winter sports clinic video was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

MR. THORNOCK: We love DAV. USAA is honored—(Applause). Thank you. Thank you. We are honored to be associated with you. We truly value our partnership and are blessed to be part of such an important mission.

With DAV and USAA the future for veterans is bright. Gentlemen, please accept this ceremonial check donation—half-a-million dollars—(Applause) to continue to forward the mission and better the lives of our veterans. There you go. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken as a ceremonial check was presented to the Commander and Adjutant Burgess, followed by another round of applause, at which time Mr. Thornock withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: We love DAV—I'm sorry. (Laughter) We do. We do love DAV, don't we? (Applause) Is anyone here hungry?

(Response of "Yes.")

COMMANDER NIXON: Marc wouldn't let me have breakfast this morning, so for some reason I am. However, more importantly, I'm thirsty.

Our next guest represents an iconic American brand that was our country's first restaurant chain and now it's our oldest. A&W Restaurants became America's first franchise in 1921.

It seems very fitting that DAV and A&W, two great national institutions, founded within a year of one another, stand together today in support of our nation's veterans and the sacrifices they have made throughout our history.

Again this year, as part of National Root Beer Float Day on Tuesday, August 6, A&W Restaurants nationwide will be partnering with DAV to raise money and awareness to ensure our promises are kept to the men and women who have served, as well as their families. Everyone will receive a free float, so make sure you are there.

Ladies and gentlemen, for the third straight year let's raise a frosty mug for a very special guest from A&W. Please give a big round of applause for Paul Martino, chief operating officer and president.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Paul Martino has worked in the food-service industry since he was a teenager and has been with A&W Restaurants for over 20 years. He first joined A&W Restaurants in the early 1990s as a multi-unit, company-owned district supervisor, advancing to VP of Company Operations responsible for over 200 corporate locations across the country.

He served as VP of Operations during the brand's transition to YUM! from 2002 to 2004, then spent several years as a consultant before returning to the A&W brand in 2011.

Paul became A&W's COO in October of 2011 during the brand's acquisition by a partnership of domestic and international A&W franchisees. Paul was promoted to President of A&W in December of 2018. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Martino advanced to the podium.)

MR. PAUL MARTINO: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. MARTINO: My name is Paul Martino, and it is a pleasure and an honor to be with you today representing A&W at your annual convention.

I was fortunate enough to be the first-born son of the most incredible man I have ever known. I lost my father, General Salvatore Martino, in 2017. And if he saw me here today he would speak the words I heard very often growing up, "I'm very proud of you, son." My father did three tours in Vietnam as an Air Force C-130 navigator. (Applause)

There were eight kids in my family. It was a fun time at the Martino house. (Laughter) And after moving around constantly for years, my parents decided that we would stay put in California while my father did his tours of duty around the country.

He sacrificed so much for his country, and he was always so supportive of A&W's work with DAV and the important work you do in supporting our vets.

We are excited this year to be celebrating A&W's 100-year anniversary. (Applause) It actually started with Roy Allen serving root beer during a parade celebrating World War I veterans. A&W saw tremendous expansion in the 1950s on the backs of World War II veterans using their GI loans to open restaurants across the country.

And here is a little-known fact: J.W. Marriott was one of the first A&W franchisees, opening up a root beer stand on the East Coast. (Laughter) The A&W team is passionate about our brand and our support of veteran-related charities.

Each year A&W celebrates National Root Beer Float Day on August 6. And in exchange for a root beer float we ask our guests to pay it forward. Together with our franchise partners we have raised over $800,000 since 2013, and our goal this year is to raise $200,000 for the DAV. (Applause)

Here is a little taste of what A&W National Root Beer Float Day is all about.

(Whereupon, a video on A&W National Root Beer Float Day was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

MR. MARTINO: Now, I ask you, can you really have a bad day if you're enjoying a delicious root beer float? You're about to find out. (Laughter) That video is just a sample of communities around the country embracing National Root Beer Float Day.

As we prepare our teams for this year's event we want you all to know how much A&W values our partnership with DAV and all the great work you do for our deserving veterans. I look forward to another big check presentation when this event is all over.

Hey, Dad, I'm thinking about you and all you did for our family and our country. (Applause) And I would also like to thank all, everyone here today for all you do for our vets. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Martino withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thanks to our great partners at A&W, Mr. Rosen and the Rosen Shingle team who donated the ice cream and the service, immediately following our opening session root beer floats will be available in the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Jay Erickson is the president of EG America, headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, with oversight of all U.S. activities, including 1,042 convenience and fuel centers in 24 states, and a newly acquired fuel wholesale company in New York.

In September of 2018, following the acquisition of the Kroger C-Stores by EG Group, Jay took on his current role as president of EG America.

Jay is a graduate of Colorado State University, earning a Bachelor's of Science degree and a Master of Science in management information systems. He later earned an MBA from Colorado Technical University.

(Whereupon, Mr. Erickson advanced to the podium followed by a round of applause.)

MR. JAY ERICKSON: Well, thank you, Commander Nixon. Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. ERICKSON: I first would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have served our country. Without your commitment the life my family has today and the opportunity that the organization like EG America has to grow would not be possible. Thank you. You have made a difference. (Applause)

I am very proud to lead one of the many organizations represented here today to support the work DAV does and give back to those who served our country.

Today, the $200,000 check was EG America's first contribution, signifying our alignment and partnership with DAV. (Applause)

As you might not be familiar with EG America, I will take a minute to share a little about the company and our journey. EG America was established in April of 2018 when the EG Group out of the U.K., owned by Moshin and Zuber Issa, acquired 763 convenience stores from the Kroger Company.

You might recognize the banner names of Turkey Hill, Tom Thumb, Kwik Shop or Loaf 'N Jug across the country. Our U.S. headquarters was established in Cincinnati, Ohio, with this transaction—coincidentally, only six miles from the DAV National Headquarters.

Since the initial acquisition, EG America has acquired an additional 350 stores and now has sites in 25 states. The Issa brothers have committed to continued growth and investment in the U.S. market as they build on their portfolio of 5,400 stores in nine countries, with a target of 5,000 stores in the U.S. within the next five years.

The EG Group vision includes supporting communities we work and live in, and a commitment to charitable giving is foundational. DAV was chosen in a collaborative effort by a committee formed with associates across the country to find a charity that would connect in a meaningful way.

Knowing many of our associates and customers have served our country through a branch of the military, the decision to focus on veterans was easy. With this as the goal research was done to find the "right organization to partner with."

We considered the percentage of donation that went back to supporting veterans and not executive leadership. We gathered insight to the understanding of the value they bring to veterans in our communities. And we asked veteran organizations who they believed were regarded favorably within the "inner circle."

DAV, although maybe lesser-known based on media exposure, rose to the top of the list.

We were impressed by the daily activities DAV supports and by the knowledge of the complex system the veterans need help understanding to navigate to receive benefits. Finally, the extensive network of resources they have across the country aligns well with our geographic coverage.

DAV became the clear choice. We wanted to have DAV as our partner to align with for a lasting and impactful relationship for giving. Now, the real challenge was to prove that we would be a worthy partner of DAV.

We were very fortunate to connect with the DAV leadership team at the National Headquarters, who gave us the opportunity to share the EG America vision of connecting in the communities we serve.

Following the evaluation, the commitment was made and the work began to quickly build a platform for our first customer-facing campaign with DAV. So, how do we know that we chose well? Because our people immediately saw the value of the DAV Summer Campaign. By midweek of the official kickoff—midweek of the official kickoff our store associates had collected $165,000 in contributions. (Applause)

As I stand here today, three weeks into the program, three weeks of an eight-week program, I am happy to update you that our total as of this morning, after three weeks in an eight-week program, is $375,000. (Applause)

EG America will continue to partner with DAV to build unity within our organization by giving people opportunities to participate, support and give back. We want to be a company that people recognize for supporting others. And DAV will help us achieve our goals as we help them help our veterans.

Thank you to all of you for supporting DAV.

Again, I am proud to be included in a group of leaders and I am confident together we can make a difference for those who have served our country. (Applause)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken as a ceremonial check was presented to the Commander and Adjutant Burgess, followed by another round of applause, after which Mr. Erickson withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. The Bugle Award was created in 2005 to recognize the outstanding contributions of the media in support of disabled veterans.

A decorated Marine veteran of the Vietnam War, wounded during the Tet Offensive, an actor, director, writer, filmmaker and consultant, this year's Bugle Award recipient has worked to ensure the stories of our military members are not just told but are told with accuracy, realism and attention to detail that does justice to the real-life subjects being portrayed.

After serving an illustrious career in the Marine Corps where he served with distinction as a mustang officer and was thrice wounded in combat over the course of three tours in Vietnam, and decorated for courage, he found a unique way to continue his service.

He went to Hollywood, founded a company called Warriors Incorporated, and forever changed the way war movies are made. It just so happens, through his authentic approach as a leader on set, he became an actor in the process.

You've seen him and experienced the result of his technical direction in "Platoon," "Band of Brothers" and "Saving Private Ryan," as well as countless more. Now let's see some of it for ourselves.

(Whereupon, a video on Dale Dye was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: It is my distinct pleasure to honor Dale Dye's work and present our fellow DAV life member and fellow Marine the 2019 DAV Bugle Award. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Mr. Dye advanced to the podium to receive the award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. DALE DYE: Thank you. Thank you so much. (Applause) That's right, bring the actor on last. (Laughter) I am probably going to make the teleprompter folks nuts because I have no prepared remarks. So what I'm going to say to you here today comes from the heart.

I am a proud member of the Disabled American Veterans, although I have—(Applause) although I've campaigned to change the Delta to Echo see because I don't think we are disabled. I think we are enabled. And that's what makes me so proud of all of you.

There is a bunch of Purple Hearts out there, aren't there? (Applause) Yes, I've got a few enemy marksmanship badges myself. And I always think that really what that means is that somebody wrote a check and said, "Dale Dye, pay to the United States of America, anything up to and including your life." And I was proud to do that. And everybody I know in the DAV is proud to do that. (Applause)

I don't know how much more speechifying you can take. You probably want to get up and stretch so I'm going to make my remarks relatively brief.

I have always believed that there is one thing that is a common denominator among all of us, and that is the soldier's spirit, the spirit of sacrifice, self-effacement. It's not about us; it's about the nation and it's about the country that we serve and sacrifice for.

I believe that it does not behoove us, us veterans, to cry the "poor ass." So excuse my French or Latin, whatever the case may be. I think it behooves us to stand up and say we served and we were hurt. We weren't "injured." You get injured when you fall off a barstool. (Laughter)

You get wounded when you are serving your country in combat. (Applause) And so I make that difference every time I'm called on to do press or that sort of thing. I said, "No, I'm not injured. I'm wounded." And the neat thing is I'm proud of it.

I don't cry. I don't whine. I say that was part of my dues. That's what I paid. And I'm proud that I paid it. There is no "IOU" and there shouldn't be. I'm proud to have served my nation, as you are proud to have served your nation. And you should retain that.

You know, one of the great things about my service was that it brought me great joy. Yes, there was a little pain. There was a little nonsense. We've all put up with that. But it brought me great joy. It brought me great joy to serve my nation.

It brings me great joy to be here among my brothers and sisters because Hollywood is a whole different issue. But this is where I'm home. This is where I'm home, among my brothers and sisters. Underdressed and unqualified as I am, I am here with you. And that's family. (Applause)

It is wonderful to be recognized in this fashion. The Bugle Award—god I hated bugles. (Laughter) What a pain in the ass. (Laughter) But I understand the necessity of that sort of communication.

One of the great things I love about the DAV—and, by the way, I drive a Ford and drink A&W root beer. (Applause) Just want you to know that. One of the great things I like about the DAV is you've figured it out. Unlike the Veterans Administration you've figured it out. You hired veterans. Nice work. (Applause)

I mean, for Christ's sakes, we could solve the whole Veterans' Administration problem in a hot second if we fired all the bureaucrats and hired veterans. (Applause) And I'm sorry, Mr. Under-Secretary, but that's the deal. (Laughter)

We have so much to give. The mission continues. That's what I felt when I retired from the United States Marine Corps and said, look, what am I going to do with my life? And I decided what I should do is help tell our story, tell our story, warts and all. Go to the place that our young men and women go to, and that is the popular media, movies and television.

And I said, if there is a message, if there is a way that we can tell that story, then we should. But we should tell the truth. Enough with the nonsense. Tell the story of our sacrifice and our service because we are proud to have done it. And if we aren't proud to have done it, we don't claim the title "veteran."

But I'm here with brothers and sisters who do claim that title and who are proud of their service. And I'm privileged—(Applause) I'm privileged to be the kind of clown that can get out there and do it in front of cameras and record it in television, because I think that's a legacy. That's a thing that we all need to do and we all need to support.

We need to tell this nation how lucky it is to have us. (Applause) You guys and gals make me proud to be an American, proud to be a veteran, proud to have shed a little blood in the service of those things.

God bless you all and thank you so much for having me. I appreciate it. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Mr. Dye withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you so much, Mr. Dye, not only for your service but for honoring our nation's veterans in such a unique way.

Golden Corral was a trailblazing restaurant that was the first to nationally honor veterans with a free meal in conjunction with Veterans Day, less than a month after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Over the last 18 years DAV chapters and departments have benefited enormously through the Military Appreciation Night program.

In 2018 alone, DAV was able to reach out to more than 300,000 veterans who received free meals. We were able to raise more than $1.3 million. And since the program's inception, over 5.4 million free meals have been served to veterans and more than $15 million has been raised to support state and local service programs.

It has also been our pleasure to stand with Golden Corral since the founding of Camp Corral in 2011. Camp Corral provides a free life-changing experience to the children of wounded, injured, ill and fallen military heroes by providing a unique summer camp experience.

The camps have grown tremendously in scope and popularity and now have a waiting list. It is our goal to clean out the waiting list and get every interested military and veteran child to a camp.

To assist Camp Corral, DAV established the Just B Kids program to provide scholarships to get more children to attend these invaluable camps. Just B Kids empowers chapters and departments to raise funds through DAV.

So far this year, DAV departments and chapters along with the DAV Auxiliary have raised $540,070 to get kids to these camps. (Applause) In recognition of your hard work, these funds will be matched up to $300,000, by the national organization.

I am happy to present a check totaling $840,070 to Camp Corral today. Combined, these funds will provide scholarships for more than 1,400 camp attendees. We will now invite some special friends to the stage and send them to the bank with this special gift made possible by all of you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Representing our partners at Golden Corral is Chris Peck, associate director for national marketing and media. Chris develops and executes national promotions and market tests while effectively communicating with cross-functional teams and operations to successfully launch campaigns, compile feedback and summarize financial results.

Chris oversees the Military Appreciation Night program and the Camp Corral fundraising campaign for Golden Corral.

Joining him is Lisa Brown, who joined the Camp Corral team in 2017 as their chief development officer.

Lisa's husband is a colonel in the Army Reserves and together they have two children. As a military spouse, a fundraising professional and a product of camp, Lisa is uniquely positioned to advocate for military children and share the Camp Corral story with others.

(Whereupon, Chris Peck and Lisa Brown advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken as they were presented a ceremonial check was by Commander Nixon, DAV Auxiliary Commander Timmerman, and Charitable Service Trust President Richard Marbes, followed by another round of applause.)

MS. LISA BROWN: Y'all, this is such great news. Thank you, DAV, (Applause) the DAV Auxiliary, and to all the departments and chapters who have done so much for Camp Corral.

I am both humbled and delighted to accept this donation on behalf of the children whose lives are changed because of your generosity and hard work. I've noticed something about this check, and I wonder if you have noticed it, too. It's grown. (Laughter)

And I don't mean the size of the check; it's a big check so you all can see it. What I mean is that the number printed on that check has grown quantifiably. It's grown over the years, significantly.

I know the effort that goes behind a check this size. It's you spending your nights in your neighborhood Golden Corral selling raffle tickets. It's you going from business to business in your area to collect items for a silent auction. It's you holding golf tournaments. It's you hosting cookouts. It's collection buckets. It's you asking others to remember the kids because they serve, too. It's never resting. It's always asking, "What more can I do?"

You have taken our mission to transform the lives of our wounded, injured, ill and fallen military heroes and you have made it your own. Every cent of this check is a demonstration of your passion and your commitment to this special group of kids.

And just like the check has grown, you have helped Camp Corral grow, too. And because of your passion, we are here today.

Nine years ago Camp Corral was one week at one camp in North Carolina. We served about 200 kids that summer. Today, Camp Corral offers 21 sessions at 19 camps in 17 different states. (Applause)

Since our founding in 2011 we have served more than 23,000 children—23,000 children. (Applause) And the vast majority of those have a mom or a dad who wore the uniform and now carry the physical and mental wounds of war long after they have served. Life can be tough in that family.

We have grown because of you. But beyond your exceptional fundraising and Camp Corral's ability to impact more children across the country, the growth can be seen in the very kids that we serve.

Campers that started in 2011 and 2012 are now older. These kids have returned year-after-year to the haven of summer camp to be nurtured and supported as they navigate the challenges that come with life at home. We can now say that campers are growing up at camp. And the results are nothing less than fantastic.

I want to introduce you to three Camp Corral campers who are now counselors—Zach, Dafene and Josh. All three were once campers in our program and now are giving back as counselors to the next wave of campers. This video will share their story.

(Whereupon, the Camp Corral video was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

MS. BROWN: As you can see, these are great kids. And you did this. What Camp Corral in partnership with Golden Corral and DAV has accomplished in nine years is extraordinary. It gives me great joy to know that what we are building together is growing as the children we are serving are growing older, too.

Your ongoing support of Camp Corral is changing lives. The camp experience is sticking with them. And some young adults like Zach, Dafene and Josh are now the best camp counselors a child of a wounded, injured, ill or fallen service member could ever have.

Because of you, this special group of kids has a place to go, a place to grow every year if they choose. Thank you for everything you do for these kids and for Camp Corral. We are honored to have such a partnership. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Camp Corral representatives and President Marbes withdrew from the podium, followed by round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Lisa. In times like these, when people seem so divided, even on issues that should unify us, like caring for our veterans, we look to talented leaders to help bring us together and steady the ship. Lucky for us, we have a sailor at the helm.

As our programs continue to evolve, one thing will remain the same—DAV will continue to deliver the most pertinent and direct services to impact the lives of veterans and their families.

National Adjutant Marc Burgess has continued to provide DAV both the dedicated professionalism and compassionate leadership necessary to manage our day-to-day operations, as well as a clear vision for the future of our charity.

With a core knowledge of service to veterans, thoughtful and methodological leadership abilities, and a keen ability not only to care for but also to inspire his staff and fellow members, Marc has proven himself a truly effective leader and a tremendous asset to DAV.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome our DAV National Adjutant, Marc Burgess.

(Whereupon Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium amid a standing ovation.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you for that introduction, Commander. But, more importantly, thank you for all you've done over the past year to ensure DAV continues to provide a lifetime of support for veterans and their families.

From various pieces of legislation to assisting our brothers and sisters in need, it has certainly been an eventful year for the veteran community and our organization.

Now, let's take a look at what DAV has done on behalf of our nation's heroes and their families since we last got together.

(Whereupon, the video "The Year in Review" was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: As you can see, it's been a big year for DAV and the veterans we serve. Looking to the future, your hard work will be as important as ever as we fight to ensure that health care, benefits and services are available to our fellow veterans and their families.

If you want to understand the value we as an organization bring to the veterans community, I would encourage you to look at our ongoing efforts to support Blue Water Navy veterans, which I mentioned in the video. That historic legislation took a concerted effort on behalf of our members and the entire community of veterans groups to get passed through Congress and onto the President's desk.

But, unfortunately, as we have seen with the Blue Water Navy legislation, even after being signed into law our work is far from done. The Department of Veterans Affairs must issue regulations, policies and procedures that can make all the difference in terms of who receives those benefits and when they will be provided. That's why our voice will continue to be needed every step of the way to ensure the law is fully and faithfully implemented.

At the same time, our national, department, chapter and transition service officers will be on the front lines assisting veterans in filing their claims so that justice is finally achieved for those long-forgotten Vietnam veterans and their families, many of whom are battling illnesses threatening their very lives.

And should the need arise, we are ready to rally our members once again and for as long as it takes until every veteran, no matter when or where they served, receives all of the benefits he or she has earned. (Applause)

But we couldn't achieve this or any other victory without the leaders in this room and your fellow veterans and family members back home. While we often highlight what happens in Washington, D.C., we know that the real work of DAV takes place across the country, in small towns and large cities, as service officers, volunteers and advocates all play their parts. It's only by working together that we have been able to achieve so many victories for veterans.

Next year DAV will mark a century of service. As I think about the many hands, hearts and voices who made the DAV the nation's premier veterans service organization, I am confident that our future is secure.

As long as all of you continue to lend your time and talents to our cause, DAV will continue to empower our nation's heroes and their families.

Army veteran and author John Holmes once said, "There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up." In towns and communities across the country you are doing this every day.

I'm humbled to serve alongside you and thank you for lifting up your fellow veterans and honoring their sacrifices. Working together, I know that we will achieve many more victories for veterans in the years ahead.

Commander Nixon, this concludes my report. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess returned to his seat on the dais and the Commander resumed his position at the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Marc. The chair will entertain a motion to accept the National Adjutant's outstanding report.

(Whereupon, the motion was duly made from the floor by a delegate from Florida.)

COMMANDER NIXON: I have a motion. Can I get a second?

(Whereupon, the motion was duly seconded from the floor.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. It carries. (Applause)

I'm proud to say that our next guest and partner, Hankook Tire America Corporation, has been generously supporting DAV for five years. Last year, Hankook donated $125,000 to sponsor 12 mobile service office stops and to purchase a brand new vehicle for the DAV Transportation Network, which was presented to the Nashville VA Medical Center two weeks ago. This year their donation will support 12 MSO stops and six career fairs.

I'd like to welcome Rob Williams from Hankook to the stage. (Applause)

With more than 30 years in the transportation industry, Rob has held sales and operation leadership positions during his career. With a passion for recruiting, mentoring and growing his teammates, he currently is responsible for the Hankook's Commercial Tire Business unit in the U.S.

Ladies and gentlemen, please put your hands together for Hankook and Mr. Rob Williams. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Williams advanced to the dais and was greeted by Commander Nixon.)

MR. ROB WILLIAMS: Thank you, Commander Nixon, for that warm welcome. And, yes, the sun is going to shine in Orlando today. I have not been outside yet to see it firsthand, but at 1 p.m. the sun will shine on us today. (Laughter)

I am privileged and honored to participate in this great event, representing Hankook and our partnership with the DAV. I've always been a proud supporter of our U.S. military, as my father served in the Navy in World War II and later became a Marine reservist. As well, my father-in-law also served in World War II and the Korean conflict as a Marine, so you can only imagine I've got a little discipline in my life.

For more than 70 years Hankook has been more than just tires. This year we changed our global brand to reflect that as we are now Hankook Tire and Technology.

Hankook began as a company right around the time of the Korean War. The company's founder saw firsthand the sacrifice the American leaders made for the South Koreans, so as a result when Hankook began to expand in the U.S., it was very important our entire company honor the sacrifice made by all American veterans.

That commitment does continue today at the root of everything we do as people, including America's great veterans, and making sure you have the mobility needed to live life to the fullest.

That's why now, for five years, Hankook has proudly partnered with the DAV and its Mobile Service Office program, serving thousands of U.S. veterans. (Applause) Thank you.

We've also made a priority of hiring U.S. veterans in our U.S. facilities, as we just opened our new location in Clarksville, Tennessee. This year Hankook is proud to announce their support of military career fairs across the country and partnership with DAV and RecruitMilitary. (Applause) Thank you.

This is where veterans can ensure their future is a success and they move into the new era of their lives beyond their military service. And of course, our support of the mobile service office stops continue as strong as ever.

Hankook and DAV proudly took the wraps off a new DAV Transportation Network vehicle at the Tennessee Valley Health Care Nashville campus, which is Hankook's hometown. Anybody here from Nashville? (Applause) So this way veterans in their area will have the year-round mobility needed to access the service they earned through their own service and sacrifice.

I would like to now share a short video clip to give you a glimpse of our commitment to this effort.

(Whereupon, the Hankook Tire and Technology video was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

MR. WILLIAMS: How about that? (Applause) I am very excited to announce that Hankook will be giving away a free set of tires to any registered guest, so please make sure you register outside at the Member Service desk just outside the doors.

Yes, I know tires are not quite as exciting as root beer floats (Laughter) but, nonetheless, necessary. And also, I believe Mr. Dye may have forgot to mention while he was drinking his root beer float in the Ford he was riding on Hankook tires. (Laughter and applause)

And a last reminder, the deadline is tomorrow at 4 p.m., so look in your gift bag for the registration or stop by the desk. I know you will love the way these tires perform.

So now as our company begins a new era in creating the future of mobility, it's very important that we support a new era, as well, helping veterans create their own future.

Hankook Tire and Technology is honored to once again present DAV with a donation of $175,000. (Applause) So on behalf of our employees and our global leadership, we thank you for your service, for five years of amazing partnership, and to many more as we all look to the future.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken as a ceremonial check was presented to the Commander and Adjutant Burgess, followed by another round of applause, after which Mr. Williams withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Rob. It is our distinct honor each and every year to recognize an individual who through both tenacity and actions reflects DAV's commitment that no veteran should have to face the challenging road to recovery alone.

An ROTC graduate, Brigadier General Patt Maney served nearly 37 years in the Army Reserve, including eight years of active duty with service in Panama, Haiti, Bosnia and Afghanistan.

General Maney was an advisor to various Afghan government ministries and was on the planning committee for President Karzai's first inauguration.

After 17 months in country he was severely wounded in an IED blast and spent almost 20 months recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. His "Alive Day" is August 21, 2005.

A judge prior to his injuries, Maney returned to the bench in Okaloosa County, Florida, with a new sense of compassion and understanding of the trauma many veterans have gone through, and endured as a result of their service. He started the country's first Mental Health and Veterans Treatment Court in 2011.

As an additional tribute to local veterans, Maney acquired the bell from the USS Okaloosa, a World War II-era ship named after the county, and a Huey helicopter to honor those who served in Vietnam. Both are on display at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport.

Now, let's get to know him a little better.

(Whereupon, a video outlining Mr. Maney's service was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, for his critical work in helping veterans overcome obstacles as well as his commitment to overcoming his very own struggles, we're proud to introduce our 2019 Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year and a DAV life member of Chapter 112 in Niceville, Florida, Judge Patt Maney. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Judge Maney advanced to the dais, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Take all the time you want.

THE HONORABLE PATT MANEY: Thank you. That's dangerous to say. Commander Nixon and national leadership, my name is Patt Maney. I'm a broken but undefeated soldier. (Cheering and applause)

I asked my friend, Andy Marshall, what I should say today. And he cautioned me. He said, "Just remember Caesar." You know Caesar. Caesar was a general. Caesar gave long speeches. (Laughter) And they killed Caesar. (Laughter)

Five thousand sixty-eight days ago I woke up as a, I guess, a normal person. I didn't really give a whole lot of thought to the future or the past. I had some success in my life. I was a general and I was a judge. And then it all changed in an instant on August 21, 2005, and it turned out to be a blessing.

At 5,068 days ago I never expected to be eligible for membership in the DAV. But by the end of the day I was aware that I was eligible. Sometime during the 20 months I was at Walter Reed, I went through the med board process, as perhaps some of you have. And they determined that I was not fit for service but not eligible for any disability.

I called the DAV. And they represented me. (Applause) They represented me and got a service-connection disability. So I am extremely grateful to the DAV and all that you do throughout the nation.

You know, in military medical jargon I am an OEF-IED-TBI. I'm not a person any more. I'm just an OEF-IED-TBI. But I'm humbled to be in the presence of so many of you who have given so much. I'm honored to accept this award really on your behalf because I know so many of you have done so much, both for our republic but also for other veterans.

I want to thank each of you, your caregivers, your families. She's back behind the stage, but my bride of 48-plus years literally led me around Walter Reed by the hand for over a year because I couldn't figure out where to go, when to go, how to get there. (Applause) The caregivers—the caregivers are really critical. And I know the DAV appreciates them.

I want to thank the DAV for this honor, for their hospitality. You've got many great employees. But I specifically want to give a shout out to Matt in Austin who put this video together. (Applause) And I want to urge the DAV and all of its members and the Auxiliary to continue to secure victories for our disabled veterans.

Thank you very much. God bless each of you and God bless the United States. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Judge Maney withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you for your service and dedication to veteran causes, and congratulations, again, on a well-deserved honor. (Applause)

I will now ask the National Adjutant to read DAV's Statement of Policy, the list of committee advisors whom I have appointed and who received the approval of the National Executive Committee at its most recent meeting, and to make any further announcements. Adjutant Burgess.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander.

"DAV was founded on the principle that this nation's first duty to veterans is the rehabilitation and welfare of its wartime disabled. This principle envisions:

"1. High-quality hospital and medical care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans with disabilities incurred in or aggravated by service in America's armed forces.

"2. Adequate compensation for the loss resulting from such service-connected disabilities.

"3. Vocational rehabilitation and/or education to help the disabled veteran prepare for and obtain gainful employment.

"4. Enhanced opportunities for employment and preferential job placement so that the remaining ability of the disabled veteran is used productively.

"5. Adequate compensation to the surviving spouses and dependents of veterans whose deaths are held to be service-connected under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"6. Enhanced outreach to ensure that all disabled veterans receive all benefits they have earned and that the American people understand and respect the needs these veterans encounter as a result of their disabilities.

"It, therefore, follows that we will not take any action on any resolution that proposes legislation designed to provide benefits for veterans, their surviving spouses and dependents, which are based upon other than wartime service-connected disability.

"We shall not oppose legislation beneficial to those veterans not classified as service-connected disabled, except when it is evident that such legislation will jeopardize benefits for service-connected disabled veterans.

"And while our first duty as an organization is to assist the service-connected disabled, their surviving spouses and dependents, we shall within the limits of our resources assist others in filing, perfecting and prosecuting their claims for benefits.

"Since this represents the principle upon which our organization was founded and since it is as sound at this time as it was in 1920, we hereby reaffirm this principle as the policy for the Disabled American Veterans."

I would now like to read into the record National Commander Nixon's appointed Convention Committee Advisors: for the Credentials Committee, Mike Dobmeier and Doug Wells; for the General Resolutions and Membership Committee, Steve Wolf and Scott Hope; for the Legislation and Veterans Rights Committee, Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann; for the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Rob Reynolds and Ed Hartman; for the Employment Committee, Jeff Hall, Jeremy Villanueva; for the Hospital and Voluntary Services Committee, John Kleindienst and Adrian Atizado; and for the Nomination of National Officers, Joe Johnston and Al Church.

The Committee Advisors can pick up their Committee folders from the Resolutions Coordinating Office located in the Suwannee Room 18.

And I do have a few other announcements. At two o'clock tomorrow afternoon we will host the Service and Legislative Seminar, in which we'll welcome the Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Mark Takano; the VA's Under-Secretary for Benefits Dr. Paul Lawrence; and Lawrence Connell, the Chief of Staff for Dr. Richard Stone, who is the executive in charge of the Veterans Health Administration.

People who are interested in attending should be in their seats by 1:45 so that the seminar can begin promptly at two o'clock. And you don't want to miss this very important discussion.

The National Commander's reception will be held in the Gatlin Pre-Function and outside this evening at 7:30 p.m. And, remember, you must have your credentials to attend. This evening we will be honoring our commander and his service. And remember, you will need your credentials to gain entry.

We'd also like to take a quick moment to thank our friends at Veterans Evaluation Services and TriWest Health Care Alliance for their continued and valuable support. VES is a veteran-owned service company and has a mission to honor and serve America's veterans and active-duty claimants by providing quality and timely reports through fair and objective evaluations, making VES a perfect fit alongside DAV.

Founded in 1996, TriWest has made it their mission to serve our nation's veterans and military community. Doing "whatever it takes" is not only their corporate motto, it is a deep-rooted desire to go above and beyond for their customers because they understand and honor our country's heroes.

Beginning this afternoon at 4:15, Convention Committees are scheduled to meet. Those of you who have been elected to Convention Committees are asked to be on time in the room assigned to your meeting. And we ask that the Committees complete their work as soon as possible.

Also, thanks to our great partners at A&W, immediately following our opening session, free root beer floats will be made available to you all in the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor. The root beer floats are also made possible by our tremendous host, Mr. Rosen, and the Rosen Shingle team who donated the ice cream and the labor to make it all happen. Please be sure to thank them when receiving your float.

For Fun Night on Monday at 8 p.m. we will be treated to our good friend Gary Sinise and the Lieutenant Dan Band. For those of you who may not be aware, this year actually marks the 25th year that Gary has given up his time to be here and lend us his valuable support. (Applause)

Fun Night is once again being presented by TriWest Health Care Alliance, and we can't thank TriWest enough for all of their dedicated support and generosity over the years. They help make this event a success, and I know everyone in this room appreciates it.

I am also pleased to announce that Gary Sinise will be signing copies of his new book, "Grateful American," Monday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor outside of Rooms D and E. But he will only be signing copies of his book and nothing else.

Books will be available for purchase for $18 just outside the entrance to the signing. Books will be sold beginning at 6 p.m. Sunday evening in the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor and, again, starting at 9 a.m. Monday morning.

We will be trying to get as many people through as possible in the short time we have to get the books signed, so please be courteous to others and make an effort to keep the line moving.

We know many of you here today are part of the Guardian Society, and we'd like to recognize those of you who have taken the extra step to help ensure DAV's future by including the organization in your estate plans.

To join us for the Guardian Society reception, which will be held today at 4 p.m. in the boardroom, please first register for the reception by visiting the Fundraising Table located in the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor. Our staff will also have more information there about how you can give back to future generations of veterans by including DAV in your estate plans.

Also, thanks to our partners at Hankook Tire, any registered convention guest can enter to win a free set of tires by stopping by the Member Advantage table located right outside Gatlin B on Level 1.

The deadline to enter the raffle is Sunday at 4 p.m. Look in your registration bag for more details. Hankook will select the lucky winner after convention. And good luck to all those who enter.

Check out your program for more information on convention events and links to view and download photos, videos, reports and other convention content.

Our first business session will convene tomorrow at 9 a.m. At that time we will hear reports from our headquarters executive directors and the Board of Directors' treasurer. We will also honor employers, VA employees, volunteers and our top recruiters.

Also, if you intend to donate to any DAV entity, in the interest of time, please fill out the form that is in your bags prior to making your way to our donation booth located in the St. John's Foyer.

We are also giving away three $50 gift cards for the DAV store. All registered convention attendees are eligible but must be present to win. If I call your name and you are in the hall, please see Membership Director Doug Wells up here on the stage as soon as we adjourn.

And the three lucky winners today are Darren Fleck, Florida, Central Number 16; Timothy Walsh, South Dakota, (Indistinguishable) Number 1; and Arthur Scott, South Carolina, Lieutenant James Miller Number 22. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess returned to his seat on the dais as the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Marc. Ladies and gentlemen, please rise and I will ask Chaplin Dover to lead us in a closing prayer.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Hang on a second. One second before we do that. The announcement, the Legislative and—Service and Legislative Seminar is today, so don't miss it. It's today, not tomorrow.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess returned to his seat and the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, sir. Ladies, gentlemen, let us pray. Heavenly Creator, bless us as we go about our business to learn our business. Guide our minds and hearts so that we will work for the good of the Disabled American Veterans in assisting their families and dependents.

Teach us to be generous in our outlook, courageous in the face of difficulty and wise in our decisions. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER NIXON: The Convention stands in recess until nine o'clock tomorrow morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 11:52 a.m. on Saturday, August 3, 2019.)

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FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

August 4, 2019

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The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 98th National Convention convened in the Gatlin Ballroom B-C on the First Level of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Sunday morning, August 4, 2019, and was called to order at 9:00 a.m., by National Commander Dennis R. Nixon.

COMMANDER DENNIS R. NIXON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER NIXON: Everybody awake?

(Response of "Yes.")

COMMANDER NIXON: Well, I'm not. (Laughter) The Convention will please come to order. As a reminder, I would like to ask everyone to please silence your cell phones and portable devices. Please join me in the Pledge.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER NIXON: I will ask our National Chaplain to lead us in prayer as we prepare to undertake the morning's business session.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL P. DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Let us pray. Heavenly Creator, guide our leaders and members as we continue our business on issues of importance to this organization. May we be wise in our discernment, balanced in our judgment, fair in our decisions and visionary in our planning.

And may we always be mindful in words and actions of what is best for all members of our great organization. And though we may at times have different views, may we listen to one another and be guided by our common goals. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," as the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Chaplain. In order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention, you must first be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. They must state their name, chapter number and the state they represent.

Comrades, the Convention rules are a continuing part of our Bylaws. They are part and parcel of Article 3 and remain in effect continually. They are subject to amendment as provided by the Bylaws and do not require re-adoption.

At this time I would like to call on the Credentials Committee for its report, Chairperson Bridgette Marker.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BRIDGETTE MARKER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARKER: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Credentials was called to order for the first business session on August 3, 2019, by the Committee advisors Michael E. Dobmeier and Doug Wells.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Myself, Bridgette Marker, was elected as chairman and Kelly Bergman was elected secretary.

Our registration at the present time is as follows. This is a partial report for informational purposes only and reflects registration at 7 a.m. on August 4, 2019.

There are 1,095 delegates and 74 alternates registered, representing 44 departments and 385 chapters. There are 5 national line officers, 21 National Executive Committee members, 3 past national commanders registered, for a total of 29 national officers. Your total vote count is 8,263. This is partial report for informational purposes only.

Comrade Commander, this concludes the first report of the Committee on Credentials.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. At this time a point of personal privilege. I would like to also introduce and recognize my National Chief of Staff Paul Shook; (Applause) my Officer of the Day Dave Sensat from Louisiana; (Applause) and Sergeant-at-Arms Donald Butler. (Applause) Thank you for your support. You have made my job a whole lot easier.

It is now my honor and pleasure to introduce the executive director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C., Randy Reese.

Randy is a native of Bristol, Virginia. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1984 and served as a rifle squad leader in the 82nd Airborne Division during the Persian Gulf War.

After the war, Randy served as an elite "Black-Hat" instructor in the Air Movement Operations and Jump Master's Courses at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. It was there he suffered a disabling back injury while conducting a night parachute jump and separated from the Army in 1995.

Randy went on to earn his paralegal degree from Kaplan College for Professional Studies and has become a nationally recognized expert on veterans benefits and services since he joined DAV as a national service officer the year of his discharge. Since that time, he has steadily worked his way through the ranks, to include service as director for DAV's Service and Human Resources departments.

In December 2018 Randy was appointed executive director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he serves as DAV's principal spokesman before Congress, the White House and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In this role he continues to lead our advocacy efforts in Washington as others have before him, keeping us at the forefront of the fight for veterans' rights on Capitol Hill.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a warm welcome for the executive director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters, Randy Reese. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Executive Director of Washington Headquarters Reese advanced to the podium.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS RANDY REESE: Thank you, Commander. National Commander Nixon, National Adjutant Burgess, distinguished guests and delegates to the 98th DAV and Auxiliary National Convention, I am deeply honored to be here today as executive director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters to deliver my first annual report on the accomplishments over the past year.

Let me begin by thanking my predecessor, Garry Augustine, who retired after more than 30 years of working for DAV. Thanks in large part to Garry's leadership, DAV helped achieve some major legislative victories, including appeals reform, the VA MISSION Act, and the caregiver expansion.

I know that Garry, his wife, Kelli, and his children, Chelsea and Kyle, have always considered DAV as their family. So on behalf of the DAV family, I want to thank Garry for a lifetime of service. Please join me in a round of applause. (Applause)

To prepare for my role working with Congress, the VA and the White House in these highly political and partisan times, I looked for words of wisdom from the past. Fifty years ago, comedian and USO performer Bob Hope said, "No one party can fool all the people all the time; that's why we have two parties." (Laughter)

Looking further back 100 years ago, the late, great Will Rogers said, "The more you observe politics, the more you've got to admit that each party is worse than the other." (Laughter)

But the best advice I got about Congress goes back over 200 years from one of our Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, who advised, "Believe none of what you hear and only half of what you see." Now I'm a big fan of Franklin who also said that "beer is proof that God wants us to be happy." (Laughter) If you see me later tonight, your happiness is on me. (Applause)

And while we like to have some fun at conventions, we also have important work to do. And I am pleased to report that over the past year that is exactly what we've done.

You probably heard that in January a Federal Circuit Court case called Procopio v. Wilkie ruled that service in Vietnam included service in the territorial seas up to 12 miles offshore, which would finally allow Blue Water Navy veterans to get the health care and benefits for conditions associated with their exposure to Agent Orange.

Several months later Congress passed and the President signed the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act that extended this even further, up to 90 miles in some locations.

However, just a week after the law was signed, the Department of Veterans Affairs issued a blanket stay on all Blue Water Navy claims, suspending processing until January of 2020.

We strongly disagree with this stay. We believe the Procopio decision gave the VA all the authority it needs to begin granting claims right now for veterans who served up to 12 miles from shore.

To correct this injustice we organized a VSO coalition and have called on the Secretary to lift the stay and begin processing claims and granting those claims right now, because our Vietnam veterans have waited long enough. (Applause)

I want to stress that anyone who thinks they may be eligible for these benefits—this includes survivors of Blue Water Navy veterans—should contact a DAV service officer and file a claim as soon as possible to preserve the earliest possible effective date.

Of course, Agent Orange is not the only toxic substance that veterans have been exposed to. It's well documented that burn pits were used in Iraq, Afghanistan and throughout the Persian Gulf, both before and after 9/11. And as a result, hundreds of thousands of veterans may have been exposed to harmful airborne toxins, though it may be years before the full health consequences are known.

To help them now, DAV has developed an original proposal that would require VA to recognize anyone who served in a location where active burn pits have been documented and concede that they were exposed to airborne toxins. This would make it easier—(Applause) this would make it easier, significantly easier, for them to prove claims for disability compensation.

And I am pleased to report that we're working with members of Congress to draft that legislation that would provide the concession of exposure and hope to introduce it in the fall. Never again should veterans made ill by toxic exposures be forced to wait years to get their benefits. (Applause)

Another critically important law being implemented right now is the VA MISSION Act. If this landmark legislation is fully and faithfully implemented, it could strengthen the VA health care for millions of ill and injured veterans who rely on VA for their care.

The MISSION Act creates a new and expanded veterans community care program, gives the VA new tools to strengthen internal care capacity, extends VA's telehealth service across state lines, and offers veterans an urgent care benefit—something that DAV actually proposed and fought years to achieve. (Applause)

Of course, we do have some concerns about VA's new community care access standards: the lack of quality standards for private health care providers and the lack of standards for clinical care coordination for the most severely ill and injured veterans.

Now, it's too early to determine whether the MISSION Act will ultimately prove successful. That's why we will soon be launching a new survey to help us learn what veterans think about VA's new approach to community care.

Rest assured that DAV will continue fighting to give all the veteran resources, or the VA the resources that it needs so that no veteran has to wait too long or travel too far for the care they need and they deserve. (Applause)

A critical part of the MISSION Act was the expansion of the VA's Caregiver Assistance Program to caregivers of severely injured veterans prior to 9/11, something DAV has long advocated for.

Unfortunately, it now appears that the VA will not expand the program this coming October as the law clearly intended because it has not yet upgraded its own caregiver IT system.

We are extremely disappointed that 14 months after the law was passed the VA is still not ready.

The VA and Congress must find an expedited solution to ensure that family caregivers of veterans from Vietnam, Korea and World War II will finally get access to these life-changing benefits. (Applause)

And we haven't forgotten about those severely disabled veterans who do not qualify for caregiver benefits simply because, by definition, their disabilities are the result of illnesses rather than injuries. And we will continue advocating until every family caregiver of a severely disabled veteran is equally honored and equally supported. (Applause)

DAV is also working closely with a coalition of veterans, military and survivor organizations to pass legislation to end the so-called "widow's tax." Today, Survivor Benefit Program, or SBP, insurance is offset by Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, or DIC, benefits, which is simply unfair.

The widow's tax legislation already has 360 co-sponsors in the House and over 70 co-sponsors in the Senate. And with your help we hope to finally end the widow's tax. (Applause)

DAV continues to make progress removing barriers that prevent women veterans from fully accessing all of their VA benefits and services. Last September DAV issued the report Women Veterans: The Journey Ahead, our second comprehensive look at the challenges facing women veterans as they transition back into civilian life.

The report contains 52 key recommendations to strengthen gender-specific health care, benefits and transition services. In February DAV was pleased to help introduce the Deborah Sampson Act, which contains a number of our recommendations.

And we intend to keep pursuing this and other women veterans legislation until everyone who served has equitable access to high-quality benefits and health care, regardless of their gender. (Applause)

As you know, service to veterans is the heart of what we do. And DAV is unparalleled in this mission. With almost 4,000 total national, transition, department, chapter and county service officers, DAV was able to file over 200,000 new claims last year, helping veterans and their families obtain more than $20 billion in new and retroactive benefits—$20 billion.

DAV has also been at the forefront of this effort to modernize the claims processing system and has been the leading VSO when it comes to paperless claims.

Over the past year we filed 160,000 claims electronically, more than any other VSO, speeding up processing times and getting veterans their compensation more quickly.

The Number 1 reason for our success in representing veterans is our dedication to training. DAV's Structured and Continued Training Program is simply the best in the business.

We also train—(Applause). Thank you. We also train and certify department and chapter service officers, with over 2,500 certified DSOs and CSOs currently assisting veterans and family members.

If you are a national, transition, department or chapter service officer, I would ask you to please stand or raise your hand, and once again let's give them a round of applause for the work they do.

(Whereupon, the service officers stood or raised their hand and were recognized with a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS REESE: Outstanding. Finally, I want to talk about DAV's Disaster Relief Program, which helps thousands of veterans and their families after natural disasters and other emergencies.

Over the past year DAV provided $1.2 million to support more than 3,500 veterans impacted by hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and even a volcano.

Here is a short video showing the impact of our Disaster Relief Program in South Carolina after Hurricane Florence overwhelmed parts of the state last year.

(Whereupon, the Hurricane Florence video was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS REESE: That's a great video, and it really tells the tale. As I look back over the past year and really my entire career with DAV, I am reminded and inspired by the words of basketball legend Michael Jordon, someone who knew a thing or six about victories. He said, "Some people want it to happen; some people wish it would happen; others make it happen."

Today, what I think of when I think about DAV is that very statement. And that's why we have been and will continue to be successful, because you continue to "make it happen."

From our commanders and adjutants, to our Benefit Protection Team leaders, to our Commander's Action Network, to our DAV members and Auxiliary, it is you who are the foundation upon which all our victories are built. And I see many more victories ahead.

So thank you. May God bless and continue all the great works that you do. And may God bless the DAV. (Applause)

Commander Nixon, that completes my report to the Convention.

(Whereupon, the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Randy. May I have a motion to accept Mr. Reese's report?

MS. JENNIFER KELLOGG: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MS. KELLOGG: Jennifer Kellogg, Chapter 17, State of Texas, I so move.

COMMANDER NIXON: I have a motion. Can I get a second?

MR. KIRK JOHNSON: Mic 3.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 3.

MR. JOHNSON: Kirk Johnson, Chapter 84, California, seconds.

COMMANDER NIXON: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, Executive Director Reese withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: It's now my pleasure to introduce our National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski for his report. Barry is a Persian Gulf War-era veteran of the United States Marine Corps (Cheers) who was medically discharged in 1993.

The Minnesota native was appointed to his current position in August of 2013 after serving as executive director of the National Service and Legislative Headquarters and in numerous other leadership positions at the executive level in both Washington and Cold Spring.

Barry is widely respected as a selfless and visionary leader who has earned the admiration of key leaders, critical associates and DAV members throughout the organization whose decisions directly impact veterans' lives.

As DAV continues to evolve and enhance the depth and scope of the services we offer our nation's veterans, Barry's leadership has dramatically enhanced the organization's reach and efficiency.

He serves as DAV's chief financial officer and chief operations officer. And his responsibility covers all National Headquarters departments, including Voluntary Services, Employment initiatives, Communications, Accounting, Fundraising, Membership, Human Resources, Information Technology, outreach and logistics of one of America's largest nonprofit organizations.

Please join me in welcoming this trailblazing leader in the world of veterans services, National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Executive Director of National Headquarters Jesinoski advanced to the podium.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BARRY JESINOSKI: Thank you, Commander. Good morning, all.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: It's been an exciting year at national headquarters as we continue to expand our efforts to serve veterans. As we push to innovate and refine our core functions, we're inspired by our members and volunteers whose service and commitment are the heart and soul of our mission.

As a charity, our impact is largely dependent on the dedicated service of volunteers, so we think a lot about what inspires our members and how we can honor and recognize their services.

Last year, we caught up with a highly distinguished DAV life member, Medal of Honor recipient Hershel "Woody" Williams.

In 1942, Woody tried to enlist in the Marine Corps but was told that at 5-foot-5 he was too short. I think I know a lot of Marines at least that short. (Laughter) But the next year, as the war raged on, the standards changed and soon he was baptized, almost literally, by fire when he was trained in demolitions and how to operate a flame thrower.

The young man from Quiet Dell, West Virginia, was on his way to war. I'll let Woody, the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient of the Pacific War, tell us more about his experience and connection with DAV.

(Whereupon, Hershel Williams told his story via video, followed by a round of applause).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: Woody's gallant actions on February 23, 1945, didn't close out his service. He charted a career in the Marine Corps as a warrant officer in the reserves and then he went on to serve his fellow veterans as a counselor at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Today, at 95 years young, he maintains a full dance card supporting his foundation and other charities like DAV. Woody's heroism is extraordinary, as were the circumstances that led to his undaunted display of valor. Few who have served in modern times have been so tested.

Yet, if you were to look at a class going through basic training, attending OCS or graduating from an academy, it is likely that in their ranks, under remarkably uncommon circumstances, there is a hero, perhaps several, among them.

There is at least one individual who would show the tenacity, the love and the devotion required to face the fire and willingly lay down his or her life so that others may live. And I would be willing to bet that many of us in this room have been inspired to continue our own service in honor of someone like Woody Williams, someone who made that kind of sacrifice for us.

One of the greatest privileges DAV offers is meeting so many who, in spite of their disabilities, step forward and sacrifice their time to be a hero to our brothers and sisters who so desperately need our services.

What motivates their service? What makes them join us? And how can we adequately recognize what our fleet of volunteers are accomplishing on behalf of our cause?

The hardest thing about our mission is knowing that no matter how hard we try, tragically, too many of our brothers and sisters are left behind. Their needs are too great. Their challenges seem insurmountable. They're disconnected and alone.

Recently, we were approached by a group of Israeli combat veterans who were pursuing a career in film in the United States. While living in Los Angeles, they were shocked at how many homeless veterans they saw living on the streets.

To help raise awareness of their plight, together we developed this message, which we'll be sharing more in the months ahead through our social networks. And we'll ask for your help pushing it out.

A brief warning here—this does contain some graphic scenes and the audio may be a bit startling, so please be prepared or turn away or turn down your hearing devices if you find it troubling.

(Whereupon, the video "Lost in the City" was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: That thought-provoking piece is called "Lost in the City." So many of us here have, on different levels, fought the battle against veteran homelessness. Nearly every service we provide, in one form or another, is designed to help veterans find justice.

But, of course, we couldn't do it without the understated heroes in this room who dedicate their most valuable resource to fight to ensure our brothers and sisters aren't left behind. That resource, of course, is our time.

Last year DAV volunteers—veterans, Auxiliary members and patriotic citizens—provided almost 5 million hours ensuring the health, well-being and dignity of those who served.

Of course, no one can do these things alone. If one person was asked to drive the 17.7 million miles that Transportation Network drivers traveled getting veterans to the care they earned last year alone, they'd be on the road 24 hours a day for nearly 160 years.

But we're not going to discount the impact one person can make any more than we'd short the role men like Woody Williams played in turning the tides of battles and inspiring their brothers and sisters to fight and to win.

We're facing a new century of service and advocacy. And our minds are focused on how we can empower our chapters, our departments and the individuals with the tools you need to meet problems with solutions.

As many of you know, I'm a big fan of the author Jocko Willink, the Navy SEAL who wrote "Extreme Ownership." One of the great lessons he promotes is the concept of decentralized command. With training and resources, the idea is that leaders on the ground should be empowered to make as many decisions as possible in a chaotic and changing environment.

While our advocacy and responsibilities at DAV are not close combat, every day on our behalf DAV leaders are meeting new challenges and confronted with situations that require the ability to adapt and to overcome.

The needs of veterans are unique. And the way we carry out our mission requires flexibility. We can't afford to be caught flat-footed or have people in the field who aren't prepared to lead and take action when called upon.

By creating new tools and resources our goal is to empower you, our DAV leaders, at every single level.

The dozens of toolkits available on the member section of the website were developed with your success in mind. Many were direct requests from the field and from some of you in this room. Whenever possible, instead of taking a top-down approach, we're focused on an outside-in approach.

We're thinking of the needs of veterans, chapter leaders, prospective members and volunteers. And we're developing customizable resources to help you achieve results.

Woody Williams' assault on those bunkers inspires us as much for his bold heroism as it does for the innovative thinking behind it. He and his fellow Marines used the tools they had to defeat the enemy.

As leaders, your knowledge of our mission and ability to leverage DAV programs and services can make you a hero among us. You can forever change lives. Conversely, if you who are called to lead falter, veterans fall through the cracks.

Remember the axiom that "knowledge is power." This is true only when knowledge is shared. Be a conduit of information and a mentor to those who will follow in your footsteps.

While we are leaders in volunteerism and employment on a national level, and though our public service announcements made 7.5 billion impressions on television, radio and other media last year alone, we know there is a larger audience of veterans that we need to reach.

While we are 1 million members strong, we know there are 4.8 million service-connected disabled veterans in our nation and no doubt many, many more who aren't getting the compensation they earned.

There is room for us to grow our ranks and extend the reach of our services. But to do so, we need our leaders at every level to fully understand our organization and be willing at any time to ask a fellow veteran if he or she is eligible and open to joining the DAV.

There again, we are providing resources to empower member leaders to bring people on board. Veterans want and they deserve to know about what their DAV does, that 85 cents of every dollar we spend goes to program services, and just how their dues are used.

(Whereupon, a video on how DAV membership dues are used was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: Our services continue to grow and to evolve. Volunteerforveterans.org remains an ambitious online application with unlimited potential for DAV chapters and individuals who want to donate their time to projects big and small.

We're working with partners like NFL Hall-of-Famer LaDanian Tomlinson's Team America to connect young people and athletes with volunteer programs.

This is all in addition to our other services that make us the most prolific volunteer organization serving veterans in the world. We're thinking about our key messages. What motivates someone to become a DAV Transportation Network driver?

We think, as much as anything, it's the veterans our drivers serve and the special thanks they get when they do. So why not let a veteran do the asking?

(Whereupon, a Transportation Network video was viewed.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: I think we were cut off a little short there, but you get the idea. This and all the videos we produce are tools for you to help extend the reach of our message. And that extends the reach of our services. So please share them.

Passing along information about our employment program and resources is another way you can serve your fellow veterans.

Again this year, we'll hold 145 traditional and virtual career fairs. And we're working directly with employers to encourage and support their employment efforts. The Disabled Veterans Hiring Guide is evolving as we get feedback and support from corporate America, and we'll relaunch the resource this fall.

In the short time since we've launched our Employment Department, our growing thought-leadership is being recognized on a national level. DAV was recently placed on the Department of Labor's Advisory Committee for Veteran Employment, Training and Employer Outreach, where we have a well-earned seat at the table.

Internally, we're improving our systems and making critical decisions to ensure we get off on the right foot for the next century of service.

By the way, you can look for more resources and toolkits to prepare for the centennial before the close of the year at DAV.org.

There is more to come, but our future success depends on leaders like you in this very room. The most important tool in your arsenal is your knowledge of our mission and ability to convey and inspire action among your fellow veterans.

Your most important quality is your integrity. By remaining true to our mission and behaving in a way that is beyond reproach, you inspire others through your example.

You are the "Woody Williamses" of our community. And the way you lead from the front and recognize and inspire your members will build a legacy that will carry us well into the future.

And when it comes to the future, we're looking ahead. We're evaluating changing trends in charitable giving. We're recruiting corporations to become a part of our mission and helping them reach out to their customers to support our cause.

We're developing new tools to allow individuals and small groups to raise funds on our behalf. If someone wants to donate their birthday to supporting disabled veterans, we want to help them do so. If they want to run a marathon or ride a unicycle across the continent to honor DAV, we're more than willing to help them in their quest.

We're accepting vehicle donations and incentivizing our state and local leaders to promote that program by sharing revenue that you can put to work through local service initiatives.

But as we develop new streams of support, we have to be extremely vigilant in how we manage the existing ones.

Guardian Society members support DAV through legacy gifts like annuities and bequests. That is an extremely special and meaningful way to remember our fellow veterans. And we thank and honor those individuals for making our mission the cause for which they will be eternally remembered. Please give them a round of applause. (Applause)

Thank you. And thanks to everyone here and at home who contribute to DAV in so many ways. May God bless each and every one of you. And may he help us in our pursuit of justice for brave men and women who have sacrificed for our nation.

Thank you. And Commander, this concludes my report. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Executive Director of National Headquarters Jesinoski withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Barry, for that outstanding report.

COMMANDER NIXON: May I have a motion to accept Mr. Jesinoski's report?

MR. KIRK JOHNSON: Mic 3.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 3.

MR. JOHNSON: Kirk Johnson, Chapter 85, makes the motion.

COMMANDER NIXON: I have a motion. Can I have a second.

MR. FRANK WAYNE: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. WAYNE: Frank Wayne, Chapter 17, Hammond, Indiana.

COMMANDER NIXON: Okay, I have a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion carried. Thanks, Barry.

(Whereupon, Executive Director of National Headquarters Jesinoski withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: At this time I would like to invite Ms. Donna Hoffmeier from TriWest to the stage.

(Whereupon, Ms. Hoffmeier advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Donna Hoffmeier is Senior Vice President of Strategic Communications and Advocacy at TriWest. She has over 30 years of experience, success and accomplishments in the private and public sectors as a senior executive.

She serves fellow veterans in her role at TriWest by focusing on enhancing the veteran experience under the Veterans Choice Program; helping members of Congress understand the Veterans Choice Program and areas for improvement; and working closely with veteran and military service organizations.

MS. DONNA HOFFMEIER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MS. HOFFMEIER: It is an honor for me as both a Navy veteran and a DAV member to be representing TriWest Health Care Alliance as a sponsor of this year's DAV National Convention.

On behalf of TriWest's President and CEO Mr. David McIntyre and our entire staff, I hope you have a very successful convention here in Orlando.

For several years now TriWest has been a proud sponsor of DAV and a big supporter of DAV's primary mission of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

Whether it is here at the annual convention or at my personal favorite, on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains of Colorado at the Winter Sports Clinic, and in the halls and offices of Capitol Hill, my colleagues and I have seen firsthand the many accomplishments of DAV.

To that end I would like to acknowledge the DAV leadership, staff and members for all of your efforts on behalf of all veterans. Thank you for your dedication to the mission.

At TriWest our mission for nearly 25 years has been to serve those who served, first through the DOD TRICARE program and now working alongside VA and its community care programs.

We are very proud to work with the VHA health care system and community providers to make sure that veterans have access to needed health care services when VA is unable to deliver those services directly. To that end, we do have a table here this week.

I think many of you have already found our table. But if you haven't come by and seen us at the table, please do so. It's a good opportunity for you to learn about some of the recent changes to the community care program that were brought about by the MISSION Act, which was discussed at great length in some of the sessions yesterday.

Also, more importantly at our table we really would like to hear from you, personally, about your experiences with the services we provide on behalf of VA. We want to hear both the success stories, of course; but, more importantly, if there are things that we can be doing better to make your experience better when you receive community care through the VA community care programs, we want to know about those.

Lastly, we are very excited to once again be sponsoring Fun Night and to have Gary Sinise and the Lieutenant Dan Band here at the DAV Convention. If you haven't seen the Lieutenant Dan Band before, we hope you will join us tomorrow night. And if you have seen Gary Sinise and his band, we hope you're excited to see them again.

So thank you, again, to each and every one of you for all you do on behalf of veterans. I hope you have a great time here this week connecting with one another and wish you all the best as you prepare to celebrate the 100th year—100th anniversary of DAV's support of our disabled veterans.

Thank you, again, very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Hoffmeier withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Once again, this year's Arthur H. and Mary E. Wilson Award for Top Venture Impacting Veterans will be awarded to a veteran-owned operation that did exceptionally well in the business plan competition in the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans program, or EBV.

The EBV offers cutting-edge experience and training in startup and small business management to veterans with disabilities. The EBV program's business plan competition mirrors DAV's mission of empowering veterans to live high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

Sharing in that same vision, DAV is proud to support this competition by offering a financial award for the specialty category of Top Venture Impacting Veterans, which is made possible by a contribution and ongoing commitment from one of the organization's true friends, Rich Fenstermacher, who was instrumental in helping to erect the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

At this time I would like to welcome our National Employment Director Jeff Hall to the stage.

(Whereupon, Mr. Hall advanced to the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: This award recognizes a disabled veteran who has taken on the challenge of starting his or her business and has set an example for others. I am happy to announce that this year's winner is Nick Ripplinger of Battle Sight Technology in Dayton, Ohio.

(Whereupon, Mr. Ripplinger advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Knowing that in combat every second counts, Nick Ripplinger set out to develop a solution that would help the military improve communications in high-risk situations, driving efficiency and potentially saving lives.

Not only does his company help provide technology to assist and improve the capabilities of military members and first responders, he has made it a personal mission to assist other veterans transitioning into civilian careers by leveraging their military skills in the business world.

A veteran of the U.S. Army, Nick is a firm believer in the talent and intelligence of veterans. He has, therefore, incorporated a hiring approach where any veteran who applies with Battle Sight Technology is guaranteed an interview. (Applause)

MR. NICK RIPPLINGER: Thank you guys and thank you to the DAV and IVMF and everybody that has helped us. We were talking this morning about mentorship, and I don't think any of us got to where we are without that. And, you know, I'm proud to be part of the DAV family and appreciate the support, along with IVMF. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Ripplinger withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Nick, and congratulations. We wish you nothing but continued success.

Our next guest is representing a Signature Sponsor—Veterans Evaluation Services. Their mission is to honor and serve America's veterans and active-duty claimants by providing quality and timely reports through fair and objective evaluations.

(Whereupon, Mr. Pummill advanced to the stage and engaged in conversation with Commander Nixon and Adjutant Burgess, then Mr. Pummill advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Danny Pummill has over 40 years of military and government experience as an Army human capital manager. He has been a leader in the federal government at every level, from platoon leader to acting under secretary. He is currently assisting Veterans Evaluation Service in their mission to provide timely and accurate compensation and pension examinations to veterans.

MR. DANNY PUMMILL: We had some military stuff we had to take care of real quick. (Laughter) Good morning. I am representing Veterans Evaluation Services this morning.

And Commander Nixon, members of the DAV, Chapter 48 Virginia (my chapter), and ladies and gentlemen, VES is honored to support the DAV in their support of our nation's heroes. VES is a veteran-owned company providing compensation and pension examinations to veterans under our contract with the Veterans Administration.

Our mission and our only job is providing quality and timely C&P exams, and we are honored to do so. Thank you, DAV, for everything you do to support veterans and their families. And thank you for allowing us to support such a great and honorable organization.

Great job, DAV. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Mr. Pummill withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: It is now my pleasure to recognize the Outstanding Local Veterans Employment Representative and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist recipients of 2019.

These awards recognize the commitment and compassion of two individuals who are dedicated to serving our nation's heroes. The recipients here today are outstanding examples of veterans helping veterans, and we're more than proud to honor them for their dedication and selfless service.

I'll ask Employment Director Jeff Hall to please return to the stage.

(Whereupon, Employment Director Jeff Hall returned to the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: The award for Outstanding Local Veterans Employment Representative is presented to Air Force veteran and DAV member Russell Cook of Arkansas.

(Whereupon, Mr. Cook advanced to the stage to receive his award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Russell Cook of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services conducts outreach to employers to assist veterans in gaining meaningful and permanent employment.

Russell networked with nearly 750 employers in 2018, helping to connect Arkansas veterans with hundreds of meaningful career opportunities throughout the year.

Russell has also been critical to ensuring all attendees of the Transition Assistance Program at Little Rock Air Force Base are fully briefed on available veterans services to help them successfully transition to civilian careers.

MR. RUSSELL COOK: National Commander, Adjutant, my fellow disabled American veterans, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. COOK: National Employment Committee, I would like to thank you for the honor of being selected as your Local Veterans Employment Representative of the Year.

I would like to thank my wife, Brenda, for joining me for this special occasion. And I am excited to be accompanied by my cousins, Allison and Kim. Thank you for attending. Thank you to the Arkansas Department for nominating me for this award. Thanks to Chapter 7, Greater Little Rock, my host DAV post or chapter. Thank you for your support.

The biggest thanks should go to the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, who hired me to be an LVER. Without that none of this could have happened. And this has turned out to be a win-win situation for everybody.

I want to thank the Division of Workforce Services for allowing me to do my job as a LVER and do outreach to employers to promote veterans as job seekers with highly marketable skills.

And as I go around talking to employers to promote those veterans, I encourage those employers to focus on hiring veterans and what veterans can bring to the job market.

It's a good day to be a Disabled American Veteran and a Disabled American Veteran Auxiliary member. I want to thank you all, and have a wonderful convention.

(Whereupon, Mr. Cook withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Russell, and keep up the phenomenal work on behalf of our fellow veterans.

The 2019 Outstanding Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist is a passionate and tireless advocate for his fellow Ohio veterans. This year's recipient is Jared Smith. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Smith advanced to the stage to accept his award, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Outstanding Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist award recipient is Army veteran Jared Smith of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Jared provides critical employment services for veterans, with particular emphasis on those who are economically or educationally disadvantaged, including homeless veterans.

In 2018 Jared placed an astonishing 43 veterans into gainful, sustained employment, boasting a 98% employment retention rate.

He has helped the veterans he serves attain wages that are 150% more than the country's average median hourly wage.

MR. JARED SMITH: Thank you. "The cause is greater than I." These are the words of United States Marine Corps Chief Warrant Officer 4 Hershel "Woody" Williams, the last living Medal of Honor recipient from Iwo Jima of World War II.

These spoken words are the motto on which I continue to live my life by. As a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist, better known as a DVOP, you are charged with the responsibility of assessing and assisting our veterans with significant barriers to employment.

After assessing we conduct labor market information and skills assessments. Individual employability roadmaps are customized and drawn for the individual veteran, mapping out all significant barriers and challenges that have been identified and creating an action plan to overcome or isolate those barriers.

This roadmap includes referrals to the network. The network is other veterans and community service providers, to include veterans service organizations such as our DAV. The network is one of the major components that allows for success.

Our network believes in "a hand up, not a handout." Thus, instead of supplying a veteran with what effectively amounts to a Band-Aid for temporary help long enough to get them employed, we provide a holistic approach which triages the warrior's entire situation and their entire being, allowing to systematically and methodically eliminate barriers and challenges along the way to their independence and self-dependency, reminding our veterans that they are still the warrior in the life they once were, just sometimes we're a little slower with a little less hair (Laughter) and a shape that's a little bit more round than it is lean. (Laughter) The network and the holistic approach results in positive life change for the individual veteran.

Over the last year, titles of our success stories included homeless and unemployed to housed and employed in 30 days; we (Indistinguishable) to work; increased wage potential by 200%; opening closed doors; summiting a mountain of barriers; U.S.A. jobs for the win; and career, long-term career guidance pays dividends.

Each one of these stories and more represent veterans who have overcome homelessness, no or low income, addiction, criminal history, suicidal ideation, no transportation, transition difficulties, and many other barriers and challenges to employment.

It is a great collaboration effort—collaborative effort by the network to properly love and care for our veterans. Through this our veterans refocus on their abilities and not their disabilities. They focus on their worth, not what they owe. And they recall the warrior spirit that lays within, which is now fueled by their personal growth.

The uniform may change after service and the team may look different, but the individual, the veteran, our warrior, still matters at home. Their new team counts on them just as previous teams have done before. There is a purpose. There is, again, a calling. There is a life to be had.

I am beyond honored and humbled by the nomination and selection of the 2019 DAV Outstanding DVOP of the Year. Though this may be an individual award, this award is not due only to an individual's effort. It takes an entire network. It's unwavering support from those in your community. It takes that—and it takes a family that comprehends and bears the same understanding that the cause is truly greater than I.

I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to my supervisor, Sarah Tomei, for this nomination; to the committee for their selection; and the recognition to our great and vast network in Southeast Ohio, to my DAV Department of Ohio, and to Pioneer City Chapter 52 of Whipple, Ohio; and to my family who assists, endures and covers down as needed.

During our service we've borne the battle and we assure that we leave no soldier, sailor, Marine or airman behind. Now at home we ensure that we leave no veteran behind.

Thank you and God bless the United States of America.

(Whereupon, Mr. Smith withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. Thank you and God bless you. Thank you, Jared, and my compliments to your barber. (Laughter) Each year DAV recognizes companies that go out of the way to recruit and hire disabled veterans. It is my pleasure to announce the DAV Employer of the Year Awards for three outstanding organizations.

The 2019 DAV Small Employer of the Year Award goes to an incredible company that truly recognizes what veterans bring to the workforce.

Unfortunately, President and Marine Corps veteran Johnathon Shepherd was unable to join us here today. However, since its founding, Americom Technologies Group has been a growing force in the electrical and telecommunication market for federal, commercial and residential consumers.

Currently the ATG team is made up of 80% veterans and veteran family members, with a company goal to increase that number to 90%.

ATG's veteran outreach program, EAGLE OPS, furthers the company's commitment to veterans by linking them to benefits and resources and by aiding veterans groups like DAV through volunteerism, event participation and fundraising. (Applause)

For our 2019 DAV Midsized Employer of the Year veteran hiring isn't simply a policy, it's the way they do business. Please welcome to the stage Army veteran Marcus Doyle, CEO of Veracity Research Company Investigations.

(Whereupon, Mr. Doyle advanced to the stage to accept the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Veracity Research Company actively recruits veterans across all 50 states, partnering with numerous organizations and conducting outreach to find talented veteran candidates.

Currently, 38% of the company's 325 employees nationwide are veterans, as are 32% of its leadership team. The veteran-owned small business is an eight-time recipient of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Patriot Award for their support of military employees and their families.

MR. MARCUS DOYLE: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. DOYLE: And thank you for having me. On behalf of my entire company, we are honored to be part of the DAV organization. And to give you a little history, I'm a second-generation U.S. Army. My father retired from the Special Forces 101st. He is buried in Springfield National Cemetery.

Myself and my little brother joined the Army. And from that point when we were Army-discharged I met my wife, in Fort Sam Houston, who is with me today and my five children. (Applause)

At Investigations we learn there is a lot of ways to help people. And one thing that we believe as an employer is to encourage other employers to hire veterans.

For example, we believe that an honorable discharge is the same as a college degree. And we've always stood by that. And so we now go and speak to other employers about how they should encourage and embrace the ability to provide jobs for our vets.

Other things that we do that we encourage, if you are an employer in the room, is that we made Veterans Day a national holiday in our company. They get the extra day off paid for, and the non-vets will do the job of two. (Applause)

It's a small way of giving back, but what I've found is if you give back to the employees, with us being over 35% ex-military and for the proud moment now we are right at 600 employees. We are growing rapidly, and that's because of the leadership that I bring on that's served.

So for myself, my entire company, we thank you for what you do. We're proud to be with you. I'm proud to have served.

(Whereupon, Mr. Doyle withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: The 2019 DAV Large Employer of the Year has an immense footprint in the military's modern maritime operations.

Last year, its Newport News Shipbuilding Division was ranked in the top 10 of Military Times' Best for Vets: Employers list and was awarded the Virginia Values Veterans Phoenix Award, recognizing outstanding comprehensive support to veteran employees or job seekers.

I'll ask Fred Howell, Manager of Talent Acquisition at Ingalls Shipbuilding, a Division of Huntington Ingalls Industries, to the stage to accept the DAV Outstanding Large Employer of the Year Award.

(Whereupon, Mr. Howell advanced to the stage to accept the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: With a force already of 7,100 veteran employees, Huntington Ingalls Industries is committed to intensifying their veteran hiring rates by filling more than 20% of new jobs with veterans and hiring at least 50 service member spouses over the next three years.

Last year the company's Newport News division exceeded veteran hiring goals by bringing in more than 1,00 veteran employees, and its Technical Solutions' Fleet Support group added another 230.

MR. FRED HOWELL: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. HOWELL: I always terrify my staff because I never write anything down. I've gone in front of the governor, several governors, actually, and they always kind of tap me on the leg right before I walk up and say, "What are you going to say?" I say, "I don't know. I'll figure it out when I get up there."

For you guys, I didn't sleep much last night. You've impressed me this week. So I had to write some comments down. The first one is, "Don't fall down." (Laughter) I'm halfway home. (Laughter)

So at Ingalls and at Huntington Ingalls Industries we have signs all over our shipyard that say, "What you do today matters." And to us that becomes very important. We build ships. We build ships to take sailors and Marines to wherever they need to be.

If you're not familiar with what we do, we build aircraft carriers and submarines in our Newport News division. In Pascagoula where I'm located, we're the only shipyard in the world that builds four different classes of warships at the same time. We build LHAs for the Marines and the Navy. We build LPDs. We build guided-missile destroyers and national security cutters.

So what we do every day truly does matter. But since I've been here the last four days I wanted to change our statement. What we do is very important. What you do every day matters. And I wanted to just take a moment and say thank you.

First of all, thank you for your service. And thank you for continuing to answer the call to service. You have no idea how impressed I am after being here these four days and hearing your stories and meeting you. Just a wonderful group.

I came here—my wife always tells me, "Don't be ignorant and arrogant." And I came here ignorant and arrogant. I thought I was doing some good things for veterans. You've taught me something else. And so ignorance can be overcome and I'm beginning to overcome my own ignorance.

Thank you for all you do. Thank you for continuing to do it.

I always want to end with a question. Now, we have over 8,000 veterans, and this is a question I ask my staff all the time, "What do you have when you have 8,000 veterans who work for you?" And the answer is "a really good start."

Thank you very much.

(Whereupon, Mr. Howell withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: As I'm standing up here doing this, I'm sure you have noticed that I washed my tongue this morning and I cannot do a thing with it. (Laughter)

In 2007 DAV created the Local Veterans Assistance Program, or LVAP, giving volunteers nearly unlimited opportunities to serve and receive the same recognition and incentives as those available to traditional VA and Transportation Network volunteers.

Under LVAP, opportunities abound for individuals to assist veterans and their families. From something as precise as building a wheelchair ramp or setting up computer software to basic tasks like grocery shopping or running other errands, volunteers perform any task that may help improve a veteran's life.

Since the program's inception, more than 18,500 volunteers have donated over 8.3 million hours of service through LVAP. We want to see that number continue to grow. And we also want to recognize those who have helped make this incredible impact possible.

I'll ask John Kleindienst of the national headquarters and National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski to the stage for their assistance, please.

(Whereupon, Mr. Kleindienst and Mr. Jesinoski joined the Commander on the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, it is my extreme pleasure to recognize our top state-level departments in the area of LVAP service.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 1 Local Veterans Assistance Program recipient is the Department of Virginia, Past Department Commander Lisa Gregory, with 403,902 hours. Here to accept the award is Department Adjutant Robert Cox. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Cox advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

VIRGINIA ADJUTANT ROBERT COX: On behalf of the Department Commander Lisa Gregory, the department, its chapters, units and members, we accept this award for the seventh time. (Applause) It was first given eight years ago, so out of the eight years Virginia has won it seven times.

I want to acknowledge our administrative assistant, Mrs. Debbie Wood, who is the bulldog who keeps after the chapters, the units and the individuals to report their hours accurately and consistently so this is possible. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Cox withdrew from the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 2 Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of Oklahoma, Past Department Commander Douglas Black, with 236,876 hours. Here to accept the award is Department Adjutant Danny Oliver. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Oliver advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

OKLAHOMA ADJUTANT DANNY OLIVER: I just want to say real quick that on—you know that's hard for me to say, "quick." (Laughter) I would like to thank our Commander J. Halford Pandos and all the DAV-DAV Auxiliary and our junior members as well as a few patriots who support the LVAP program in Oklahoma.

And I would just offer for any of you who are not reporting your hours, please see myself or someone from Oklahoma and we'll send you the link to our app so your hours can get recorded. Thank you. (Laughter and applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Oliver withdrew from the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 3 Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of Wisconsin, Past Department Commander Michael Hert, with 47,123 hours. Here to receive the award is Department Adjutant Larry Hill. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Hill advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

WISCONSIN ADJUTANT LARRY HILL: On behalf of the Department 12 up in Wisconsin, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to accept this award on behalf of our Commander Hert and especially Vice Commander Campeney, who was our coordinator for this effort, but, most of all, for all those volunteers that we have within the department.

And I understand right now that so far this year that Maryland is ahead of us, but I just want you to know, we are coming for you. (Laughter and applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Hill withdrew from the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 4 Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of Nebraska, Past Department Commander Michael Jackman, with 58,512 hours. Here to bring home the award is Department Adjutant Jamie Jakub. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Jakub advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

NEBRASKA ADJUTANT JAMIE JAKUB: We were told back stage to make this extremely quick, so on behalf of the State of Nebraska and our past commander and our acting, or our current commander, my father, Jim Jakub, the big thanks goes to my wife, Christa Jakub, because without her for the last two years this program wouldn't have taken effect in the State of Nebraska. So, honey, thank you, love you. God bless, everybody. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Jakub withdrew from the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 5 Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of South Dakota, Past Department Commander Gaylord Helmbrecht, with 21,704 hours. Here to receive the award is Department Adjutant Gene Murphy. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Gene Murphy advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

SOUTH DAKOTA ADJUTANT GENE MURPHY: On behalf of the great State of South Dakota, I'd like to thank all of our volunteers. They did another super job. I think this is our fifth year in receiving this.

And, again, I challenge all the departments to get the hours in. I mean, this is a super program for many of our veterans that need assistance. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Murphy withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: We thank all of our volunteers in VA hospitals, our Transportation Network drivers, and participants in the Local Veterans Assistance Program for their compassionate service to the disabled veterans and to their families. Thank you for your helping hands and kind hearts. Please join me again in giving them a big hand for their service. (Applause)

Every day throughout the country DAV partners with thousands of passionate VA employees to ensure veterans are getting the resources they need and assistance they have earned. We strive to work together as one in order to keep the promises to those who served.

It is my pleasure to now present the National Commander's Outstanding VA Employee of the Year award to three remarkable VA staff members in recognition of their leadership, compassion, and dedication supporting our nation's ill and injured veterans.

I'd like to invite National Legislative Director Joy Ilem and Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy Reese to the stage for this presentation.

(Whereupon, Ms. Ilem and Executive Director Reese joined Commander Nixon on the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee of the Year, Dr. Christina Chavez. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Dr. Chavez advanced to the stage to accept the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The 2019 Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee this year is Dr. Christina Chavez, an audiologist with the Veterans Benefits Administration Houston VA Regional Office.

Dr. Chavez has dedicated much of her career to helping veterans address hearing loss issues, the most common service-connected disability.

Working closely with DAV and other veterans groups, Dr. Chavez also created a compensation and pension examination program with the Houston regional office to streamline the hearing loss claims process for veterans in order to decrease wait times.

DR. CHRISTINA CHAVEZ: Thank you, Commander Nixon and Adjutant Burgess for this award. I am truly honored to be here today.

In Houston I have the unique opportunity as a VA audiologist provider to work in our regional office side-by-side with the DAV. We work together to streamline the audiology claims process and assist our veterans with their hearing health care needs.

This working relationship with the regional office and with DAV has taught me a whole other side of the claims process. I am in awe of what I have learned about the DAV advocates for how they support and fight for our veterans.

I want to thank my Houston DAV family. I don't know where you are, but thank you guys. Mr. Don Reed, your team has been so welcoming to this VA employee. And, most importantly, we have learned to work as a team to serve our veterans together, which is both of our missions.

In closing, I want to thank you all, the veterans, for your sacrifice and service. It is my honor and privilege to serve you every day. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Dr. Chavez withdrew amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Christina, and congratulations on your well-deserved award. Now I'll ask the DAV National Service Director Jim Marszalek to the stage for our next important presentation.

(Whereupon, Mr. Marszalek joined the Commander on the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the Outstanding Veterans Benefit Administration Employee of the Year, Army veteran Anthony Irby. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Irby advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The 2019 DAV National Commander's Award for Outstanding Department of Veterans Affairs Employee within the Veterans Benefits Administration is Anthony Irby, who serves as the homeless veterans outreach coordinator and justice-involved veterans coordinator at the Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office in Phoenix, Arizona.

Knowing firsthand how difficult the transition from military life can be, the Gulf War and Iraq War veteran established himself as a compassionate and empathetic advocate for veterans, taking and expediting disability claims for more than 3,000 homeless or at-risk veterans.

In 2017 Mr. Irby was inducted into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame in recognition of his prolific civic contributions and honorable service to the nation.

MR. ANTHONY IRBY: I'm an Army guy, so I'm going to say "Hoo-rah."

(Response of "Hoo-rah.")

MR. IRBY: All right. All right. I just want to say thank you to the national commander, the attendees, a special shout-out to the benefit office over at DAV and the Phoenix Regional Office who I work with, and I know I have to say her name—Angel—and the awardees.

I didn't have a prepared speech. I didn't even know I was going to speak. I mean, I get a lot of awards, unfortunately, and I don't speak, I just do a little smile and then this wave and bye. But I feel like I'm at the Academy Awards, you know? This is a big deal.

And I just wanted to say that I did participate in a few wars. I was in Desert Storm, Desert Shield. And I was in the Iraq War. But the biggest war that I'm facing right now is the war against homelessness among our veterans. And that's an ongoing war since the beginning of our nation.

We have drastically reduced homelessness, but it is still there. And with such great advocacy among the DAV, I think that we can work on ending it.

Me, as a former homeless veteran, I know the needs, the wants and sometimes the insecurity of being out there in the streets. But with great preservation and advocacy among us as a community I think that we can help out our fellow veterans that are facing that dilemma.

So with that said and done, I want to say thank you very much and have a good convention.

(Whereupon, Mr. Irby withdrew from the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you for all you do for our veterans, Anthony, and congratulations, again.

Honoring our fallen and supporting their survivors in their time of grief is a sacred and patriotic duty. Please welcome to the stage the 2019 VA National Cemetery Administration Employee of the Year, Mr. Edward Lyons. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Lyons advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Afghanistan War veteran Edward Lyons was medically discharged from the Marine Corps in 2015, having suffered serious injuries from a pressure plate IED. Despite his

injuries, Mr. Lyons has taken great pride building a career honoring the lives of America's veterans and caring for the families of our departed brothers and sisters.

Out of several hundred applicants, Mr. Lyons was selected to attend the yearlong National Cemetery Administration's Cemetery Director Intern Program in Saint Louis this October. Upon graduation, Mr. Lyons will be assigned to the Sarasota National Cemetery in Florida. (Applause)

MR. EDWARD LYONS: Oo-rah.

(Response of "Oo-rah.")

MR. LYONS: Anyways, so I'd just like to say thank you. This is truly an honor. Three years ago when I started working as a caretaker for the National Cemetery Administration, I never imagined that I would have been here today, right now, as a new director at Sarasota National Cemetery here in Florida.

So just thank you. It's truly an honor. And I look forward to continue serving our veterans.

(Whereupon, Mr. Lyons withdrew from the stage amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: DAV has over 4,700 members dedicated to recruiting veterans into the organization in order to maintain a strong voice with lawmakers and a robust offering of services for our nation's veterans.

Much has changed throughout the nearly 100-year history, including the needs of the veterans we serve and, just as importantly, the way we reach them.

Our dedicated recruiters have evolved to meet these challenges head-on and have worked diligently to welcome new members to ensure DAV's legacy lives on for future generations of veterans.

For our first award, I'll invite Executive Director Barry Jesinoski and National Membership Director Doug Wells to the stage as we recognize our top division winners in recruiting for 2019.

(Whereupon, Executive Director Jesinoski and National Membership Director Wells joined the Commander on the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 1 winner is the DAV Department of North Carolina. Please give a round of applause for past Department Commander Linda Gibson. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Gibson advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which she withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 2 winner is the DAV Department of Missouri. Please give a warm welcome for Past Department Commander Ronald Carr. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Carr advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 3 winner is the DAV Department of South Carolina. Please give a warm welcome for Department Commander Willard Cunningham Jr. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Department Commander Cunningham advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 4 winner is the DAV Department of Puerto Rico. Please give a warm welcome for Senior Vice Commander Ruben Arce. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Senior Vice Commander Arce advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 5 winner is the DAV Department of Rhode Island. Please give a warm welcome for Past Department Commander Alan Conca. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Conca advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER: Our next award is the General Jonathan M. Wainwright Award. It is presented to the Department that closes the year with the largest percentage increase in new members.

The winner is the DAV Department of Missouri. I'll ask Past Department Commander Ron Carr to the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Carr advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The General Jonathan M. Wainwright Award is named after a Past DAV National Commander and Medal of Honor recipient who served with distinction as the Commander of Allied Forces in the Philippines at the time of their surrender to Japan in World War II.

COMMANDER NIXON: The Judge Robert S. Marx Award is presented to the Department that completes the year with the highest percentage increase of fully paid life members over the goal. This

year's winner is the Department of South Dakota, represented by Department Adjutant Gene Murphy. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Department Adjutant Murphy advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Judge Robert S. Marx Award is named after DAV's founder. Marx served in the United States Army in World War I. He earned the Distinguished Service Cross and was injured in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in 1918. He later became a superior court judge and law professor.

COMMANDER NIXON: No one is more likely to join DAV than the veterans who have experienced our assistance. Those who experience DAV's free services firsthand understand the life-changing value of our organization. But it still takes a special type of national service officer to communicate the value and advantages of joining the organization.

Our next award recognizes individuals who go above and beyond the call to ensure the long-term health of our membership. Therefore, it is with great pride that I present the top recruiter from our NSO corps who remarkably recruited 430 veterans to join our ranks.

Ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together for James Balmer of the Saint Louis National Service Office in Saint Louis. (Applause)

(Whereupon, NSO Balmer advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Our top recruiting member of the year is Keith Pelusi from DAV Chapter 57 in Dallas, Texas. He recruited 192 new members. Unfortunately, Keith was unable to attend this year's convention. Here to accept the award on his behalf is the Department of Texas Commander Tommy Archer. Let's give it up. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Texas Commander Archer advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Since 1994, DAV has recognized the success of its members who have signed 100 or more new members for three consecutive membership years with a gold lapel pin and by entering their names into the Membership Recruiters Hall of Fame.

This year's inductees are James Balmer, who recruited 430 new members; Bennie Fugate, who recruited a total of 319 new members; and Carlo Melone, who added 214 new members to DAV. (Applause)

This year's Hall of Fame recipients will be honored at the Membership Luncheon today at noon in Conway.

Friends, think back to the time you were first introduced to DAV. How did it change your life? How can you help to do the same for another veteran? Take that leap and ask the question: Are you interested in becoming a DAV member? As always, thank you for another great recruiting year and keep up the wonderful work you do. (Applause)

And now I'd like to call on Board of Directors' Treasurer Jim Shuey, a personal friend of mine, for his report.

(Whereupon, Board of Directors Treasurer Shuey advanced to the podium.)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS TREASURER JIM SHUEY: National Commander Nixon, fellow members of the National Executive Committee, and DAV members and guests, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

BOARD OF DIRECTORS TREASURER SHUEY: Let me begin by recognizing those with whom I've served on the Board of Directors: Chairman Delphine Metcalf-Foster, California; Vice Chairman Stephen "Butch" Whitehead, Minnesota; Secretary and National Adjutant Marc Burgess; Director and 6th District NEC Robert D. Cox, Virginia; Director and NEC 1st District Coleman Nee, Massachusetts; and Director and NEC 12th District, Kevin Walkowski, Wisconsin.

It is my honor and privilege to present a report on the financial affairs of our organization for the six-month period ending June 30th, 2019. DAV's total solicited support through that date was a little over $51 million. Direct mail contributions were in excess of $31 million; bequests were almost $11 million.

Under the Department Fundraising Program payouts to departments in December 2018 and June 2019 totaled just about $3 million. Since the program began in 1994, more than $104 million have been distributed to departments for their service programs.

The Board would like to thank all of our departments for their continued participation in these programs, and especially our members for their generosity.

As of June 2019, DAV received total support and revenue from all sources of roughly $200 million. Also through June 2019, DAV had total expenditures of $168 million, of which almost $148 million were for service programs which is 87% of total expenses. (Applause) Congratulations.

Over the same period, fundraising expenditures of $18 million were comparable to 2018. Administrative outlays were a little above $4 million.

As of June 30, 2019, the market value of our general fund long-term investment portfolio is just over $381 million.

DAV's net assets or net worth increased from slightly more than $330 million at this time last year to in excess of $341 million this year.

DAV has been investing in new areas of assistance to provide more services to more veterans. We're also devoting our resources to new fundraising opportunities and will continue to use our resources wisely.

We are also pleased to report that at June 30, 2019, the Life Membership Fund Reserve was approximately $53 million.

Commander, it is my privilege to present DAV's proposed 2020 Annual Budget for ratification by the Convention.

At the May 22, 2019, meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board was presented the 2020 proposed budget. The Board unanimously approved the proposed budget at that time, a copy of which was provided to all Convention attendees at registration.

I would like to thank National Adjutant Marc Burgess and his staff for all their hard work which makes this report possible. Let me thank you, Commander Nixon, for the support I received in my role as the Board of Directors' Treasurer. It has truly been an honor and a privilege to hold this position.

Commander, this concludes my report to the National Convention, a report I feel honored to submit to our delegates. I thank you and I move for the adoption of my report and the approval of the proposed 2020 annual budget. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Jim, for that very informative report. I have a motion to accept this report. May I have a second?

MR. DAVID SARTORI: Microphone 3.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 3.

MR. SARTORI: David Sartori, Department of Wisconsin, Chapter 19, move for adoption—second for adoption.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. We have a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed, same sign. So ordered.

(Whereupon, Mr. Shuey withdrew from the podium.)

I would like now to call on Convention Chairman and Past National Commander Rob Reynolds for the report of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws. This is the first reading of the proposed Bylaw changes.

(Whereupon, Convention Chairman and Past National Commander Robert Reynolds advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERT REYNOLDS: Comrade Commander and delegates, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: The National Convention Committee on Constitution and Bylaws was called to order on August 3, 2019, by the Committee Advisors, Rob Reynolds and Ed Hartman.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Rob Reynolds was elected as chairman and Jim Copley was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I now will report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolution.

Resolution Number 233, it is proposed that Article IX, Section 9.3, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to increase the minimum amount of income generated by chapter in order to file a copy of their Annual Financial Report to the National Organization from $10,000 to $25,000.

Resolution Number 348, it is proposed that Article III, Section 3.5, Paragraph 3 of the Bylaws be amended to make a copy of the National Convention proceedings available on DAV's website as soon as practical following the convening of the National Convention.

Resolution Number 349, it is proposed that Article XI, Section 11.9, Paragraph 2 of the Bylaws be amended to require a flat rate of $300 for life membership in DAV for all ages with the exception of those over 80 whose membership would still be offered for free.

Comrade Commander, this completes the first reading of the report of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws and the recommended changes to the Constitution and Bylaws.

(Whereupon, Convention Chairman and Past National Commander Reynolds withdrew from the stage and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Rob. As I said, there will be no action taken at this time. We will hear the final report on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee at the final business session on Tuesday.

National Adjutant Burgess, do you have any announcements?

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. Join us for Fun Night tomorrow at eight o'clock. We will be treated to the Lieutenant Dan Band, starring Gary Sinise. This year's concert is sponsored by our good friends at TriWest, who have generously donated to bring Gary and the team back to Orlando to perform. And a little fun tidbit, this year marks Gary's 25th anniversary of his very first DAV National Convention. (Applause)

I'm also pleased once again to announce that Gary Sinise will be signing copies of his new book, "Grateful American," Monday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor outside of Rooms D and E. As a reminder, he will only be signing copies of his book and nothing else.

Books will be available for purchase for just $18 outside the entrance of the signing. Books will be sold beginning at 6 p.m. this evening in the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor and again starting at 9 a.m. in the morning.

We will be trying to get as many people through the line as possible in the short time that we have, so please be courteous to others and make an effort to keep the line moving.

Thanks to our partners at Hankook Tire, any registered convention guest can enter to win a free set of tires by stopping by the Member Advantage table located right outside Gatlin B on Level 1. The deadline to enter the raffle is Sunday at 4 p.m. Take a look in your registration bag for more details. Hankook will select the lucky winner after convention.

Don't forget that today at 4 p.m.—or 1600 for those of you military types—is the cut-off for you to make reservations to attend the Line Officer Dinner. You will need tickets to enter. And there will be assigned seating. So the cut-off is at 4 p.m. today.

Also, we would like to ask that all department Women Veterans Committee chairs meet in the back of this very ballroom at the completion of this morning's session to meet one another and help further each other's mission. Again, all department Women Veterans Committee chairs, if you will stick around after this session and we will have a quick meeting.

Our regular business will begin again Tuesday morning at 8:30. We will start off with the Committee reports, including the final report of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. We will hear reports on the Charitable Service Trust, and the National Service Foundation, plus an update on our Memorial in Washington, D.C.

On Tuesday afternoon we will hold our final business session and conclude with nominations and elections of our officers.

Also, those of you who wish to donate to any DAV entity, in the interest of time you are encouraged to fill out the form in your bags prior to making your way to our donation booth located in the Saint John's Foyer.

We are giving away three more $50 gift cards to attending delegates. You must be present to win. If I call your name and you are in the hall, please come up to the front by the stage and see Membership Director Doug Wells.

And the lucky winners are: Phillip Johns of Illinois, A.G. Tri-centennial Number 84; Jack Johnson of Florida, Orange Blossom Gardens Number 150; and Robert Young of Maryland, General M. J. Maas Number 17. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess returned to his seat and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: See there, even the National Adjutant stumbles every once in a while. (Laughter)

Thank you, Marc. Ladies and gentlemen, please rise and I will ask Chaplain Dover to please lead us in our closing prayer.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Ladies, gentlemen, let's pray. Heavenly Creator, as we depart this place, assist us in being mindful of the love you have for each and every one of

us. May we go with the knowledge of your presence to live life to its fullest. And give us the wisdom to understand such knowledge as we continue to make new friends and relationships in the spirit of camaraderie. Help us honor you in our every action, word and deed. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, sir.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: The Convention stands in recess until 8:30 a.m. Tuesday.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 10:55 a.m. on Sunday, August 4, 2019.)

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NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICES
MONETARY STATS 2018

In 2018, with the assistance of DAV, service members, veterans and their families received over $20 billion in benefits in 2018.

Compensation	$18,627,982,867
DIC	$669,688,177
Veteran Pension	$329,793,253
Survivor Pension	$34,184,399
Education Benefits	$1,027,728,516
Special Entitlements (Clothing Allowance)	$31,756,129
Total Benefits	$20,721,133,341

Disabled American Veterans

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2018, and
Independent Auditors' Report

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Disabled American Veterans:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Disabled American Veterans (DAV), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2018, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to DAV's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of DAV's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of DAV as of December 31, 2018, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 2 to the financial statements, in 2018, DAV adopted Accounting Standards Update No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

April 9, 2019

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018

ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
CASH	$ 7,721,756	LIABILITIES:	
		Accounts payable	$ 9,823,080
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	5,323,542	Accrued expenses	3,959,303
		Pension liability	16,129,057
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	228,787	Postretirement benefit obligation	47,750,818
		Other liabilities	15,097
SOLICITATION MATERIALS	1,333,872	Deferred dues and service fees collected in advance	3,400,535
PREPAID EXPENSES	5,050,713	Deferred revenue	295,510
		Life membership:	
INVESTMENTS	366,478,312	Accounts payable	332,460
		Reserve for future distribution of	
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT—Net	7,869,875	life membership dues	44,781,324
OTHER ASSETS	183,000	Total liabilities	126,487,184
		NET ASSETS:	
LIFE MEMBERSHIP:		Without donor restrictions—	
Cash	2,251,514	undesignated	307,318,279
Accounts receivable	2,627		
Interest and dividends receivable	17,888	With donor restrictions:	
Investments	42,841,755	Purpose restrictions	2,325,955
		Endowment funds	3,172,223
		Total net assets	312,816,457
TOTAL	$439,303,641	TOTAL	$439,303,641

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

	Without Donor Restrictions			
	Without Donor Restrictions	Purpose Restrictions	Endowment Funds	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Support:				
Contributions received primarily from direct mail solicitations	$105,697,030	$ 12,807,883	$3,386,166	$121,891,079
Contributed services and facilities—primarily services	47,135,258			47,135,258
Contributed media and materials—primarily media	91,195,809			91,195,809
Total support	244,028,097	12,807,883	3,386,166	260,222,146
Revenue:				
Membership dues and fees	6,983,481			6,983,481
List royalties	814,412			814,412
Miscellaneous revenue	974,068			974,068
Total revenue	8,771,961	-	-	8,771,961
NET INVESTMENT RETURN	(18,869,654)		(213,943)	(19,083,597)
NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS	10,481,928	(10,481,928)		-
Total support and revenue	244,412,332	2,325,955	3,172,223	249,910,510
EXPENSES:				
Program services:				
Service program	42,645,302			42,645,302
Employment program	1,529,400			1,529,400
Legislative service program	2,189,204			2,189,204
Voluntary service program	48,228,765			48,228,765
State services and disaster relief	6,078,928			6,078,928
Communications program	9,081,722			9,081,722
Public service announcement program—primarily contributed media	91,958,173			91,958,173
Membership program	5,591,780			5,591,780
Public awareness outreach	27,923,374			27,923,374
Total program services	235,226,648	-	-	235,226,648
Supporting services:				
Fundraising costs	34,308,847			34,308,847
Administrative and general	8,749,402			8,749,402
Total supporting services	43,058,249	-	-	43,058,249
Total expenses	278,284,897			278,284,897
EXCESS OF EXPENSES OVER SUPPORT AND REVENUE	(33,872,565)	2,325,955	3,172,223	(28,374,387)
PENSION LIABILITY AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT OBLIGATION ADJUSTMENT	(545,181)			(545,181)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(34,417,746)	2,325,955	3,172,223	(28,919,568)
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	341,736,025			341,736,025
NET ASSETS—End of year	$307,318,279	$ 2,325,955	$3,172,223	$312,816,457

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

	Service Program	Employment Program	Legislative Service Program	Voluntary Service Program	State Services and Disaster Relief	Communications Program	Public Service Announcement Program	Membership Program	Public Awareness Outreach	Total Program Services	Fundraising Costs	Administrative and General	Total Supporting Services	Total
Salaries	$24,485,136	$ 364,161	$ 889,556	$ 522,779	$ -	$1,078,910	$ -	$1,353,097	$ 217,925	$ 28,911,564	$ 3,617,091	$ 5,451,404	$ 9,068,495	$ 37,980,059
Employee benefits	6,628,275	102,779	213,396	184,620		203,947		392,133	57,714	7,782,864	1,177,861	1,468,927	2,646,788	10,429,652
Payroll taxes	1,908,817	25,542	60,760	43,922		80,593		89,318	16,946	2,225,898	278,644	399,872	678,516	2,904,414
DAV Transportation Network and LVAP volunteers				44,461,869					1,500	44,463,369			-	44,463,369
HSC and Transport Network Grants				323,724						323,724			-	323,724
Winter Sports Clinic				864,654						864,654			-	864,654
Columbia Trust				62,450						62,450			-	62,450
Other grants	75,589			177,410	1,423,373	15,000				1,691,372			-	1,691,372
Disaster relief					1,237,582					1,237,582			-	1,237,582
State service program					3,408,566					3,408,566			-	3,408,566
Scholarships				58,750						58,750			-	58,750
Expenses of national convention								532,735		532,735			-	532,735
Expenses of national commander and committees								638,263		638,263			-	638,263
Travel, training, and relocation	1,833,091	63,661	43,207	471,445		97,896		71,582	23,734	2,604,616	185,242	143,408	328,650	2,933,266
Facilities	2,671,889									2,671,889			-	2,671,889
Contributed media and materials	6,990			7,770			90,874,483		176,967	91,066,210			-	91,066,210
Postage and shipping	656,792	7,310	802	55,385	185	1,106,980	4,807	167,532	13,252	2,013,045	12,975,014	401,786	13,376,800	15,389,845
Equipment rental and maintenance	441,802	1,499	14,021	251,886		48,135	6,525	201,882	91,685	1,057,435	709,118	1,034,451	1,743,569	2,801,004
Supplies	684,920	68,077	66,756	66,814		58,624	23,669	151,170	28,514	1,148,544	224,445	143,106	367,551	1,516,095
Insurance	96,978		1,739	2,119		2,944		1,288	5,636	110,704	3,977	225,233	229,210	339,914
Telephone	146,703	3,153	4,907	3,022		8,564		6,299	2,643	175,291	11,981	148,067	160,048	335,339
Outside services	594,544	6,198	16,261	636		6,654		105,967		730,260	274,314	357,127	631,441	1,361,701
Project costs		800,000	1,500		9,222	3,274,556		52,032	208,530	4,345,840	2,635,764	62,963	2,698,727	7,044,567
Printing of magazine						909,762		37,060		946,822			-	946,822
Cost of mailing materials	26,642			33,567		105,490		255,866	932	422,497	35,203,518	439,564	35,643,082	36,065,579
Heat, light, water, and power	175,998									175,998		310,309	310,309	486,307
Security service	201,749								(400)	201,349		153,455	153,455	354,804
Depreciation of property and equipment	1,117,574	1,569	2,368	86,361		15,627		12,549		1,236,048	115,441	621,282	736,723	1,972,771
Legal fees	140,707			17,894				36,765		195,366	57,549	68,795	126,344	321,710
Professional fees	99,828	42,192	112,632	4,134		1,296,810	1,048,689	83,599	472,240	3,160,124	1,923,066	1,374,632	3,297,698	6,457,822
Technology services	37,548			(39,673)				(158,690)		(160,815)	1,440	446,663	448,103	287,288
Other expenses	63,108		1,284	126,013		9,470		14,595	16,793	231,263	10,112	1,094,999	1,105,111	1,336,374
Allocations from (to) other departments	550,622	43,259	760,015	441,214		761,760		1,546,738	26,588,763	30,692,371	(25,095,730)	(5,596,641)	(30,692,371)	-
Total	$42,645,302	$1,529,400	$2,189,204	$48,228,765	$6,078,928	$9,081,722	$91,958,173	$5,591,780	$27,923,374	$235,226,648	$ 34,308,847	$ 8,749,402	$ 43,058,249	$278,284,897

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	$ (28,919,568)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:	
Noncash contributions	(281,600)
Pension liability and other postretirement benefit obligation adjustment	545,181
Depreciation	1,972,771
Gain on disposal of property and equipment	(2,700)
Contributions restricted for endowment	(3,386,166)
Gain on sale and depreciation of investments	32,232,932
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:	
Accounts receivable	(377,794)
Interest and dividends receivable	(198,372)
Solicitation materials	342,197
Prepaid expenses	332,668
Other assets	200,000
Accounts payable	(1,707,548)
Accrued expenses	(3,475,598)
Other liabilities	(1,748,058)
Deferred dues and service fees collected in advance	(19,482)
Deferred revenue	(2,166,852)
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	(8,532,648)
Net cash used in operating activities	(15,190,637)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Payments for property and equipment	(1,942,317)
Proceeds from the sale of property and equipment	21,133
Purchases of investments for endowments	(6,103,331)
Proceeds from the sale of investments for endowment	2,672,444
Purchases of investments	(241,225,465)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	260,088,428
Net cash provided by investing activities	13,510,892
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES—	
Proceeds from contributions restricted for investment in endowment	3,386,166
Net cash provided by financing activities	3,386,166
NET INCREASE IN CASH	1,706,421
CASH—Beginning of year	8,266,849
CASH—End of year	$ 9,973,270

See notes to financial statements.

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is a Congressionally chartered, not-for-profit service organization. DAV is dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. DAV accomplishes this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access a full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

- Providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies of government
- Providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people, generally, and to disabled veterans and their families, specifically
- Representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses, and their orphans before Congress, the White House, and the judicial branch, as well as state and local governments
- Extending DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level departments and local chapters
- Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements—The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

New Accounting Standards—In August 2018, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2018-14, *Compensation—Retirement Benefits—Defined Benefit Plans—General (Subtopic 715-20): Disclosure Framework—Changes to the Disclosure Requirements for Defined Benefit Plans*. The amendments in this ASU remove disclosures that no longer are considered cost beneficial, clarify the specific requirements of disclosures, and add disclosure requirements identified as relevant. The effective date of ASU No. 2018-14 is for fiscal years ending after December 15, 2021. Early adoption is permitted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact on the financial statements.

In August 2018, ASU No. 2018-13, *Fair Value Measurement (Topic 820): Disclosure Framework—Changes to the Disclosure Requirements for Fair Value Measurement*. The amendments in this Update modify the disclosure requirements on fair value measurements in Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 820, *Fair Value*

Measurement, based on the concepts in the concepts statement, including the consideration of costs and benefits. The effective date of ASU No. 2018-13 is for all entities for fiscal years, and interim periods within those fiscal years, beginning after December 15, 2019. Early adoption is permitted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact on the financial statements.

In March 2017, the FASB issued ASU No. 2017-08, *Receivables—Nonrefundable Fees and Other Costs (Subtopic 310-20): Premium Amortization on Purchased Callable Debt Securities*. ASU No. 2017-08 amends guidance on the amortization period of premiums on certain purchased callable debt securities. The amendments shorten the amortization period of premiums on certain purchased callable debt securities to the earliest call date. The amendments should be applied on a modified retrospective basis through a cumulative-effect adjustment to beginning retained earnings. The effective date of ASU No. 2017-08 is for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2019. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it is not expected to have a material impact on DAV's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations.

In February 2016, the FASB issued ASU No. 2016-02, *Leases (Topic 842)*. This standard amends the existing guidance and requires lessees to recognize on the balance sheet assets and liabilities for the rights and obligations created by those leases with lease terms longer than 12 months. This update is effective for annual financial statements issued for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2019, and is to be applied using a modified retrospective approach; early adoption is permitted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact on the financial statements.

In June 2016, the FASB issued ASU No. 2016-13, *Financial Instruments—Credit Losses*, which is included in ASC Topic 326, *Measurement of Credit Losses on Financial Instruments*. The new standard revises the accounting requirements related to the measurement of credit losses and will require organizations to measure all expected credit losses for financial assets based on historical experience, current conditions, and reasonable and supportable forecasts about collectibility. Assets must be presented in the financial statements at the net amount expected to be collected. This standard will be effective for the annual financial statements beginning January 1, 2021. A modified retrospective approach is to be used for certain parts of this standard, while other parts are to be applied using a prospective approach. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In May 2014, the FASB issued ASU No. 2014-09, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. ASU No. 2014-09 requires an entity to recognize revenue in a way that depicts the transfer of promised goods or services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods and services. ASU No. 2014-09 is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018, and has the option to be applied using a full retrospective transition method or a modified retrospective transition method; early adoption is permitted. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it is not expected to have a material impact on DAV's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations.

Newly Adopted Accounting Principles—DAV implemented FASB ASU No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*, in the current year, applying the changes retrospectively. The new standards change the following aspects of the financial statements:

- "Unrestricted net assets" have been renamed "Net assets without donor restrictions."

- The financial statements include a disclosure for composition of net assets with donor restrictions (see Note 6).

- The financial statements include a disclosure for net assets released from donor restrictions (see Note 7).

- The financial statements include a disclosure about liquidity and availability of financial assets (see Note 8).

- The financial statements include an endowment disclosure (see Note 9).

The changes have no effect on net assets at January 1, 2018.

In June 2018, the FASB issued ASU No. 2018-08, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Clarifying the Scope and the Accounting Guidance for Contributions Recevied and Contributions Made*. This update clarifies and improves current guidance about whether a transfer of assets is a contribution or an exchange transaction. DAV adopted the guidance in ASU No. 2018-08 as of December 31, 2018, using a modified prospective approach. Adoption of ASU No. 2018-08 resulted in a reclassification of deferred revenue to contributions with restrictions for a purpose of approximately $1.4 million.

DAV implemented FASB ASU No. 2016-01, *Financial Instruments—Overall (Subtopic 825-10)—Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities*, on January 1, 2018, applying the changes using a modified retrospective transition approach. ASU No. 2016-01 revises the accounting related to the classification and measurement of investments in equity securities and the presentation of certain fair value changes for financial liabilities measured at fair value. Adoption did not materially impact DAV's financial statements.

Cash—DAV maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. DAV has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Accounts Receivable—Amounts recorded as accounts receivable are reduced to their net realizable value, as appropriate.

Solicitation Materials—Inventories are carried at the lower of cost or net realizable value, generally determined on the first-in, first-out basis.

Investments—Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of DAV's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of total support and revenue for the investments in the general fund. DAV's policy is to report cash equivalents, which include money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

Property and Equipment—Property and equipment are stated at cost, less accumulated depreciation, and, at December 31, 2018, are composed of the following:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
Land and improvements	$ 1,021,394	$ 506,961	$ 514,433
Buildings and improvements	11,540,528	9,561,628	1,978,900
Machinery and other equipment	28,829,449	24,149,697	4,679,752
Construction in process	696,790		696,790
Total	$42,088,161	$34,218,286	$7,869,875

Depreciation is computed generally on the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of assets, which range from three to 50 years.

Contributions—Contributions received are recorded as support with or without donor restrictions depending on the existence and the nature of any donor restrictions. All contributions are considered available for unrestricted use, unless specifically restricted by the donor. Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the gift.

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions—All contributions and bequests without donor restrictions are resources available to support DAV's operations.

Net Assets With Donor Restrictions—Net assets with donor restrictions consist of assets whose use is limited by donor-imposed, time and/or purpose restrictions.

DAV reports gifts of cash and other assets as revenue with donor restrictions if they are received with donor stipulations that limit the use of the donated assets. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished, the net assets are reclassified as net assets without donor restriction and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Some net assets with donor restrictions include a stipulation that assets provided be maintained in perpetuity while permitting DAV to expend the income generated by the assets in accordance with the provision of additional donor-imposed stipulations.

See Notes 6 and 7 for more information on the composition of net assets with donor restrictions and the release from restrictions, respectively.

Contributed Services and Facilities—DAV operates extensive programs through which volunteers contribute many hours of service to veterans. The 1.8 million hours that are donated to DAV's Transportation Network at the VA and donated hours of Department and Chapter Service Officers through the Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) are used to tabulate contributed services. Using a value per hour of $24.69 developed by Independent Sector, an organization that provides oversight to nonprofit organizations in America, the value of these hours contributed to the DAV's Transportation Network and LVAP program is $44,461,869. This value, together with the value of certain contributed facilities, is recorded as support and expenses in the accompanying statement of activities and statement of functional expenses.

Contributed Media and Materials—DAV produces public service announcements through various mediums (television, radio, digital, print, out of home), of which approximately $91.1 million was donated through independent third parties. The value of the donated media is provided through an independent third party utilizing an estimated market value for each type of medium. The most significant medium is television. Estimated market values for television announcements are determined using various inputs, including length of spot, city, station, day part, and industry media cost data. The value of contributed media and materials is recorded as support and expenses in the accompanying statement of activities and statement of functional expenses.

Salaries Expense—The salaries expense in the accompanying financial statements includes the cost of all national service officers and their support staff who work directly with veterans and their dependents in providing counseling and representation in obtaining benefits and services. This expense also includes DAV's administrative and support staffs.

Income Taxes—As a not-for-profit service organization, DAV has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that it is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to DAV are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Use of Estimates—The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of support, revenues, and expenses during the reporting period. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more programs or supporting services of DAV. Those expenses include building maintenance, mail center administrative services, and information technology and general administrative services. Building maintenance expenses are allocated based on a square footage basis, mail center administrative expenses are allocated based on the number of pieces mailed tracked by department utilized, the information technology and general administrative services expenses are allocated based on the percentage of time tracked by department utilized.

Allocation of Joint Costs—The allocation of joint costs is based on the specific content of the qualifying material or media. In 2018, DAV incurred joint costs of $53,177,527 for informational materials and activities that included fundraising appeals. Of those costs, $26,588,763 were allocated to public awareness outreach (program services) and $26,588,764 were allocated to fundraising costs.

3. LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Under the bylaws of DAV, any eligible person may become a life member. Amounts paid for membership are placed in separate life membership accounts and invested; the only withdrawals permitted from these accounts are amounts required to pay chapter, department, and national (DAV) per capita dues for services to be provided to the life members. Generally, life membership assets for DAV National Headquarters per capita dues are transferred to the general assets of DAV at the beginning of the membership year (July 1) and deferred and recognized as revenue in the statement of activities over the course of the membership year. The per capita chapter and department dues are distributed at the beginning of the membership year. The reserve for future distribution of membership dues represents the liability for the future life membership distributions to DAV National Headquarters, departments, and chapters to assist with providing member services.

The changes during 2018 in the reserve for future distribution of life membership dues are summarized below:

Balance—January 1, 2018	$ 53,313,972
Additions:	
Membership dues received	5,388,463
Net investment return	(2,422,495)
Total additions	2,965,968
Distribution of membership dues:	
National headquarters	6,963,999
Local chapters	2,258,206
State departments	2,137,899
Other expense	138,512
Total distribution of membership dues	11,498,616
Balance—December 31, 2018	$ 44,781,324

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, provides a framework for measuring fair value. This framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value, as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

DAV did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3) during 2018.

DAV's policy is to recognize significant transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers between Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 during 2018.

Asset Valuation Techniques—Valuation techniques used maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs. The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for general fund, life fund, and pension plan assets recorded at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at December 31, 2018.

Cash equivalents, composed of money market funds, are categorized as Level 1. Such investments are valued at cost, which approximates fair value. The money market fund represents DAV's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

US government securities (US Treasury Notes), common stocks, and exchange-traded funds (ETFs), categorized as Level 1, are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

Certificates of deposit, categorized as Level 2, are valued at fair value, which approximates amortized cost.

US government agency notes, municipal and corporate bonds, categorized as Level 2, are valued using third-party pricing services. These services may use, for example, model-based pricing methods that utilize observable market data as inputs. Broker-dealer bids or quotes of securities with similar characteristics may also be used.

Shares of registered investment companies (mutual funds), categorized as Level 1, are valued at quoted market prices that represent the net asset value of shares held at year-end.

The major categories of general fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2018, are as follows:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
Asset Category	**Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)**	**Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)**	**Total**
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 6,992,513	$ -	$ 6,992,513
Certificates of deposit		1,462,806	1,462,806
Corporate bonds		36,467,981	36,467,981
Municipal bonds		2,962,732	2,962,732
Common stocks	20,994,263		20,994,263
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	94,437,630		94,437,630
International fixed-income funds	77,091		77,091
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	129,734,908		129,734,908
International equity funds	66,194,337		66,194,337
Real estate equity funds	7,154,051		7,154,051
Total mutual funds/ETFs	297,598,017	-	297,598,017
Total general fund assets	$325,584,793	$40,893,519	$366,478,312

The major categories of life membership fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2018, are as follows:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
Asset Category	**Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)**	**Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)**	**Total**
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 441,572	$ -	$ 441,572
Corporate bonds		3,811,434	3,811,434
Common stocks	2,412,176		2,412,176
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	9,746,699		9,746,699
International fixed-income funds			-
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	16,187,346		16,187,346
International equity funds	8,807,527		8,807,527
Real estate equity funds	1,435,001		1,435,001
Total mutual funds/ETFs	36,176,573	-	36,176,573
Total life membership fund assets	$39,030,321	$3,811,434	$42,841,755

5. PENSION PLAN AND POSTRETIREMENT BENEFITS

Pension Plan—DAV has a defined benefit pension plan covering substantially all of its employees and certain employees of Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary (DAVA). Benefits are based on years of service and employees' compensation. Contributions are intended to fully fund, over a period of seven years, the benefits attributed to service to date based on market interest rates established by the IRS. In 2018, DAV funded amounts in accordance with the recommended actuarially determined contribution amount. Contributions to the plan are based on the unit credit actuarial cost method.

Other Postretirement Benefit Plans—DAV provides certain health care and life insurance benefits (other postretirement benefits) for its retired employees and their spouses as well as certain retired employees and their spouses of DAVA. Substantially, all of DAV's employees may become eligible for these benefits if they have completed 20 years of service upon retirement. The High Cost Plan Excise (a.k.a. "Cadillac") tax that is set to begin in 2020 would apply to the pre-Medicare retiree medical benefits and has been valued. The post-Medicare retiree medical benefits are now a health reimbursement account (HRA), which is not subject to the Cadillac tax.

DAV offers Medicare-eligible retirees access to health care coverage through a private exchange and provides an HRA to subsidize benefits. DAV established a catastrophic HRA with $75,000 aggregate limit to cover catastrophic prescription drug expenses incurred by qualifying participants.

Summarized information for the plans as of December 31, 2018, measurement date is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Accumulated benefit obligation	$ 65,861,113	$ -
Projected benefit obligation (PBO)	$ 73,023,256	$ -
Accumulated postretirement benefit obligation (APBO)		47,750,818
Fair value of plan assets	(56,894,199)	
Unfunded status recognized	$ 16,129,057	$47,750,818

Summarized information of the plans for the year ended December 31, 2018, is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Components of net periodic benefit cost :		
Service cost	$ 2,740,124	$ 1,642,602
Interest cost	2,202,688	1,630,382
Expected return on assets	(3,775,797)	
Amortization of net loss	936,822	807,360
Amortization of prior service cost (benefit)	31,964	(4,156,585)
Net periodic benefit cost (benefit)	$ 2,135,801	$ (76,241)
Components of pension and postretirement benefit obligation adjustment:		
Amortization of prior service cost (benefit)	$ 31,964	$(4,156,585)
Amortization of net loss	936,822	807,360
Actuarial net (loss) gain during the year	(4,577,839)	6,413,097
Pension and postretirement benefit obligation adjustment	$(3,609,053)	$ 3,063,872

Amounts not yet recognized as a component of periodic pension cost at December 31, 2018, are as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Prior service cost (benefit)	$ 127,855	$ (39,473,359)
Net actuarial loss	20,992,952	9,764,970
Amounts recognized as reduction (increase) in unrestricted net assets	$ 21,120,807	$ (29,708,389)

The estimated net actuarial loss and prior service cost for the pension plan that will be amortized from net assets without donor restrictions and into net periodic benefit cost in 2019 are $1,261,809 and $31,964, respectively. The estimated net actuarial loss and prior service benefit for the postretirement plan that will be amortized from net assets without donor restrictions and into net periodic benefit cost in 2019 will result in a cost of $402,309 and a benefit of $4,156,585, respectively.

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
For the year ended December 31, 2018:		
Benefit expense (net periodic pension benefit cost of $2,135,801 offset by $24,348 reimbursed by DAVA)	$ 2,111,453	$ (76,241)
Actual return (loss) on plan assets	(3,985,805)	
Employer contribution	4,590,000	1,435,294
Plan participants' contributions		46,099
Benefits paid	5,004,586	1,481,393
Weighted-average rate assumptions used for the December 31 valuation—for year-end benefit obligation:		
Discount rate	4.12 %	4.25 %
Rate of compensation increase	3.00	3.00

For the year-end benefit obligation, the RP-2014 Healthy Fully Generational Mortality Table with MP-2018 was utilized.

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
For annual benefit cost:		
Discount rate	3.46 %	3.61 %
Discount rate—PBO normal cost	3.46 %	n/a
Rate of compensation increase	3.00 %	3.00 %
Expected return on plan assets	6.50 %	n/a

For the annual benefit cost, the RP-2014 Healthy Fully Generational Mortality Table with MP-2017 was utilized.

The APBO and related benefit cost are determined through the application of relevant actuarial assumptions. DAV anticipates the increase in its health care cost-trend rate to slow from 7.5% in 2018 to 4.5% in 2025, after which the trend rate is expected to stabilize.

DAV expects to contribute $2.8 million to its pension plan in 2019.

DAV's pension plan investment allocation at December 31, 2018, is as follows:

Asset Category	Percentage of Plan Assets
Equity-based securities	56 %
Fixed-income securities	29
Real assets	5
Alternative	8
Cash and cash equivalents	2
Total	100 %

The primary objective of the investment policy is preservation of capital with an emphasis on long-term growth without undue exposure to risk and in recognition of the cash flow needs of the plan. The asset allocation ranges are: 42% to 59% equities, 20% to 35% fixed-income securities, 0% to 10% real assets, and 5% to 20% alternative strategies. Approximately, 0% to 13% of the combined investments are to be in money market or other liquid funds (cash requirements).

Pension plan financial assets are recorded at fair value using the measurement techniques outlined in Note 4. The major categories of pension plan financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2018, are as follows:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
Asset Category	**Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)**	**Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)**	**Total**
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 1,013,974	$ -	$ 1,013,974
US government securities	1,923,593		1,923,593
US government agency notes		984,351	984,351
Municipal bonds		447,269	447,269
Corporate bonds		6,732,259	6,732,259
Common stocks:			
Real assets	1,655,082		1,655,082
Equity-based securities	5,194,035		5,194,035
Total common stocks	6,849,117	-	6,849,117
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Equity-based securities	26,515,564		26,515,564
Fixed income	6,154,262		6,154,262
Real assets	1,367,825		1,367,825
Alternative	4,905,985		4,905,985
Total mutual funds/ETFs	38,943,636	-	38,943,636
Total pension plan assets	$48,730,320	$8,163,879	$56,894,199

In selecting the expected rate of return on plan assets, DAV considers historical rates of return for the type of investments the plan holds, as well as future market expectations. Expectations are then applied to the target asset allocation to arrive at a weighted average of expected returns for the plan's portfolio of assets.

The pension plan benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid as follows:

Fiscal Years Ending	**Benefit Payments**
2019	$ 2,586,500
2020	3,336,152
2021	4,052,410
2022	4,011,172
2023	4,921,371
2024–2028	31,068,387

DAV offers retirees access to coverage through a private exchange and provides an HRA to subsidize benefits.

The other postretirement benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid as follows:

Fiscal Years Ending	Benefit Payments
2019	$ 2,330,010
2020	2,151,290
2021	2,202,598
2022	2,193,642
2023	2,288,688
2024–2028	13,103,782

DAV also maintains a defined contribution salary savings and investment plan for its employees. For qualified participating employees, DAV contributes a percentage of the employees' base salary. DAV's contributions in 2018 were $2,743,773 and are included in employee benefits expense in the accompanying statement of functional expenses.

6. COMPOSITION OF NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor restrictions as of December 31, 2018, are restricted for the following purposes:

Subject to expenditure for a specified purpose:	
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	$ 965,111
Service program office	385,578
Transportation Network	286,201
Employment program	193,340
Other	495,725
Total subject to expenditure for a specified purpose	2,325,955
Endowments subject to DAV's spending policy and appropriation	3,172,223
Total net assets with donor restrictions	$ 5,498,178

7. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes or by occurrence of the passage of time or other events specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions for the year ended December 31, 2018, are as follows:

Purpose restriction accomplished:	
Service program	$ 5,012,211
Employment program	1,521,660
Disaster relief program	1,159,345
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	864,704
DAV Just B Kids Scholarship fund	728,655
DAV 5K events	573,440
Transportation Network	224,738
Boulder Crest Retreat	150,000
National Disabled Veterans TEE Tournament	75,175
Other	172,000
Total net assets released from restriction	$ 10,481,928

8. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

DAV intends to operate within a prudent range of financial soundness and stability. DAV regularly monitors liquidity required to meet its operating needs and other contractual commitments, while also striving to maximize the investment of its available funds. DAV has various sources of liquidity at its disposal, including cash and cash equivalents and readily marketable debt and equity securities.

DAV forecasts its future cash flows annually and monitors actual activity monthly. For purposes of analyzing resources available to meet expenditures over a 12-month period, DAV considers all expenditures related to its ongoing program, fundraising, and general and administrative activities. DAV's working capital and cash flows have seasonal variations during the year attributable to the timing of contribution solicitation campaigns. Campaign expenses paid and contributions received fluctuate monthly with a heavier concentration near calendar year-end. Bequests also vary from year to year.

While DAV's investments are primarily unrestricted, funds withdrawn from the portfolio approximate 4% of the portfolio's average quarterly market value over the prior two years. Funds are liquidated quarterly based on cash flow forecasts. DAV has an investment policy with primary goals of safeguarding its assets; maximizing return on the investments through interest, dividends, and appreciation of capital; and avoiding undue interest rate risk in the fixed-income portion of the portfolio. The overall asset allocation is 64% equities and liquid alternative investments and 36% fixed income investments and cash equivalents.

The following reflects DAV's financial assets at December 31, 2018, reduced by amounts not available for general use within one year of the statement of financial position date due to donor and purpose restrictions:

Total assets, excluding nonfinancial assets	$421,004,000
Subtract: Life Membership Fund	(38,113,784)
Subtract: Donor-Restricted Endowment Fund	(3,172,223)
Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	$379,717,993

9. ENDOWMENT

DAV's endowment (the "Endowment") consists of approximately 19 individual funds established by donors to provide perpetual source of support for DAV's activities. As required by GAAP, net assets associated with Endowment funds are classified and reported based on the existence of donor-imposed restrictions.

DAV's Board of Directors has interpreted the KY Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the date of the donor-restricted endowment funds, unless there are explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. At December 31, 2018, there were no such donor stipulations. Because of this interpretation, DAV retained in perpetuity (a) the original value of initial and subsequent gift amounts donated to the endowment and (b) any accumulations to the endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added. Donor-restricted amounts not retained in perpetuity are subject to appropriation for expenditure by DAV in a manner consistent with the standard of prudence prescribed by UPMIFA. DAV considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

- The duration and preservation of the endowment
- The purposes of DAV and the donor-restricted endowment
- General economic conditions
- The possible effect of inflation and deflation
- The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments
- Other resources of DAV
- The investment policies of DAV

As of December 31, 2018, DAV had $3,172,223 of donor-restricted, perpetually endowed net assets.

Investment and Spending Policies—DAV has an investment policy specific to its endowment, which is monitored by DAV's management team and implemented by the investment manager. The investment policy statement describes the objective for the fund and sets ranges for asset allocation. The objective of the endowment is to preserve and enhance the real (inflation adjusted) purchasing power of the endowment assets consistent with agreed-upon levels of risk that a prudent person would take under various economic conditions. At a minimum, long-term rates of return should be equal to an amount sufficient to maintain the purchasing power of the endowment fund assets, to provide necessary capital to fund the spending policy, and to cover the costs of managing the

endowment fund investments. The desired total return over a long-term basis (as measured on a five-year rolling period and full market cycle) is expected to exceed the rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, plus the spending rate plus investment expenses. Actual returns in any given year may vary from this amount. In light of this return requirement, the portfolio is constructed using a total return approach with a significant portion of the funds invested to seek growth of principal over time. The assets are invested for the long term, and a higher short-term volatility in these assets is expected and accepted. DAV limits its investment in so-called alternative investments that have daily liquidity (mutual funds and ETFs).

The following is a summary of the asset allocation guidelines, with allowable ranges for each asset type.

Asset class	Lower Range	Target Weight	Upper Range
Equity	55 %	65 %	75 %
Fixed income	5	15	25
Real assets	3	10	15
Alternatives	3	7	11
Cash equivalents	-	3	13

DAV uses an endowment-spending formula based on total return of the investments for determining the amount to spend from the endowment fund each year. The appropriation is a maximum of 3% of the average market value of the trailing 12 quarters, calculated annually as of December 31 of each year. In establishing this policy, DAV considered the long-term expected return on its endowment fund investments and set the rate with the objective of maintaining the purchasing power of its donor-restricted permanent endowment funds over time. The endowment investment fund earned a negative return in 2018. DAV did not withdraw funds in order to allow the endowment to grow.

From time to time, certain donor-restricted endowment funds may have fair values less than the amount required to be maintained by donors or by law (underwater endowments). We have interpreted UPMIFA to permit spending from underwater endowments in accordance with prudent measures required under law. At December 31, 2018, funds with original gift values of $3,386,166, fair values of $3,172,223, and deficiencies of $213,943 were reported in net assets with donor restrictions. These amounts were fully recovered as of the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

Changes in endowment net assets for the year ended December 31, 2018, are as follows:

	With Donor Restriction
Endowment net assets—January 1, 2018	$ -
Contributions	3,386,166
Investment return—net	(213,943)
Endowment net assets—December 31, 2018	$3,172,223

10. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation—Some members of DAV's Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for the DAV National Service Foundation (the "Foundation"). DAV also provides services to the Foundation, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of the Foundation. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the Foundation, which are held by the Foundation and available to DAV only through appropriation by the Foundation's Board of Directors. The Foundation is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2018, net assets of the Foundation were $128,402,713. During 2018, DAV personnel assisted the Foundation on a limited basis in administering its business operations and fundraising program. For these services, DAV charged the Foundation $98,817. DAV provides the Foundation with the use of facilities, equipment, and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2018, DAV contributed $62,450 to The Columbia Trust, a fund with donor restrictions established by the Foundation, to provide funds for the service programs of needy DAV state departments and local chapters.

In 2018, the Foundation appropriated $4,073,574 in support of DAV service program.

At December 31, 2018, the Foundation owed $97,915 to DAV, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust—Some members of DAV's Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Charitable Service Trust (the "Trust"). DAV also provides services to the Trust, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of the Trust. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the Trust, which are held by the Trust and available to DAV only through grants approved by the Trust's Board of Directors. The Trust is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2018, net assets of the Trust were $28,479,819. DAV personnel assist the Trust on a limited basis in administering its business operations, fundraising, and grant programs. For these personnel services, DAV charged the Trust $191,092. DAV provides the Trust with the use of facilities, equipment, and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2018, the Trust appropriated the following in support of DAV programs and services:

- $1,300,000 DAV Employment Initiative
- $ 309,100 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic
- $ 300,000 DAV "Just B Kids" Scholarship
- $ 250,542 Assistance to disabled veterans and their families
- $ 200,000 Transportation Network
- $ 50,000 Mobile Service Office Program
- $ 45,000 Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program
- $ 37,876 DAV 5k Program

At December 31, 2018, the Trust owed $227,504 to DAV, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary—DAV provides services to the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary (the "DAVA"), which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of DAVA. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of DAVA, which are held by DAVA. DAVA is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2018, net assets of DAVA were $6,802,026. DAVA occupies space in the DAV National Headquarters' building and also uses certain office equipment owned by DAV. No fees are charged for such usage. The value of these contributed facilities is estimated to be $8,204 in 2018.

Certain costs are paid by DAV on behalf of DAVA. In addition, DAV collects contributions on behalf of DAVA. At December 31, 2018, DAVA owed DAV the net of such costs, less contributions of $89,216, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

DAV also processes membership dues on behalf of DAVA. As of December 31, 2018, DAV owed approximately $8,035 for dues collected, which is recorded as an accounts payable from the DAV Life Membership.

Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation—Some members of DAV's Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation (the "DVLMF"). DAV also provides services to the DVLMF, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of the DVLMF. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the unaudited DVLMF. The DVLMF is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2018, net assets of the DVLMF were $47,898. During 2018, DAV personnel assisted the DVLMF on a limited basis in administering its business operations, as well as providing the use of facilities and equipment at no charge.

11. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2018, but before April 9, 2019, the date the financials were available to be issued, that require consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the financial statements.

* * * * * *

Committee on Credentials

Advisor: Douglas K. Wells Jr. and Michael Dobmeier

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Colon, Heriberto	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	41
	Zilka, Michael	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	56
2	Sander, George	Delegate	NEW YORK	15
	Lee, Tony	Alternate	NEW YORK	126
3	Garrett, Edward	Delegate	VERMONT	4
	McKinney, Darrell	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Applegate, Walter	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	24
	Rivard, Mark	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	53
5	Noel, Kevin	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	8
	Arnold, Philip	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
6	Dawson, Michael	Delegate	WEST VIRGINIA	56
	Russell, Rodrick	Alternate	D C	3
7	Johnson, Denise	Delegate	FLORIDA	32
	Young, Robert	Alternate	FLORIDA	1
8	Sensat, Davis	Delegate	LOUISIANA	17
	Perez, Anita	Alternate	ALABAMA	13
9	Jackson, Doris	Delegate	GEORGIA	92
	Causey, John	Alternate	GEORGIA	1
10	Tucker, Lolita	Delegate	MICHIGAN	114
	Shepherd, Frank	Alternate	MICHIGAN	7
11	Habern, Robert	Delegate	OHIO	54
	Liebhaber, Ralph	Alternate	OHIO	9
12	Weber, Thomas	Delegate	WISCONSIN	17
	Couture, Kenneth	Alternate	ILLINOIS	42
13	Bratcher, Thomas	Delegate	INDIANA	27
	Nelson, Norman	Alternate	INDIANA	36
14	Berglund, Keli	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	3
	Walsh, Timothy	Alternate	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
15	Hansen, Karin	Delegate	KANSAS	28
	Knabe, Daniel	Alternate	MISSOURI	1
16	McGriff, Kaitlyn	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	28
	Countryman, Raymond	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	123
17	Larsen, Penny	Delegate	UTAH	20
	Bilodeau, Joseph	Alternate	COLORADO	26
18	Crowe, Michael	Delegate	ARIZONA	8
	Jones, Arthur	Alternate	NEVADA	13
19	Marker, Brigitte	Delegate	OREGON	12
	Crary, Walter	Alternate	ALASKA	2
20	Reed, Donald	Delegate	TEXAS	78
	Jackson, William	Alternate	TEXAS	20
21	Nunez, Sonya	Delegate	ARKANSAS	7
	Acosta, Paulino	Alternate	ARKANSAS	7
99	Kaminsky, Paul	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

Committee on General Resolutions and Membership

Advisor: Shawn Hope and Steven Wolf

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Connor, Richard	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	11
	Rhilinger, Michael	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	56
2	Fredericks, Rachel	Delegate	NEW YORK	38
	Tears, Ronald	Alternate	NEW YORK	15
3	Patterson, Andrew	Delegate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	18
	Zibrida, Michael	Alternate	RHODE ISLAND	21
4	Werlich, Ronald	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	47
	Velez, Abraham	Alternate	DELAWARE	1
5	Yost, Jeremy	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
	Falk, Jonathan	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
6	Simmons, John	Delegate	VIRGINIA	22
	Couser, Lamarr	Alternate	MARYLAND	18
7	Yaitanes, George	Delegate	FLORIDA	123
	Rose, Laymond	Alternate	FLORIDA	16
8	Perez, Hugo	Delegate	ALABAMA	13
	Durand, Barney	Alternate	LOUISIANA	7
9	Wilson, Bennie	Delegate	GEORGIA	27
	Kemp, Emil	Alternate	GEORGIA	8
10	Gonzales, Beth	Delegate	MICHIGAN	102
	Zielke, Jason	Alternate	MICHIGAN	114
11	Plahovinsak, John	Delegate	OHIO	63
	Gidden, William	Alternate	OHIO	35
12	Bitner, Wesley	Delegate	ILLINOIS	33
	Palo, Gregory	Alternate	WISCONSIN	51
13	Kaminski, Robert	Delegate	KENTUCKY	8
	Nelson, Norman	Alternate	INDIANA	36
14	Saddoris, Robert	Delegate	MINNESOTA	38
	Jarvis, Richard	Alternate	MINNESOTA	12
15	Oliver, Jennifer	Delegate	IOWA	20
	Kimble, Ryan	Alternate	KANSAS	4
16	Martinez, Jo Ann	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	7
	Jackson, Eldra	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	6
17	Prescott, Gary	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	5
	Estes, Jerry	Alternate	UTAH	14
18	Torres, Rexana	Delegate	ARIZONA	14
	Ruvalcaba, Maria	Alternate	NEVADA	1
19	Royse, Sarah	Delegate	OREGON	5
	Hack, Saranna	Alternate	ALASKA	2
20	Foxx, Janie	Delegate	TEXAS	128
	Arroyo, Lennie	Alternate	TEXAS	5
21	Komprood, Harry	Delegate	ARKANSAS	27
	Brown, Vici	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	43
99	Lane, Richard	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights

Advisor: Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Egan, William	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	57
	Valila, Michael	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	4
2	Montes, Diane	Delegate	NEW YORK	120
	Cheney, Mark	Alternate	NEW YORK	120
3	Schatz, Richard	Delegate	RHODE ISLAND	12
	Mortellaro, Nicholas	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Maebry, Ronnie	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	2
	Lardizzone, Paul	Alternate	DELAWARE	1
5	Brooker, Michael	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	8
	Blow, Samuel	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Procunier, James	Delegate	VIRGINIA	10
	McClung, Ronnie	Alternate	WEST VIRGINIA	2
7	Zoller, Virginia	Delegate	FLORIDA	123
	Eglinger, Leslie	Alternate	FLORIDA	1
8	Wilburn, Ronald	Delegate	MISSISSIPPI	48
	Boulton, Jane	Alternate	TENNESSEE	28
9	Wilner, Brian	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	44
	Durant-McEady, Heather	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	4
10	Dempsey, James	Delegate	MICHIGAN	13
	Lewis, Anthony	Alternate	MICHIGAN	13
11	Parker, John	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Raver, Paul	Alternate	OHIO	52
12	Aaron, Mark	Delegate	ILLINOIS	1
	Labelle, Al	Alternate	WISCONSIN	57
13	Purcell, Ralph	Delegate	INDIANA	3
	Sparks, Michael	Alternate	KENTUCKY	12
14	Dilks, Trent	Delegate	MINNESOTA	12
	Haugen, Ronald	Alternate	MINNESOTA	10
15	Jakub, Jamie	Delegate	NEBRASKA	20
	Rogers, John	Alternate	IOWA	6
16	Wilson, Gerald	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	154
	Brown, Penni	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	91
17	Mitchell, Edward	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	5
	Norman, Derek	Alternate	UTAH	6
18	Di Girolamo, Robert	Delegate	ARIZONA	1
	Billy, Lorrie	Alternate	ARIZONA	26
19	Cousino, Thomas	Delegate	OREGON	1
	Lowe, David	Alternate	OREGON	1
20	Dunham, Greggory	Delegate	TEXAS	22
	Rhoads, Jon	Alternate	TEXAS	61
21	Leapheart, Joy	Delegate	ARKANSAS	27
	Schermer, Anna	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	44

Committee on Constitution and Bylaws

Advisor: Edward Hartman

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Olson, Debora	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	85
	Sullivan, Mason	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	30
2	Wohlrab, Thomas	Delegate	NEW YORK	144
	Sander, Shannon	Alternate	NEW YORK	15
3	Brunelle, Richard	Delegate	MAINE	19
	Welch, Jesse	Alternate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
4	Kopley, James	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	41
	Newell, Harry	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	47
5	Blow, Samuel	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
	Fiumara, Philip	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
6	Reynolds, Robert	Delegate	VIRGINIA	10
	Walker, William	Alternate	D C	3
7	Tyson, Wallace	Delegate	FLORIDA	11
	Godfrey, M	Alternate	FLORIDA	158
8	Miller, Vernon	Delegate	MISSISSIPPI	17
	Schmiderer, Calvin	Alternate	MISSISSIPPI	5
9	Robinson, William	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	1
	Long, Larry	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	4
10	Hughes, Albert	Delegate	MICHIGAN	1
	O'Connell, Damon	Alternate	MICHIGAN	102
11	Martyn, Nolan	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Robertson, Reynolds	Alternate	OHIO	63
12	Sontag, Thomas	Delegate	WISCONSIN	3
	Hiley, Michael	Alternate	ILLINOIS	16
13	Baker, Jerome	Delegate	INDIANA	3
	Ewing, Lee	Alternate	KENTUCKY	89
14	Berndt, Scott	Delegate	MINNESOTA	39
	Pederson, Bruce	Alternate	MINNESOTA	12
15	Jakub, Daniel	Delegate	NEBRASKA	20
	Thornburg, Audie	Alternate	IOWA	20
16	Barnes, Johnny	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	28
	Butler, Linda	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	28
17	Weber, Eugene	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	6
	Timmerman, Timothy	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	32
18	Donberger, Mark	Delegate	NEVADA	7
	Cooper, Lori	Alternate	ARIZONA	20
19	Gunno, Stanley	Delegate	WASHINGTON	2
	Kotanchick, Gregory	Alternate	WASHINGTON	23
20	Adams Jr, Russell	Delegate	TEXAS	233
	Almaraz, Amanda	Alternate	TEXAS	5
21	Pandos, Ronald	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	9
	Plunk, Bobby	Alternate	ARKANSAS	7

Committee on Employment

Advisor: Jeffrey Hall and Jeremy Villanueva

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Patterson, William	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	45
	Fitzgerald, David	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	90
2	Rivera, Israel	Delegate	NEW YORK	118
	Porter, Monique	Alternate	NEW YORK	108
3	Boisvert, Ernest	Delegate	RHODE ISLAND	12
	Cvelbar, William	Alternate	VERMONT	3
4	Walker, Michael	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	24
	Long, Leonard	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	42
5	Thomas, Raymond	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	8
	Brooker, Michael	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	8
6	Arce, Ruben	Delegate	PUERTO RICO	16
	Whitfield, Mattie	Alternate	MARYLAND	33
7	Ayala, Thomas	Delegate	FLORIDA	1
	Perez, Liza	Alternate	FLORIDA	13
8	Harman, Michael	Delegate	TENNESSEE	39
	Walker, Deborah	Alternate	ALABAMA	7
9	Alston, James	Delegate	NORTH CAROLINA	21
	McNeil, Walter	Alternate	NORTH CAROLINA	63
10	Barenbrugge, Ricky	Delegate	MICHIGAN	19
	Tucker, Lolita	Alternate	MICHIGAN	114
11	Bailey, James	Delegate	OHIO	117
	Kaster, James	Alternate	OHIO	116
12	Drossart, Lisa	Delegate	WISCONSIN	17
	Corsello, Carter	Alternate	ILLINOIS	86
13	Smith, Richard	Delegate	KENTUCKY	89
	Vaccari, Richard	Alternate	KENTUCKY	89
14	Hall, Joseph	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	3
	Natalie, Chase	Alternate	MONTANA	3
15	Boykins, Ronald	Delegate	KANSAS	4
	Hicks, Kenneth	Alternate	MISSOURI	2
16	Dykens, Richard	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	19
17	Schow, Terry	Delegate	UTAH	4
	McGinnis, Carmen	Alternate	COLORADO	7
18	Hohman, Glenn	Delegate	ARIZONA	14
	Cooper, Kevin	Alternate	ARIZONA	20
19	Niemi, Amber	Delegate	OREGON	1
	Paige, Matthew	Alternate	OREGON	1
20	Adams, Audrey	Delegate	TEXAS	233
	Keith, Elizabeth	Alternate	TEXAS	17
21	Schermer, Phillip	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	44
	Halpain, William	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	31

Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services

Advisor: Adrian Atizado and John Kleindienst

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Kinsman, Robert	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	47
	Bennett, Helen	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	35
2	Ingram, Thomas	Delegate	NEW YORK	28
	Szewczyk, Alex	Alternate	NEW YORK	120
3	Fox, Keith	Delegate	MAINE	6
	Hanson, Virginia	Alternate	RHODE ISLAND	15
4	Walsh, Elizabeth	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	15
	Licausi, Grace	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	15
5	Homme, Franklin	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	7
	Butler, Jesse	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Miller, Nachee	Delegate	D C	3
	Cruz, Jorge	Alternate	PUERTO RICO	4
7	Keckler, Mary Ann	Delegate	FLORIDA	67
	Markiewicz, John	Alternate	FLORIDA	1
8	Johnston, Rebecca	Delegate	TENNESSEE	22
	Mercer, John	Alternate	LOUISIANA	2
9	Cherry, Levon	Delegate	NORTH CAROLINA	55
	Stack, Willie	Alternate	NORTH CAROLINA	37
10	Beckman, Dawn	Delegate	MICHIGAN	11
	Dempsey, James	Alternate	MICHIGAN	13
11	Hutchinson, Raymond	Delegate	OHIO	63
	Mitchell, Arlinda	Alternate	OHIO	35
12	Hilliard, Robert	Delegate	WISCONSIN 27	
	Alexander, Tim	Alternate	ILLINOIS	90
13	Johnson, Penny	Delegate	INDIANA	52
	Greer, DeAndre	Alternate	INDIANA	3
14	Francis, Daniel	Delegate	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
	Walker, John	Alternate	MINNESOTA	2
15	Kieffer, John	Delegate	IOWA	6
	Jaso, George	Alternate	KANSAS	4
16	Maddox, Clyde	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	28
	Arnold, Gerald	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	11
17	Perez, George	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	3
	Mitchell, Elaine	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	5
18	Cook, Charles	Delegate	ARIZONA	8
	Richardson, Joe	Alternate	NEVADA	12
19	Janus, Wanda	Delegate	OREGON	1
	Mitchell, Wayne	Alternate	IDAHO	22
20	Montgomery, Lillie	Delegate	TEXAS	128
	Bigley, Terrance	Alternate	TEXAS	20
21	Dunning, William	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	32
	White, Fred	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	7

Committee on Nomination of National Officers

Advisor: Albert Church and Joseph Johnston

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Stack, Daniel	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
	Nee, Coleman	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
2	Sioss, Donald	Delegate	NEW YORK	76
	Pennell, Joseph	Alternate	NEW YORK	158
3	Guldner, Robert	Delegate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
	Wilkinson, Andrew	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Pescatore, Richard	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	5
	Walker, Johnnie	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	44
5	Kauffman, Joseph	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	113
	Hassinger, Jason	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Parker, Glynn	Delegate	MARYLAND	4
	DeBerry, Paul	Alternate	WEST VIRGINIA	32
7	Joyner, Dennis	Delegate	FLORIDA	16
	Wolfe, Kenneth	Alternate	FLORIDA	101
8	Wenthe, Kevin	Delegate	LOUISIANA	20
	Belew, Kenneth	Alternate	TENNESSEE	56
9	Lynch, Tincie	Delegate	GEORGIA	91
	Bledsoe, Robert	Alternate	GEORGIA	18
10	Lee, Rolly	Delegate	MICHIGAN	129
	Cutler, Jo Linda	Alternate	MICHIGAN	20
11	Hanneman, Dennis	Delegate	OHIO	77
	Uetterling, David	Alternate	OHIO	36
12	Reynolds, Alfred	Delegate	ILLINOIS	17
	Kempainen, Matthew	Alternate	WISCONSIN	3
13	Fivecoate, Gerald	Delegate	INDIANA	28
	Carnagey, Robert	Alternate	INDIANA	17
14	Murphy, Eugene	Delegate	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
	Litzinger, Joseph	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	2
15	Tatham, Kimberly	Delegate	MISSOURI	51
	Jakub, James	Alternate	NEBRASKA	20
16	Powers, Frederick	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	20
	Vogel, Ronald	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	20
17	Gonzales, Benito	Delegate	COLORADO	7
	Dingler, Tillery	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	33
18	Cox, Ronald	Delegate	ARIZONA	26
	Propst, Gerald	Alternate	NEVADA	12
19	Gavin, JoAnn	Delegate	WASHINGTON	5
	Bele, Jeffrey	Alternate	WASHINGTON	9
20	Paquette, Roland	Delegate	TEXAS	20
	Spence, Percy	Alternate	TEXAS	17
21	Halford-Pandos, Jerletta	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	9
	Labs, Michael	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	32
99	Lester, Ronnie	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1
	Harris, Herschel	Alternate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

National Executive Committee

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Bennett, Helen	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	35
	Follis, James	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	85
2	Robinson, Keith	Delegate	NEW YORK	15
	Ingram, Thomas	Alternate	NEW YORK	28
3	Boisvert, Ernest	Delegate	RHODE ISLAND	12
	Guldner, Robert	Alternate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
4	Flynn, Benjamin	Delegate	DELAWARE	1
	Clynch, James	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	12
5	Iacavazzi, Michael	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	1
	Arnold, Philip	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
6	Cox, Robert	Delegate	VIRGINIA	60
	Dawson, Michael	Alternate	WEST VIRGINIA	18
7	Johnson, Jack	Delegate	FLORIDA	150
	Chicollo, Frank	Alternate	FLORIDA	4
8	Bratton, Jerry	Delegate	MISSISSIPPI	48
	Davis, Carroll	Alternate	MISSISSIPPI	11
9	Walls, Thomas	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	4
	Bradley, Derwin	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	20
10	Dempsey, James	Delegate	MICHIGAN	13
	Hughes, Albert	Alternate	MICHIGAN	1
11	Davis, Will	Delegate	OHIO	144
	Stith, Michael	Alternate	OHIO	35
12	Walkowski, Kevin	Delegate	WISCONSIN	34
	Helgeson, Rodney	Alternate	WISCONSIN	27
13	Sanders, Terry	Delegate	INDIANA	2
	Fivecoate, Gerald	Alternate	INDIANA	28
14	Tobin, Warren	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	31
	Hall, Joseph	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	3
15	Thornburg, David	Delegate	IOWA	20
	Hansen, Karin	Alternate	KANSAS	28
16	Johnson, Kirk	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	85
	Valdez, Richard	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	12
17	Talley, Timothy	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	6
	Watson, Floyd	Alternate	WYOMING	2
18	Crawford, Julian	Delegate	HAWAII	1
	Hohman, Glenn	Alternate	ARIZONA	14
19	Hack, Saranna	Delegate	ALASKA	2
	Crary, Walter	Alternate	ALASKA	2
20	Parker, Thomas	Delegate	TEXAS	3
	Edwards, Charles	Alternate	TEXAS	128
21	Donovan, John	Delegate	ARKANSAS	10
	Oliver, Danny	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	88

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION

August 6, 2019

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The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 98th National Convention convened in the Gatlin Ballroom B/C on the First Level of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Tuesday morning, August 6, 2019, and was called to order at 8:30 a.m., by National Commander Dennis R. Nixon.

COMMANDER DENNIS R. NIXON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER NIXON: You know, I've been up here—this is my third day. And every morning when I come in, Kimberly back there in the back tries to get me to put makeup on. You don't want to mess with this face. (Laughter) But what I'm telling them is this is my last time to shine. (Laughter and applause)

A quick announcement: Somebody misplaced-lost their phone back here somewhere. If you've lost your phone you can pick it up over here from Dawn next to the stairs—stadium.

Okay, the convention will come to order. As a reminder, I would like to ask everyone to please silence your cell phones or portable devices. Now, if you would, (Three raps of the gavel) join me in the Pledge of the Allegiance to our flag. Hand salute.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER NIXON: And I will call on Chaplain Dover to lead us in prayer.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL P. DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Well, good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we come into your presence this day with thankful hearts. We give thanks to you for the bounty of your blessings, for the love of families, friends and comrades. We ask for your strength and guidance throughout this day that we may do your best to serve you and represent our organization as humanly possible.

Grant your blessings upon this meeting, each participant and the work that they represent. Amen.

(Response of "Amen"; whereupon, the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, sir. (One rap of the gavel) I remind each of you that in order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention you must be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. Upon being so recognized, please state your name, your chapter number and the state you represent.

Now we will call on the Bridgette Marker, Credentials Committee chairman, to give her report.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BRIDGETTE MARKER: Good morning, Commander.

COMMANDER NIXON: Good morning, Bridgette.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARKER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARKER: Comrade Commander and delegates, the Credentials Committee met this morning in Saint John Room 28 at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel in Orlando, Florida. This is a partial report for informational purposes only and reflects the registration as of 7 a.m. on August 6, 2019.

There are 1,160 delegates, 74 alternates registered representing 46 departments and 390 chapters. There are 5 national line officers, 21 National Executive Committee members, 3 past national commanders registered for a total of 29 national officers. The total vote count is 8,300.

This partial report reflects registration this morning. This completes the partial report of the Credential Committee, Commander.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. And as a reminder, the registration desk will close at 10 o'clock this morning.

And now we will call upon Rob Reynolds, chairman of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws Committee, for his final report.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERT REYNOLDS:

Comrade Commander and delegates, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: I will now proceed with the second reading of the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws which are recommended for adoption. In the interest of time, again, I will read only the number and purpose of the resolutions.

Resolution Number 233, it is proposed that Article IX, Section 9.3, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to increase the minimum amount of income generated by a chapter in order to file a copy of their Annual Financial Report to the National Organization from $10,000 to $25,000.

Resolution Number 348, it is proposed that Article III, Section 3.5, Paragraph 3 of the Bylaws be amended to make a copy of the National Convention proceedings available on DAV's website as soon as practical following the convening of the National Convention.

Resolution Number 349, it is proposed that Article XI, Section 11.9, Paragraph 2 of the Bylaws be amended to require a flat rate of $300 for life membership in DAV for all ages, with the exception of those over 80 whose membership would still be offered for free.

Comrade Commander, on behalf of the Committee I move that the Committee recommendations be accepted, that the resolutions be adopted and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MR. LEE EWING: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. EWING: Lee Ewing—Lee Ewing, Chapter 89, Louisville, Kentucky, seconds that.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: Thank you, Commander.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Rob.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Next, we will call upon Chairman Terry Schow for the report of the Committee on Employment.

(Whereupon, the Employment Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Good morning, sir.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TERRY SCHOW: My liege. Thank you. Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SCHOW: And to the mighty District 17, good morning, as well.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SCHOW: Thank you. I see there are three of you over there. (Laughter) The National Convention Committee on Employment was called to order on August 3, 2019, by the able Committee advisors, Jeremy Villanueva and Jeff Hall.

The first order of business, the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Terry Schow was elected as chairman and Glenn Hohman was selected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted, and I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purposes of saving time I will read only the number and purpose of the resolutions.

Number 6, support licensure and certification of active-duty service personnel; Number 22, provide educational benefits for dependents of service-connected veterans rated 80% or more disabled; Number 97, support veteran preference in public employment;

Number 98, eliminate the delimiting date for eligible spouses and surviving spouses for the benefits provided under Chapter 35 of Title 38 of the United States Code; Number 100, monitor activities of the mandatory transition GPS program—that's the new TAPS program;

Number 101, support outreach and employment of women veterans; Number 102, eliminate the 12-year rule to request VA vocational rehabilitation benefits under Chapter 31, leaving the date to apply for that benefit open-ended;

Number 140, support extension of period of employment services under vocational rehabilitation and employment services; Number 202, support the adoption of programs and legislation to reduce barriers to employment, education, and full use and access to other benefits earned through the service in the military;

Number 207, require the U.S. Congress to create and fund, without corresponding reduction of funding to VA or DOD, a jobs program, similar to the Works Progress Administration that was back in the '30s, which guarantees federal employment to persons being discharged from military service under "other than dishonorable" conditions;

Number 273, support meaningful accountability measures but with due process for employees of the VA; Number 282, support legislation to extend the duration of vocational rehabilitation benefits beyond 48 months; Number 313, provide adequate funding and permanency for veterans employment and/or training programs;

Support prompt payment of contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned businesses; Number 331, remove requirement that VA compensation to service-connected veterans is counted as income for purposes of federal financial aid determinations;

Number 388, increase staffing levels at the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service; Number 389, support legislation to provide a reasonable transition period for service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses to retain federal protective status following the death of the disabled veteran business owner;

Number 390, create an economic opportunity administration within the Department of Veterans Affairs; Number 391, support fraud prevention controls over service veteran-owned small business programs; Number 392, support verification improvements for veteran-owned businesses within the VA,

Number 393, support legislation enhancing government-wide goals for participation by small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans; Number 394, oppose using DVOP/LVER to work with or process public assistance programs unrelated to veterans;

Number 395, eliminate annual employment verification questionnaire by veterans in receipt of individual unemployability benefits; Number 396, protect veterans from employment discrimination when receiving health care for service-connected issues or conditions;

397, support legislation to strengthen and protect service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses; Number 398, support legislation to improve and protect educational and employment benefits to service-disabled veterans and their survivors.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Employment. On behalf of the Committee, I move the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 006
SUPPORT LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION OF ACTIVE-DUTY SERVICE PERSONNEL

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DOD) establishes, measures and evaluates performance standards for every occupation within the armed forces, providing some of the best vocational training in the nation to its military personnel; and

WHEREAS, that training is not recognized as fulfilling the certification and licensure requirements of applicable civilian equivalent occupations by all of the states; and

WHEREAS, many former military personnel certified as proficient in their military occupational specialty are not certified or licensed to perform a comparable job in the civilian workforce once they leave the military; and

WHEREAS, many occupational career fields in the armed forces could translate to civilian occupations if DOD, in collaboration with states, unions and certifying/licensing entities, would expand its training curriculum to meet the various certification and licensure requirements of applicable civilian equivalent occupations, or forge some other path to do so; and

WHEREAS, once DOD expands its training approaches to meet the requirements of civilian equivalent career paths, service members could take certification or licensure equivalency examinations to gain journeyman status on par with the military occupation level of proficiency for the state in which they plan to reside; and

WHEREAS, the state in which the military service member plans to reside could then confer the appropriate journeyman equivalent status; and

WHEREAS, as military service members continue to serve, additional training or education could be counted as continuing training or education credits, thereby allowing them to retain certification and/or licensure status; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 112-56, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, mandates the Department of Labor's (DOL's) Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training to carry out a demonstration project on credentialing to facilitate the seamless transition of members of the armed forces to civilian employment by selecting up to five military occupational specialties with a skill or set of skills that are required for civilian employment in industries with high career demand; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the elimination of employment barriers that impede the transfer of military occupations to the civilian labor market; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to engage in a national dialogue, working closely with the Administration generally, and DOD, Department of Veterans Affairs and DOL specifically, as well as state governments, employers, trade unions, and licensure and credentialing entities, to establish a clear process so that military training meets civilian certification and licensure requirements for the states in which veterans choose to live once they leave military service.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 022
PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS OF SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS RATED 80% OR MORE DISABLED

WHEREAS, chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, extends educational assistance to the dependents of service-connected veterans who are evaluated as permanently and totally disabled; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected veterans are rated 80% and 90% disabled, whose dependents cannot afford to attend an institution of higher learning or pursue a vocational endeavor because of the reduced earning ability of such veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend educational assistance under chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, to the dependents of veterans who have service-connected disability ratings of 80% or more.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 097
SUPPORT VETERANS' PREFERENCE IN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

WHEREAS, DAV strongly supports federal, state and local veterans' preference laws; and

WHEREAS, under section 2108, title 5, United States Code, qualified veterans with military service in periods of conflict receive a 5-point preference in federal hiring, and service-disabled veterans receive a 10-point preference; and

WHEREAS, numerous special hiring authorities exist in federal law for veterans and service-disabled veterans, including the veterans recruitment appointment authority, Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 hiring authority and the 30% or more disabled veterans hiring authority; and

WHEREAS, the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended, requires most federal contractors to have an "Affirmative Action" plan for employment of service-disabled veterans, veterans who served during periods of conflict and recently separated veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act was enacted to protect veterans from job discrimination and ensure their right to reemployment after an absence due to service in the uniformed services, to include protection for seniority, health insurance and retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, federal agencies generally have not taken a proactive position on identifying patterns and practices of veterans' preference employment discrimination violations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports veterans' preference in federal, state and local employment, greater enforcement provisions and increased accountability for veterans hiring compliance; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports appropriate enforcement against systemic veterans' preference discrimination, broader utilization of veterans and service-disabled veterans hiring

preference, and substantive improvement of recruitment and hiring of veterans generally and service-disabled veterans specifically.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 098
ELIMINATE THE DELIMITING DATE FOR ELIGIBLE SPOUSES AND SURVIVING SPOUSES FOR BENEFITS PROVIDED UNDER CHAPTER 35, TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

WHEREAS, dependents and survivors eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits under chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, have 10 years in which to apply for and complete programs of education; and

WHEREAS, this 10-year period begins either from the date a veteran is evaluated by the VA as permanently and totally disabled from service-connected disabilities or 10 years from the date of such veteran's death due to service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, in many instances, because of family obligations or the need to provide care to the veteran, spouses and surviving spouses may not have had an opportunity to apply for these benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks the enactment of legislation to eliminate the delimiting date for spouses and surviving spouses for purposes of benefits provided under chapter 35, title 38, United States Code.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 100
MONITOR ACTIVITIES OF THE MANDATORY TRANSITION GOALS, PLANS, SUCCESS PROGRAM

WHEREAS, current law authorizes comprehensive transition assistance benefits and services for separating service members and their spouses, and requires that the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP), now known as the Transition Goals, Plans, Success (GPS) program, be established and maintained; and

WHEREAS, the transition from military service to civilian life is very difficult for many veterans who must overcome obstacles to successful employment; and

WHEREAS, the transition program was created to help our separating service members successfully transition to the civilian workforce, start a business, or pursue training or higher education, and is now mandatory for active-duty personnel except under certain circumstances as specified in Public Law 112–56, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act; and

WHEREAS, participation by DAV and other veterans service organizations in the Transition GPS program is essential to service members to gain a full understanding of entitlements and free assistance and representation available upon discharge from military service; and

WHEREAS, the Transition GPS program expands the previous TAP and DTAP workshops from five to seven days (or longer in some instances) to strengthen, standardize and expand counseling and guidance for service members as they are separating from military service while transforming the military's approach to education, training and credentialing for service members; and

WHEREAS, the Transition GPS program, and its component TAP and DTAP workshops, are essential to easing some of the problems associated with transition, as is periodic review of training methodology and the collection and analysis of course participant critiques to ensure the program is fulfilling its intended objective, as mandated in Public Law 112–56; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to monitor the review of Transition GPS program, its workshops, training methodology and delivery of services, and the collection and analysis of course critiques; and to ensure the inclusion of DAV and other veterans service organizations in workshops, in order to confirm the program is meeting its objective, and to follow up with participants to determine if they found gainful employment following such training.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 101
SUPPORT OUTREACH AND EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, many women who have served in the military are not aware of services available to them through State Employment Security Agencies/State Workforce Agencies and therefore are less likely to obtain employment and training assistance than their male counterparts; and

WHEREAS, over the past decade a significant increase has occurred in the number of women veterans in need of employment and training services; and

WHEREAS, because of the reduction in federal programs and the reduction of jobs for women in the private sector, the number of unemployed women veterans continues to increase; and

WHEREAS, workforce trends indicate only job-ready and highly skilled women veterans are able to find career employment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to enact legislation to establish and fund special programs and outreach to women veterans, especially service-disabled women veterans, in need of employment assistance from the nation's basic labor exchange system and training assistance through programs operated under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls for additional training to be provided to service providers to address the delivery of services to, and the under-representation of, women veterans in career employment.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 102
ELIMINATE THE 12-YEAR RULE TO REQUEST DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION BENEFITS UNDER CHAPTER 31, LEAVING THE DATE TO APPLY FOR THAT BENEFIT OPEN-ENDED

WHEREAS, not all disabled veterans are aware of their possible entitlements to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation programs at the time they are awarded service connection for disabilities; and

WHEREAS, not all awards of service connection are rated high enough to enable veterans to be awarded chapter 31 benefits; and

WHEREAS, not all disabled veterans are under the impression that they need vocational rehabilitation until later, often after the current 12-year rule excludes them from the benefit they need and would otherwise have been entitled to; and

WHEREAS, the VA puts no time limit on when a veteran may claim his or her disability, and the VA also does not put a time limit on requesting another service-connected benefit; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks legislation to eliminate the 12-year limitation to apply for VA vocational rehabilitation, leaving a veteran's date of entitlement open ended without time limit.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 140
SUPPORT EXTENSION OF A PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

WHEREAS, section 3105, title 38, United States Code (USC), states the period of a vocational rehabilitation program for a veteran may not exceed 48 months; and

WHEREAS, 38 USC §3105 allows veterans counseling and placement and post-placement services for an additional period not to exceed 18 months in any case in which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines the provision of such counseling and services to be necessary to accomplish the purposes of a rehabilitation program in the individual case; and

WHEREAS, veterans with service-connected disabilities have substantial industrial impairments and face employment barriers even after rehabilitation or achievement of vocational goals; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks to ensure that service-connected veterans receive the services necessary to obtain and maintain suitable employment, supporting an extension up to 24 months for counseling and placement and post-placement services.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 202
SUPPORT THE ADOPTION OF PROGRAMS AND LEGISLATION TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND FULL USE AND ACCESS TO OTHER BENEFITS EARNED THROUGH SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

WHEREAS, DAV is dedicated to empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity; and

WHEREAS, a primary focus for DAV is to provide free, professional assistance to service-disabled veterans and their families in obtaining benefits an services earned through military service; and

WHEREAS, furthering their education and seeking gainful employment to support themselves and their families becomes a veteran's immediate and continued focus upon leaving service; and

WHEREAS, upon separation from service, veterans do not always fully understand the scope and breadth of their earned benefits or how to access those benefits, and often do not understand or realize the barriers that impede or infringe on those benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the adoption of programs and legislation to identify, reduce and remove barriers to a service-disabled veteran's employment, continued education, and full access and use of other benefits earned as a result of their service-connected disability.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 207
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CREATE A WORK PROJECTS PROGRAM THAT GUARANTEES FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT TO SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the federal government set a precedent with the creation of the Works Progress Administration, later renamed the Work Projects Administration (WPA), to complete major public works projects before World War II; and

WHEREAS, the WPA was highly successful in completing major public works projects; and

WHEREAS, general government infrastructure nationwide lacks sufficient funding to maintain the adequate safety of public roads, bridges, water supplies and the like; and

WHEREAS, the nation's veterans have proved themselves as dedicated, highly trained and capable workers that bring leadership and maturity to the workforce; and

WHEREAS, such a program has the potential to significantly reduce veteran homelessness caused by high unemployment rates and demonstrate the gratitude of the people served by our veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, strongly supports legislation to require the United States Congress to create and fund, without reduction to Department of Veterans Affairs or Department of Defense funding, a jobs program similar to the WPA, which guarantees federal employment to service-disabled veterans being discharged from military service under other than dishonorable conditions.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 273
SUPPORT MEANINGFUL ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES, BUT WITH DUE PROCESS, FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, in order to assure that veterans receive the benefits and services they have earned, every Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employee, manager and leader must faithfully fulfill their duties and responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, when VA employees fail veterans due to poor performance or misconduct, these individuals must be held accountable for such failures; and

WHEREAS, accountability constitutes a range of actions, including remedial training, demotion, suspension and, when justified, termination; and

WHEREAS, the VA's long-term future must foster an environment in which the best and brightest individuals choose VA employment over other federal or private employers; and

WHEREAS, poor performance and misconduct cannot be tolerated, but all VA employees must be confident that fairness and due process govern selection, promotion, demotion, sanction or termination; and

WHEREAS, without such assurances of fairness and due process in the workplace, talented individuals may not entertain working in or remaining at the VA; and

WHEREAS, pending legislative proposals before Congress would heighten accountability; however, any bill enacted by Congress should include standards by which accountability can be measured while ensuring due process and fairness for VA employees subject to such standards; and

WHEREAS, civil service protections enacted decades ago came about as a consequence of cronyism, politicization and ill treatment of civil servants, including terminations for almost any reason or no reason; and

WHEREAS, ensuring that the civil service remains free of political influence is a principle that must be protected to guarantee that VA employees are either appointed, demoted or terminated for political or personal reasons; and

WHEREAS, sanctions against VA employees based on performance must be made only if measurable performance standards have been clearly communicated but still violated; and

WHEREAS, VA managers must be empowered to use existing policies in a timely manner to sanction employees who fail to meet their documented performance standards; and

WHEREAS, applying sanctions exclusively to VA employees in the wake of a scandal is in contravention of civil service rules that regulate the entire federal workforce; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, insists any legislation changing the existing employment protections in the VA must strike a balance between holding civil servants accountable for their performance, while maintaining VA as an employer of choice for the best and brightest.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 282

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND THE DURATION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION BENEFITS BEYOND 48 MONTHS

WHEREAS, veterans that have a disability rating with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and are considered to have an employment handicap are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services through the VA; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans are eligible for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program for a duration not to exceed 48 months (or its equivalent when pursued on a part-time basis); and

WHEREAS, many veterans do not have any college prior to entering the Vocational Rehabilitation Program and require basic entry level courses to start college; and

WHEREAS, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment released their Longitudinal Study Annual Report for fiscal year 2016, in which it states that the average college degree takes up to five years to complete; and

WHEREAS, it would be more equitable if the laws and regulations were changed so that veterans were eligible for vocational rehabilitation benefits beyond 48 months, extending them to a minimum of 60 months, to ensure that they can complete their program without additional financial burden; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation that would allow vocational rehabilitation benefits to be extended, to a minimum of 60 months, for eligible veterans, to ensure that they can complete their program without additional financial burden.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 313

PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING AND PERMANENCY FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND/OR TRAINING PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the extended economic downturn has had a greater impact on veterans generally and service-disabled veterans specifically than many other groups; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous veterans employment and training programs reaching out to provide critical assistance but are in need of adequate staffing and funding; and

WHEREAS, these programs include the Veterans' Employment and Training Service of the Department of Labor, National Veterans Training Institute of the Small Business Administration, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Local Veterans Employment Representative program, homeless assistance programs and others; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks and supports adequate funding and permanency for all veterans employment and training programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 314
SUPPORT PROMPT PAYMENT OF CONTRACTS TO SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES

WHEREAS, the program of contracts for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) on a preferential basis should be of a great assistance to SDVOSBs that hire disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, we are aware of problems involving the nonpayment of contracts; and

WHEREAS, when these SDVOSBs complain about reduced payments, the threat of rejection from future contracts and/or the threat of being put out of business; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks and strongly supports the immediate payment of all completed SDVOSB contracts that are unpaid for more than one year, the expeditious payment of all unpaid completed SDVOSB contracts and an investigation of the inappropriate tactics used against our comrades by an independent prosecutor.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 331
REMOVE REQUIREMENT THAT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMPENSATION TO SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS IS COUNTED AS INCOME FOR PURPOSES OF FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID DETERMINATIONS

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) monthly disability compensation is a tax-free benefit awarded to ill and injured veterans and is not considered income under the Internal Revenue Code; and

WHEREAS, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid requires dependents of service-connected disabled veterans in receipt of VA disability compensation to disclose their parents' compensation as income under penalty of perjury; and

WHEREAS, this requirement is contrary to the intent of the VA disability compensation award and contrary to tax law; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to counter this arbitrary and capricious victimization of ill and injured veterans and their dependents, which can render the dependent child of a service-disabled veteran ineligible for federal student aid; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this requirement is unjust to service-disabled veterans and their dependents.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 388
SUPPORT ADEQUATE STAFFING LEVELS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service is charged with preparing service-disabled veterans for suitable employment or providing independent-living services to those veterans with disabilities severe enough to render them unemployable; and

WHEREAS, transition of service-disabled veterans to meaningful employment relies heavily on the VA's ability to provide vocational rehabilitation and employment services in a timely and effective manner, but the demands and expectations being placed on the VR&E Service are exceeding the organization's current capacity to effectively deliver a full continuum of comprehensive programs; and

WHEREAS, the VR&E Service has been experiencing a shortage of staff nationwide because of insufficient funding, which, as a result, has caused delays in providing VR&E services to service-disabled veterans, thus reducing their opportunities to achieve successful and timely rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, to increase emphasis on employment, the VR&E Service has begun an initiative entitled "Coming Home to Work," an early outreach effort to provide VR&E services to eligible

service members pending medical separation from active duty at military treatment facilities, which will require additional staff to maintain efforts nationwide; and

WHEREAS, even though the focus of the VR&E Service has drastically changed to career development and employment, it is not clear, despite VR&E's additional 80 employment coordinators, whether the VA is able to meet the current and future demand for employment services; and

WHEREAS, in addition, the current 60 days of employment as the standard for a veteran to be considered fully employed is insufficient given that employers typically require longer probationary employment time frames; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports strengthening of VA VR&E Service to meet the demands of service-disabled veterans by providing increased staffing and funding, a more timely and effective transition into the workforce, and placement follow-up with employers for at least six months.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 389
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE A REASONABLE TRANSITION PERIOD FOR SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES TO RETAIN FEDERAL PROTECTED STATUS FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF THE DISABLED VETERAN OWNER

WHEREAS, section 308, Public Law 108–183, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003, established a procurement program for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB); and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 13360, Contracting with Service-Disabled Veterans' Businesses, directs all federal agencies to provide opportunities for SDVOSBs to increase their federal contracting and subcontracting opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 109–461, the Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006, established a Veterans First Contracting Program specifically for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to increase business opportunities with the VA for SDVOSBs; and

WHEREAS, SDVOSBs and other small businesses are the focus of Public Law 111–240, the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, which provides enhanced opportunities for SDVOSBs to compete for federal projects and subcontracting opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the SDVOSB category has encouraged many service-disabled veterans to take the personal risk of establishing small businesses with the support of their families, their own personal financial resources, the VA and, in some cases, commercial institutions; and

WHEREAS, these SDVOSBs have created new job opportunities for American citizens and, in many cases, have hired other service-disabled veterans and veterans during very challenging economic times; and

WHEREAS, in enacting Public Law 111–240, the federal government acknowledges that it is essential to create and grow small businesses in order to create new jobs and help the country recover from a most severe recession and provide for future job growth; and

WHEREAS, the SDVOSB category requires the service-disabled veteran to own at least 51% of the stock in the business and remain active in the day-to-day operations of the business in order for the business to maintain its SDVOSB status; and

WHEREAS, the enabling legislation for the SDVOSB program does not currently include a provision dealing with the treatment of the business after the death of the veteran owner; and

WHEREAS, since loss of the company's SDVOSB status would put the service-disabled veteran's investment, family heirs and employees at severe risk due to either downsizing or closing the business due to loss of federal procurement opportunities; and

WHEREAS, section 8127 (h)(2)(C), Public Law 109–461, (applicable only to the VA) allows for a 10-year transition period to the surviving spouse of a 100% service-disabled veteran owner of a SDVOSB or a veteran owner who dies as a result of a service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, allowing the surviving spouses or heirs of service-disabled veterans to gain a reasonable transition period for the SDVOSB program would help to maintain the jobs created by the SDVOSB for service-disabled veterans, veterans and other employees, and will not put these individuals at increased financial risk and hardship due to likely job loss or downsizing of the business; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a reasonable transition period for all SDVOSBs, not covered by Public Law 109–461, to retain their SDVOSB status with the federal government following the death of the service-disabled veteran owner via a surviving spouse, children or

heirs, and thus allowing the business to restructure over time without necessarily downsizing, laying off workers or closing.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 390
CREATE AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ADMINISTRATION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, veterans programs have become more complex over the years, the fragmented nature of these programs has resulted in a decreased ability of senior management to monitor the delivery of each veterans employment, education and training program; and

WHEREAS, when the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was created, the initial reason for doing so was to avoid duplication, fragmentation or delay in the various services provided to veterans; and

WHEREAS, anticipating veterans' long-term needs, not only for health care and disability compensation but also for education and employment, requires a new approach; and

WHEREAS, establishing a fourth administration within the VA dedicated to creating economic opportunities for veterans would increase the visibility and accountability of all veterans education and employment-related programs; and

WHEREAS, despite a steadily increasing workload due to more veterans becoming eligible as the compensation backlog is reduced, programs such as Vocational Rehabilitation have seen a stagnation of budget requests and even reductions; and

WHEREAS, this new centralized veterans economic opportunity administration should be administered through a new position of Under Secretary for said organization; and

WHEREAS, such a move would allow the Under Secretary for Benefits to focus specifically on the delivery of disability compensation and pension benefits to disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, recommends that Congress separate from the Veterans Benefits Administration all programs related to economic opportunity and create a new administration and that it should be appropriately funded and administered by an Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 391
SUPPORT FRAUD PREVENTION CONTROLS OVER SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) Program, designed to steer $4 billion in government contracts to businesses owned by service-disabled veterans, has allowed over $90 million to be fraudulently awarded to ineligible companies; and

WHEREAS, the Small Business Administration failed to properly check applicants before awarding contracts and failed to take action on service-disabled veterans' complaints of abuse; and

WHEREAS, testimony presented by the United States Government Accountability Office identified millions of dollars of SDVOSB contracts awarded to ineligible firms; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks and strongly supports the investigation, prevention and monitoring controls and to ensure that fraud is aggressively prosecuted or companies having committed fraud are suspended, debarred or otherwise held accountable.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 392
SUPPORT VERIFICATION IMPROVEMENTS FOR VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the military is downsizing, and thousands of former military personnel who have honorably served their country could become unemployed when they leave the military; and

WHEREAS, small business development assistance to veterans who have honorably served this country is a veterans benefit that dates back to the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized under the Veterans First program to enter into contracts first with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) and then with Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB); and

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

WHEREAS, the VA has implemented a formal verification process that is overly burdensome; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, recommends the VA simplify its verification process for SDVOSBs and VOSBs interested in participating in the VA's Veterans First Contracting Program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 393
SUPPORT LEGISLATION ENHANCING GOVERNMENT-WIDE GOALS FOR PARTICIPATION BY SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, section 502, Public Law 106–50, the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999, codified "the Government-wide goal for participation by small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans shall be established at not less than 3% of the total value of all prime contract and subcontract awards for each fiscal year"; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization has the Center for Veterans Enterprise, which maintains the VA's database of Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB), as well as serving as an advocate for VOSBs, SDVOSBs, historically underutilized business (HUB) zone businesses and women-owned small businesses; and

WHEREAS, the database va.gov/osdbu vendor information pages (VIP) list businesses that are 51% or more owned by veterans and is the only one within the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the VIP was originally established to act as a single-source database of certified VOSBs and SDVOSBs to supply all federal agencies and prime contractors information to assist the federal government with achieving the not less than 3% goal of set-aside contracts for SDVOSBs and/or contracts being awarded to SDVOSB or VOSB concerns, as mandated in Public Law 106–50; and

WHEREAS, while section 8127 (f)(4), Public Law 109–461, requires verification of veterans' ownership of listed SDVOSBs and VOSBs, as well as verification of the service-disabled status of SDVOSBs, the federal agencies tasked with ensuring set-asides and timely, comprehensive verification have failed to do so; and

WHEREAS, according to the VA Office of Inspector General report, "Audit of Veteran-Owned and Service Disabled-Owned Small Business Programs," Report Number 10-02436-234, dated July 25, 2011, 32 of 42 statistically selected businesses that were reviewed—76%—were either ineligible to participate in the programs or were ineligible for the awarded contracts; and

WHEREAS, few government agencies have met, much less exceeded, the set-aside program goal for disabled veteran-owned businesses; and

WHEREAS, based on section 1347, Public Law 111–240, the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, SDVOSBs, HUB zone businesses, women-owned small businesses and small businesses now have the same meaning, thus providing parity to each of these businesses when competing for contracts; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on all government agencies to meet the set-aside goal of not less than 3% of the total value of all prime and subcontract awards to businesses controlled by service-disabled veterans each fiscal year; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should enact legislation requiring the federal government make set-asides mandatory rather than be goals, and should require underperforming federal agencies to make up shortfalls in achieving these goals in the subsequent fiscal year; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should revise the enforcement penalties for misrepresentation of a business concern as a VOSB or SDVOSB from a reasonable period of time as determined by the Secretary to a period of not less than five years; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress must ensure adequate resources are available to the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to expedite verification of VIP business listing eligibility and all federal agencies to effectively monitor and hold accountable those agencies that are not meeting the set-aside goal of not less than 3%, and require all federal agencies to list in their annual reports their prior fiscal year's actual percentage of meeting this goal, the results of which would serve as an annual report card of which agencies need the most assistance in the development and implementation of stronger contracting compliance.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 394

OPPOSE USING DISABLED VETERANS OUTREACH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS AND LOCAL VETERANS EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVES TO WORK WITH OR PROCESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS UNRELATED TO VETERANS

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service administers programs to assist veterans with their employment and training needs; and

WHEREAS, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS) provide intensive services to disabled veterans and veterans with barriers to employment in finding work, and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) work with nondisabled veterans, informing them of employment opportunities, and outreach to community businesses to locate employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Public Law 112–56, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, state employment agencies are now directed to utilize DVOPS and LVERs to work on other public assistance-related programs, which diverts DVOPS/LVERs from their prime mission to assist veterans with their employment and training needs; and

WHEREAS, this same law directs the Secretary of Labor to conduct regular audits to ensure compliance with this provision; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to reverse its decision from Public Law 112–56, and return the duties of DVOPS and LVERs to concentrate their work to aid veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 395

ELIMINATE ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE BY VETERANS IN RECEIPT OF INDIVIDUAL UNEMPLOYABILITY BENEFITS

WHEREAS, veterans receiving Individual Unemployability (IU) benefits must complete required Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Form 21-4140-1 (Employment Questionnaire) fully and accurately on an annual basis, and return the form to the VA within 60 days of receipt; and

WHEREAS, the veteran is required to turn in the VA Form 21-4140-1 annually for up to 20 years; and

WHEREAS, if veterans do not return the form within 60 days of receipt, their benefits are reduced; and

WHEREAS, it would provide a great justice to the disabled veterans of this nation who are currently in receipt of IU to not have the burden of submitting to the VA an income verification on an annual basis; and

WHEREAS, a majority of such veterans are incapacitated in some way; and

WHEREAS, this impedes such veterans from filing paperwork appropriately as they age and their disabilities progress through the years; and

WHEREAS, the VA, as well as the Internal Revenue Service, is better equipped to communicate employment verification of veterans agency to agency as opposed to veteran to the VA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to amend its policy on the annual employment questionnaire so that veterans in receipt of IU benefits are relieved of this burden.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 396

PROTECT VETERANS FROM EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION WHEN RECEIVING HEALTH CARE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires certain employers to allow employees to take reasonable unpaid leave for qualified medical and family reasons; and

WHEREAS, the National Defense Authorization Acts for fiscal years 2008 and 2010 amended the FMLA to include "qualifying exigency leave" and "military caregiver leave" to better balance the unique needs of employees with family members in the military and family members ill and injured while serving in the military; and

WHEREAS, the FMLA delays service-connected disabled veterans' eligibility to job-protected medical leave; and

WHEREAS, many service-disabled veterans with the ability to work need ongoing care to maintain their health status and retain their employability; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to extend protection under the FMLA to encompass the medical care needs of veterans with service-connected disabilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 397
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN AND PROTECT SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES

WHEREAS, the federal government's support of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs) contributes significantly to restoring veterans' quality of life while aiding in their transitions from active duty; and

WHEREAS, the federal government sets aside over $105 billion in annual small business spending which the SDVOSBs compete for; and

WHEREAS, the Vets First Program was created under Public Law 109-461 for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) and expanded the Service-Disabled Veteran contracting program for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) procurements in order for veteran business owners and the government to benefit mutually; and

WHEREAS, the Vets First Program's purpose is to ensure that legitimately owned and controlled VOSBs and SDVOSBs are able to compete for VA VOSB and SDVOSB set-asides, and help stimulate the small business community and create growth for the economy; and

WHEREAS, the success of the SDVOSB programs greatly benefits the service-disabled veteran community; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation that strengthens and protects SDVOSB programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 398
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE AND PROTECT EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS AND THEIR SURVIVORS

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Survivors and Dependents' Educational Assistance (chapter 35) have been integral to improving the economic outlook for both service-disabled veterans and their survivors; and

WHEREAS, despite improvements in the overall veteran unemployment rate, service-disabled veterans still have a higher rate of unemployment than their civilian counterparts; and

WHEREAS, programs, such as the VetSuccess on Campus, that could be used to reach more rural locations, could be expanded and strengthened; and

WHEREAS, both chapter 35 and the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation benefits should be strengthened and protected from budget cuts and fraud, waste and abuse; and

WHEREAS, survivors and dependents of severely disabled veterans should see their benefits under chapter 35 strengthened and increased so as not to cause a financial burden if they choose to attend school; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation that would improve and protect VA education and employment benefits for service-disabled veterans and their survivors.

* * *

(Whereupon, the Employment Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, sir. You have heard the motion. Do I have a second?

MR. STEVE GIRDLER: Mic 2, Steve Girdler, Department of Kentucky, Chapter 19, I second that motion.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 9 now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any resolutions that you wish to be read? Hearing none, all in favor of the motion signify by saying aye; those opposed. So ordered. Thank you, sir.

COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT CHAIRMAN SCHOW: Thank you, Commander.

(Whereupon, the Employment Committee Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: I would like to call upon Chairman Jim Procunier for the report on the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights. Good morning, Jim.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights Chairman advanced to the podium.)

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JIM PROCUNIER: Good morning, Commander. Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROCUNIER: I hope you're ready for this list of 700 resolutions. Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights was called to order on August 4, 2019, by the Committee advisors Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann.

The first order of business was the election of convention chairman and secretary. I, Jim Procunier, was elected as chairman. And Tom Cousino was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted, and I will now report to you on the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time, I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolutions.

Resolution 002, support legislation to remove prohibition against concurrent receipt of longevity retired pay and veterans disability compensation for all longevity-retired veterans; 003, support legislation to provide justice to Blue Water Navy veterans;

004, Congress must act to protect Individual Unemployability; 010, support legislation to remove the prohibition against concurrent receipt of SBP and DIC; 010—excuse me, 011, support legislation to reduce the 10-year rule for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation;

012, support legislation to provide a temporary total disability compensation rating for an amputee veteran while a new prosthetic device is developed and delivered; 013, support interest payments for Department of Veterans Affairs retroactive awards of one year or more;

014, amend the law to provide 10-year protection for service-connected disability ratings; 016, support legislation to provide for presumptive service connection for tinnitus and hearing loss; 017, support meaningful claims and appeals reform;

023, remove requirement of manifestation of chloracne and prophyria cutanea tarda and acute and sub-acute peripheral neuropathy within one year of exposure to Agent Orange; 032, oppose any recommendation by any commission or other source to reduce or eliminate benefits for disabled veterans;

033, support legislation that requires the VA to consider private medical evidence provided by licensed private health care providers; 036, oppose reduction, taxation or elimination of veterans benefits; 037, expand POW presumptions;

038, support legislation to provide for realistic cost-of-living allowances; 039, support legislation to exclude veterans disability compensation from countable income for purposes of eligibility for benefits and services from other government programs;

043, support oversight of VA's practices in evaluating disability claims for residuals of military sexual trauma; 044, support legislation to allow all veterans to recover amounts withheld as tax on disability severance pay; 045, oppose subjecting disability compensation and DIC to means testing;

046, oppose the long-term rounding down of COLAs in veterans benefits; 047, support legislation that would exempt the benefits paid to wartime, service-connected disabled veterans from the PAYGO/CUTGO provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act;

049, support legislation to provide for service connection for disabling conditions resulting from toxic and environmental exposures; 050, oppose any proposal that would reduce payments of Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation by payments of Social Security Disability Insurance or any other federal benefit paid to a veteran;

051, support legislation to increase disability compensation; 054, support legislation providing that Special Separation Benefits payments not be withheld from VA disability compensation payments; 055, consider treatment for a presumptive service-connected condition as a claim for VA compensation;

056, oppose lump-sum payments for service-connected disabilities; 057, support a more liberal view of other than honorable discharge for the purpose of eligibility for VA benefits and health care services; 058, oppose the imposition of time limits for filing disability compensation claims;

059, oppose any change that would redefine service-connected disability or restrict the conditions or circumstances under which it may be established; 060, oppose change of definition of herbicide agent for the purposes of establishing service connection for disabilities related to herbicide exposure;

061, support legislation for presumptive service connection for diseases related to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune; 062, presumptive disease or presumptive service connection for diseases and illnesses due to contaminants at Fort McClellan, Alabama;

063, compensate Persian Gulf veterans suffering from illnesses circumstantially linked to their service in the Persian Gulf War; 064, amend the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities for Mental Disorders; 065, support sufficient, timely and predictable funding for all VA programs, benefits and services;

103, support legislation authorizing the presumption of service connection for all radiogenic diseases and eliminate dose exposure estimate requirements; 105, support elimination of a link between chronicity and continuity for the chronic diseases listed in 38 CFR, Section 3.309;

106, support the elimination of the 30-day requirement for diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune; 107, provide for a compensable rating for hearing-impaired veterans required to use a hearing aid;

108, support reforms related to recovery of debts by the VA; 109, support legislation that recognizes presumptive service connection for hypertension, bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson-like tremors as related to exposure to Agent Orange and herbicides;

110, support legislation to increase maximum valuation for service-connected headaches; 111, support legislation to include children in legal custody as VA dependents; 112, support a change in regulatory requirements for total temporary disability ratings;

116, support legislation to create presumptive service connection for long-term health effects of anti-malarial medications; 118, support legislation to expand the recognized wartime service periods to include those veterans who served in combat environments from hostile military or terrorist activity from 4 November 1979 through 1 August 1990;

119, support legislation to allow for the use of an Intent to File in cases where an initial or supplemental claim where a same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided; 120, demand for a scientific evaluation for including disabilities of the thyroid as a presumptive Gulf War disorder;

121, support legislation to establish multiple automobile grants for eligible veterans; 122, support waiving additional amounts of debt created by the VA's lack of timely action; 123, establish immediate authorization of grants by the Board of Veterans' Appeals on all cases advanced on the docket;

124, the veteran's claim number should no longer be the veteran's Social Security number; 125, support legislation to oppose the payment of attorneys' fees based on periods when the attorney was not involved in the claim; 126, support legislation to establish a Supplementary Special Adaptation, or SHA, grant;

127, support legislation to establish a Supplementary Specially Adapted Housing, or SAH, grant; 128, support legislation for VA to provide child care services and assistance to veterans attending VA health care, benefits, educational, employment, homeless and rehabilitative programs;

144, support using the proposed reduction due process to all disability evaluation reductions; 156, support legislation to award special monthly compensation at R-1 to veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use of three extremities;

158, support legislation to provide realistic increased VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life; 168, remove the delimiting date for Persian Gulf War illnesses; 169, oppose regional dispersion of the Board of Veterans' Appeals;

170, support legislation to cap attorneys' fees for benefits counseling and claims services before the VA; 171, support legislation to require that U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to decide each of the appellant's assignments of error;

172, extend eligibility for mortgage protection life insurance for 100% service-connected veterans; 173, support an increase in the Department of Veterans Affairs burial allowance for service-connected veterans and provide automatic annual adjustments;

174, increase benefit rate for the Home Improvement and Structural Alterations, HISA, Grant; 263, support research to study the long-term health effects of exposure to bisphenoa A., known as BSA, as found in plastic disposable water bottles exposed to extreme heat;

267, oppose all attempts to change the basis of the Department of Veterans Affairs Rating Schedule from the average impairments of earnings capacity standard; 328, amend provision requiring eligibility for automobile adaptive equipment to include any veteran whose service-connected disability inhibits his or her ability to safely operate a motor vehicle;

345, support a change in 38 CFR, 4.71A and Diagnostic Code 5227, allowing a compensable rating for unfavorable or favorable ankylosis of the ring or little finger; 143 (sic) require the VA to request private medical records prior to future examinations;

356, reform and improve service-connected disabled veterans life insurance; 357, streamline and improve Specially Adapted Housing and Special Housing Adaptation grants; 358, protect claimants from those charging fees for VA claims preparation, presentations or prosecution;

359, improvements to modernization of information technology; 360, improve and reform DIC benefits; 362, support legislation authorizing presumptive service connection based on herbicide exposure for military personnel that served at air bases in Thailand during the Vietnam War;

363, support legislation to improve the VA Fiduciary Program; and my personal favorite, the last one, 364, increase the Grant and Specially Adaptive Equipment Reimbursement rates for automobiles and other conveyances to certain disabled veterans and authorize reimbursement for new and adapted equipment technologies.

(Whereupon, a staff member advanced to the podium and had a sidebar conversation with the Chairman.)

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS CHAIRMAN PROCUNIER: Got it. Late-breaking news from the back room. (Laughter) 003 actually was rejected, the one that said "support legislation and provide justice to Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans." Since that is already public law it was rejected but was mistakenly put in the program, so I apologize for that.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights. On behalf of the Committee, I move for the adoption—wow, new teeth (Laughter)—adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 002

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF MILITARY RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR ALL LONGEVITY RETIRED VETERANS

WHEREAS, current law provides that service-connected veterans rated less than 50% disabled who retire from the armed forces based on length of service do not receive disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in addition to full military retired pay; and

WHEREAS, these disabled veterans must therefore surrender retired pay in an amount equal to the disability compensation they receive; and

WHEREAS, this offset is unfair to veterans who have served faithfully in military careers inasmuch as these veterans have earned their retired pay by virtue of their long service to the nation and wholly apart from disabilities due to military service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to repeal the offset between military longevity retired pay and VA disability compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 004

SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION TO ENSURE THAT TOTAL DISABILITY BASED ON INDIVIDUAL UNEMPLOYABILITY REMAINS AVAILABLE FOR ALL VETERANS REGARDLESS OF AGE OR RECEIPT OF ANY OTHER EARNED FEDERAL BENEFITS

WHEREAS, when a veteran's disability is rated less than a total 100% evaluation, but he or she is unable to obtain or maintain substantial gainful employment, VA regulations allow the veteran to apply for Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU); and

WHEREAS, TDIU is based on the severity of the individual veteran's unique disability picture and its impact on the veteran's ability to obtain and maintain substantial gainful employment, generally, the veteran must have a single disability rated at 60% or a combined evaluation of 70% to be eligible for TDIU; and

WHEREAS, reports published by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) in November 2013, August 2014, and December 2016, as well as the Government Accounting Office (GAO) report in June 2015, made recommendations to limit TDIU based on age and entitlement to additional earned federal benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Administration's proposed 2018 Budget contained a proposal to terminate IU ratings for veterans at age of 62 and cut off TDIU benefits for any veteran already in receipt of Social Security retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, the December 2018 CBO report contained a proposal to terminate IU ratings for veterans at age of 65 and cut off TDIU benefits for any veteran already in receipt of Social Security retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, VA regulation 38 C.F.R §4.19 states the VA is precluded from considering the veteran's age in their determination of a Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability; and

WHEREAS, TDIU is not a retirement or pension program and is neither similar nor related to Social Security retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, a VA determination of a Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability is not the same nor is it similar to Federal Unemployment Insurance; it is a disability compensation benefit; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to enact legislation to protect TDIU for it to remain available for all veterans regardless of age or receipt of any other earned federal benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 010
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN PAYMENTS AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) payments are payments of an insurance annuity for which the retired military member pays premiums for coverage; and

WHEREAS, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is paid to the surviving spouse of a service member, retiree or veteran who dies of a service-connected condition; and

WHEREAS, these two programs are unrelated; and

WHEREAS, under current law SBP payments are reduced by the amount of DIC received; and

WHEREAS, this offset is extremely unfair to the spouses whose service members faithfully paid premiums in anticipation of a fair annuity; and

WHEREAS, there should not be a delimiting date to apply for SBP as the current six-year statute of limitations has severe and adverse consequences on survivors; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to repeal the offset between SBP annuity payments and DIC payments; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the six-year statute of limitations should be waived if the offset between DIC and SBP is removed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 011
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REDUCE THE 10-YEAR RULE FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, section 1318 (b)(1), title 38, United States Code, provides Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits for survivors of deceased veterans who were rated totally disabled for 10 or more years; and

WHEREAS, the financial status of the surviving spouse is compromised due to the care required by the totally disabled veteran and provided by the caregiver spouse; and

WHEREAS, the veteran's spouse, acting as a caregiver, must in many cases limit, give up or put careers and other activities on hold; and

WHEREAS, it is inherently unfair that the spouse should carry this additional burden for 10 years or more before qualifying for DIC; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to reduce the 10-year rule for DIC qualification to a more reasonable period of time.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 012
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE A TEMPORARY TOTAL DISABILITY COMPENSATION RATING FOR AN AMPUTEE VETERAN WHILE A NEW PROSTHETIC DEVICE IS DEVELOPED AND DELIVERED

WHEREAS, four to six weeks are required to manufacture a prosthetic device; and

WHEREAS, the veteran amputee without an artificial limb can be incapacitated and unable to obtain or retain gainful employment; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Schedule for Rating Disabilities does not contain any provision for temporary total disability rating for a service-disabled veteran amputee during the period of waiting for delivery of a new prosthetic limb; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to amend the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities to provide a temporary total rating for a service-connected veteran amputee during the period required to replace a prosthetic device.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 013
SUPPORT INTEREST PAYMENTS FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RETROACTIVE AWARDS OF ONE YEAR OR MORE

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claimants are often denied timely receipt of their rightfully earned benefits due to prolonged bureaucratic delay in the VA adjudication process and/or through clear and unmistakable error on the part of VA rating board authorities; and

WHEREAS, under current law and regulation, VA claimants who incur indebtednesses to the United States government, in addition to the principal amount of such indebtednesses, are assessed and must pay interest charges; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, Congress enacted the Prompt Payment Act, Public Law 97–177, to require federal agencies to pay their bills to outside vendors on a timely basis or pay interest penalties to the outside vendors when payments are made late; and

WHEREAS, VA claimants who are denied timely receipt of their rightfully earned benefits do not receive interest payments from the government and therefore incur a loss of income, which could have been avoided had they received their earned benefits in a timely fashion; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks the enactment of legislation that would require the VA to pay interest on all retroactive benefit awards in excess of one year after these claims are filed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 014
AMEND THE LAW TO PROVIDE A 10-YEAR PROTECTION PERIOD FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY RATINGS

WHEREAS, section 110, title 38, United States Code, now provides for the protection of all disability compensation ratings that have been continuously in effect for 20 or more years; and

WHEREAS, permanency should be conceded for disability compensation ratings which have been in effect for 10 years without change in evaluation with no further examination scheduled; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports amendment of section 110, title 38, United States Code, to provide that disability ratings in effect be permanently protected after a period of 10 continuous years.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 016
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR TINNITUS AND HEARING LOSS

WHEREAS, veterans of the armed services who served in combat or in certain occupational specialties have a high incidence of hearing loss or tinnitus as a direct result of acoustic trauma; and

WHEREAS, many pre-service and discharge examinations, particularly for World War II and Korean conflict veterans, were usually accomplished with the highly inaccurate “whispered voice” test; and

WHEREAS, veterans, in those cases, were not afforded a comprehensive audiological examination upon entrance and discharge from military service; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the second leading disability granted service connection by the Department of Veterans Affairs was for hearing loss or tinnitus; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports entitlement to service connection on a presumptive basis for any veteran suffering from hearing loss or tinnitus, which manifests itself to any degree and the evidence shows the

veteran participated in combat or worked in a position or military occupational specialty likely to cause acoustic trauma.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 017
SUPPORT MEANINGFUL APPEALS PROCESSING REFORM

WHEREAS, over the past few years, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has undergone significant transformation to modernize the benefit claims process and worked diligently to reduce the backlog of pending claims; and

WHEREAS, due to VBA's concentrated efforts to reduce the disability compensation claims backlog, the processing of appeals of claims was considered a lesser priority, resulting in a growing backlog of pending appeals; and

WHEREAS, as of June 30, 2017, there were over 470,000 appeals pending, roughly 320,000 within VBA's jurisdiction and approximately 150,000 within the jurisdiction of the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) creating long wait times for veterans to get decisions on their appeals; and

WHEREAS, the Board also faces serious processing delays due to its workload and resource mismatch; and

WHEREAS, without commensurate resources, emphasis and urgency directed toward appeals processing at both VBA and the Board, veterans will continue to experience excessive delays for decisions while the appeals backlog continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, DAV joined with VBA, the Board and other stakeholders to develop a new framework to reform and modernize how the VA processes appeals that includes several appeal options that claimants could choose, including filing supplemental claims, seeking higher level review of VBA claims decisions, and filing formal appeals directly to the Board; and

WHEREAS, throughout this process, claimants would have the ability to request hearings and submit evidence, protect their earliest effective dates, and have all of their due process rights protected; and

WHEREAS, legislation and additional resources are necessary to successfully accomplish appeals reform efforts in VBA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on Congress to pass legislation that supports significant and meaningful appeals processing reform to address the VA's overall appeals workloads; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that representatives of veterans service organizations with service programs should be included in the implementation phase of the appeals reform process and that Congress should provide continued oversight to ensure the VA has adequate resources to accomplish appeals reform; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should provide continued oversight during the reform period and must ensure that adequate resources are provided throughout the implementation and operation of this new system, particularly to resolve the backlog of legacy appeals, as well as provide regular oversight to monitor and measure the VA's progress so these reforms achieve their intended purpose.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 023
REMOVE REQUIREMENT OF MANIFESTATION OF CHLORACNE AND PORPHYRIA CUTANEA TARDA, AND ACUTE AND SUBACUTE PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY WITHIN ONE YEAR OF EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently recognizes a total of 14 diseases as presumptive to Agent Orange exposure; and

WHEREAS, section 1116, 38 United States Code, establishes presumptive service connection for diseases based on exposure to Agent Orange which requires that chloracne and porphyria cutanea tarda to become manifest to a degree of 10% or more within one year after service in the Republic of Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, section 3.307(a)(6)(ii), title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, requires the presumptive disease, acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy to become manifest to a degree of 10% or more within one year of exposure to herbicides; and

WHEREAS, the limitations placed on the three above noted diseases create unreasonable requirements on veterans to provide evidence of manifestations of symptoms from 50 years ago and creates an inequity; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to remove the requirement of manifestation of symptoms to a compensable degree within one year of exposure for chloracne and porphyria cutanea tarda, and acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 032

OPPOSE ANY RECOMMENDATION BY ANY COMMISSION OR OTHER SOURCE TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE BENEFITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, American citizens owe their freedoms and way of life to disabled veterans who made extraordinary personal sacrifices and who suffer lifelong disabilities as a consequence; and

WHEREAS, those who serve in our armed forces stand ready to endure any hardships and to be exposed to any hazards on behalf of their country and our citizens; and

WHEREAS, our government did not hesitate in asking them to give life or limb if necessary; and

WHEREAS, our elected officials surely should not renege on our reciprocal obligation when our disabled veterans ask for so comparatively little in return; and

WHEREAS, we, as a nation, owe no more important indebtedness nor greater moral obligation than the indebtedness and obligation we have to disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, some elected officials nonetheless prefer to minimize or ignore the suffering of disabled veterans, despite this debt and this national responsibility; and

WHEREAS, any effort on the part of legislators to find ways to avoid compensating disabled veterans, especially in time of war, is unconscionable; and

WHEREAS, honorable and great nations of conscience do not abandon their wounded, injured or ill wartime veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, reminds our elected officials of our undebatable responsibility to fairly and fully compensate veterans for all the effects of disabilities incurred or aggravated in the line of duty as provided for in the equitable standards of current law and regulations; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV vigorously opposes any recommendations made for the purpose of reducing, adding limitations on or eliminating benefits for service-connected disabled veterans and their families.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 033

SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT REQUIRES THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO CONSIDER PRIVATE MEDICAL EVIDENCE SUPPLIED BY LICENSED PRIVATE HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

WHEREAS, section 5125, title 38, United States Code, Acceptance of Reports of Private Physician Examinations, authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to accept private reports in the adjudication of claims for veterans disability benefits; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Health Administration personnel, to include nurse practitioners and physician assistants in independent practices, of equal training and background to their private-sector counterparts, are authorized to complete such medical reports for VA adjudication purposes; and

WHEREAS, submission of private medical records by a claimant, if otherwise adequate for rating purposes, provides claimants with an alternate means to procure evidence in support of their claims, rather than being required to attend mandatory compensation and pension examinations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks the enactment of legislation that would require the VA to consider private medical evidence supplied by licensed private health care providers to include, but not be limited to, reports from nurse practitioners and physician assistants in private practices.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 036

OPPOSE REDUCTION, TAXATION OR ELIMINATION OF VETERANS BENEFITS

WHEREAS, veterans benefits are earned benefits paid to veterans and their families for their service to the nation; and

WHEREAS, veterans benefits are part of a covenant between our nation and its defenders; and

WHEREAS, certain government leaders have continued to attack veterans benefits in an attempt to tax those benefits, reduce them or eliminate them completely; and

WHEREAS, these attacks recur with regularity and serious intent; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, vigorously opposes reduction, taxation or elimination of veterans benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 037
EXPAND PRESUMPTIONS FOR SERVICE CONNECTION FOR FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR

WHEREAS, former prisoners of war (POWs) suffered cruel and inhumane treatment, together with nutritional deprivation at the hands of their captors, which resulted in long-term adverse health effects; and

WHEREAS, POWs were subjected to numerous and varying forms of abuse dependent upon the place, time and circumstance of their captivity by the enemy; and

WHEREAS, for this reason, former POWs suffer from a wide range of physical and psychological maladies; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation which would add those medical conditions which are characteristically associated with or can be reasonably attributed to the POW experience as presumptive disorders for former POWs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 038
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR REALISTIC COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCES

WHEREAS, the Department of Labor provides statistical information and analysis that impacts the annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for disabled veterans, military retirees and Social Security recipients; and

WHEREAS, the calculations regarding COLAs are the domain of the Social Security Administration, using a formula that has been directly linked to the Consumer Price Index since 1975, prescribed by law when calculating any COLA increase; and

WHEREAS, in general, a COLA is equal to the percent age increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of one year to the third quarter of the next, and if there is no increase, there is no COLA; and

WHEREAS, the formula that derives the level of increase is tied to the United States economy on a very broad basis; stagnant economic activity does not mean disabled veterans' cost of living is flat; in fact, as they age and suffer from associated illnesses of aging, their costs increase; and

WHEREAS, it is unfair that disabled veterans are denied necessary increases in disability payments due to a formula that actually has little to do with the costs they bear; and

WHEREAS, there have been recent attempts to adjust the COLA downward in various methods such as "Chained CPI"; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans disability compensation has not kept pace with the rest of the economy; even in years when there were COLA payments, disability benefits lagged; and

WHEREAS, many disabled veterans and their survivors are on fixed incomes and rely on COLAs to keep pace with their current living expenses; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to provide a realistic cost-of-living allowance for our nation's disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 039
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXCLUDE VETERANS DISABILITY COMPENSATION FROM COUNTABLE INCOME FOR PURPOSES OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS AND SERVICES FROM OTHER GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, by virtue of their service and sacrifices, disabled veterans deserve special benefits that are separate and in addition to benefits the government provides to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, compensation for the effects of service-connected disabilities is counted as income in determinations of eligibility for other government benefits and programs, such as low-income housing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS, the value of compensation is negated and its purposes are defeated when a veteran's receipt of compensation is used to reduce or deny entitlement to government benefits or services available to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, when a veteran's compensation is offset against other entitlements, it is in effect deducted from eligibility for services generally available to citizens who did not serve, and thus the veteran receives nothing for his or her disability and is thus not compensated; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks legislation to exclude veterans disability compensation from countable income for purposes of eligibility for benefits or services under other government programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 043
SUPPORT OVERSIGHT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PRACTICES IN EVALUATING DISABILITY CLAIMS FOR RESIDUALS OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

WHEREAS, DAV maintains a long-standing resolution from our membership that advocates an open process to govern establishment of service connection for diseases and injuries incurred in or aggravated during military service; and

WHEREAS, establishing a causal relationship between certain injuries and later disability can be daunting due to lack of records or human factors that obscure or prevent documentation or even basic investigation of such incidents after they occur; and

WHEREAS, military sexual trauma is ever more recognized as a hazard of service for 1% of men serving and 20% of women serving in the armed forces and later represents a heavy burden of psychological and mental health care for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, an absence of documentation of military sexual trauma in the personnel or military unit records of injured individuals prevents or obstructs adjudication of claims for disabilities of this deserving group injured during their service, and may interrupt or prevent their care by the VA once they become veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DOD) has established an office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) to establish department-wide policies and procedures for the handling of sexual assault and injury cases for active military service members and members of Reserve and Guard units, including documentation, records retention and protection of the privacy of the individuals involved in such cases; and

WHEREAS, both DOD and the VA have agreed on some procedures that would govern documentation sufficient to justify service connection of sexual assault and other military sexual trauma; and

WHEREAS, the VA has issued a regulation (section 3.304(f)(5), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations) that provides for a liberalization of requirements for establishment of service connection due to personal assault, including military sexual trauma, even when documentation of an "actual stressor" is not found, but when evidence in other records exists of a "marker" indicating that a stressor may have in fact occurred; and

WHEREAS, the VA has trained adjudication personnel, especially its rating staffs in VA regional offices, in better evaluating disability claims for military sexual assaults and has emphasized these particular claims must be made subject to special attention in consonance with the new regulation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the VA's practices in evaluating disability claims associated with military sexual trauma, and urges the VA to conduct rigorous oversight of adjudication personnel and review of data to ensure the present policy is being faithfully followed and standardized in all VA regional offices.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 044
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW ALL VETERANS TO RECOVER TAXES ON DISABILITY SEVERANCE PAY

WHEREAS, certain funds received by military service members determined to be unfit for duty as a result of personal injury or disability are not taxable; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) continues to tax military disability severance pay as regular income; and

WHEREAS, a United States District Court held that such military disability severance pay is nontaxable income; and

WHEREAS, the IRS has subsequently acquiesced to the District Court holding; and

WHEREAS, a three-year statute of limitation prevents individuals who have been discharged for more than three years from recovering the taxed funds taken by the IRS; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, strongly supports legislation which would allow all veterans to recover taxes from their disability severance pay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 045

OPPOSE SUBJECTING DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO MEANS TESTING

WHEREAS, the citizens of our nation heretofore have honorably recognized their indebtedness to those who sacrificed in military service by providing disability compensation as restitution for injuries, illnesses or diseases suffered in such service; and

WHEREAS, a disabled veteran is rightfully entitled to compensation for the effects of service-connected disability, without regard to any good fortune or income of the veteran or spouse from sources independent of the government's obligations to the veteran; and

WHEREAS, it is unfair for the government to seek to disclaim its obligation to disabled veterans or their survivors merely because of the receipt of other, unrelated income; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the special status of disability compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, efforts have been made to deploy a means test to reduce or eliminate them in cases in which the veteran, spouse or survivor has obtained other income; and

WHEREAS, degrading compensation by providing it to the extent of the veteran's or survivor's economic needs rather than as a measure of restitution for personal injury or illness, thereby disassociates compensation from that which merits it and associates it with factors that govern purely gratuitous benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any proposal to means test disability compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 046

OPPOSE LONG-TERM ROUNDING DOWN OF COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS IN VETERANS BENEFITS

WHEREAS, to maintain the worth of veterans benefits, they must be adjusted to keep pace with the rise in the cost of living; and

WHEREAS, long-term rounding down of adjusted rates to the next lower dollar amount erodes the value of these benefits over time and thus does not keep pace with the rise in the cost of living; and

WHEREAS, the rounding down of veterans' cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) unfairly targets disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors for cost savings to the government; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes long-term rounding down of COLAs for veterans' disability compensation, and compensation to their dependents and survivors.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 047

SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD EXEMPT THE BENEFITS PAID TO WARTIME SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS FROM THE "PAYGO/ CUTGO" PROVISIONS OF THE BUDGET ENFORCEMENT ACT

WHEREAS, wartime disabled veterans have earned the benefits and services they, their dependents and survivors receive from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as a result of the injuries sustained during wartime service; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services received by wartime disabled veterans as a result of their service-connected disabilities is an extension of the costs of war; and

WHEREAS, this country has a moral obligation to continue to care for these citizen soldiers who have risen in defense and support of the ideals of this great nation and who have returned to civilian life with service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services provided to America's veterans, dependents and survivors have not caused this nation's deficit problems; and

WHEREAS, the so-called "PAYGO/CUTGO" provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act require any new benefits or services to be paid out of existing benefits or programs, in effect, requiring one group of disabled veterans to give up a benefit or service so that another worthy group of wartime disabled veterans can receive benefits or services to which they are entitled; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of budget caps and sequestration have often limited the ability of congressional appropriations committees to fully fund all veterans programs, services and benefits; and

WHEREAS, veterans suffering from ailments associated with their service in the military are compensated from funds generated by cutting the benefits of other service-connected veterans and their survivors; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services provided to wartime disabled veterans are unique and not a gratuitous benefit; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to exempt VA benefits and services provided to service-connected disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors from the PAYGO/CUTGO provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act as well as from any budget caps or sequestration legislation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 049
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR SERVICE CONNECTION FOR DISABLING CONDITIONS RESULTING FROM TOXIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES

WHEREAS, veterans of all military conflicts from the World Wars to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been exposed to toxic and environmental exposures such as mustard gas, herbicides, cold weather, chemicals, biological agents, harmful levels of radiation and other combat operation exposures; and

WHEREAS, veterans may not know for years or decades about the toxic or environmental conditions they were exposed to during military service; and

WHEREAS, returning from war, veterans subsequently suffer from disabling conditions that are not immediately identified as a result of such exposures; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DOD) has not always been willing to publicly share information regarding exposures during military service with other government departments or agencies or with the individuals involved; and

WHEREAS, research conducted by the National Institutes of Health, DOD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and other federal agencies has focused on relationships between toxic and environmental exposures and health outcomes of veterans and pending claims; and

WHEREAS, such research is necessary to ensure veterans receive high-quality health services and benefits to which they are entitled due to diseases or injuries resulting from deployment exposures; and

WHEREAS, in studies mandated by Congress, the National Academy of Sciences continues to review and evaluate scientific literature including specific research studies to determine whether a link exists between exposure and certain physical disorders; and

WHEREAS, the VA and DOD must collaborate and share necessary deployment, health and exposure data to better address the health conditions experienced by disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, these studies to establish and recognize relationships between exposures and diseases take several years to accomplish, requiring veterans to establish claims on a direct basis without conceded exposure to such toxins; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to establish a concession of individual exposures while awaiting conclusions of studies for presumptive diseases and conditions associated with all veterans' related exposures to toxic and environmental hazards; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV vigorously supports the VA's expeditious handling of veterans' claims and the payment of fair and just compensation for conditions associated with all veterans' service and related exposures to toxic and environmental hazards.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 050

OPPOSE ANY PROPOSAL THAT WOULD REDUCE PAYMENTS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DISABILITY COMPENSATION BY PAYMENTS OF SOCIAL SECURITY INSURANCE, SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE OR ANY OTHER FEDERAL BENEFIT PAID TO A VETERAN

WHEREAS, consideration has been given to offsetting Social Security Insurance (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits from any other federal benefit; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of such a measure would reduce the overall income provided to veterans who have a compensable service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, such an offset creates undue hardship on totally disabled service-connected veterans and their families by drastically reducing their total income; and

WHEREAS, benefits received from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or under military retirement pay and other federal programs have differing eligibility criteria compared to eligibility for SSI or SSDI benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any measure that proposes to offset the payment of any other federal benefit or earned benefit entitlement from VA compensation payments made to service-connected disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 051

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCREASE DISABILITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, it is the historical policy of DAV that this nation's first duty to veterans is to provide for the rehabilitation of its wartime disabled; and

WHEREAS, the percentage ratings for service-connected disabilities represent, as far as can be practicably determined, the average impairment in earning capacity resulting from such disabilities in civil occupations; and

WHEREAS, compensation increases should be based primarily on the loss of earning capacity; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans who are unable to work because of service-connected disabilities should be entitled to compensation payments commensurate with the after-tax earnings of their able-bodied contemporaries; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a realistic increase in Department of Veterans Affairs compensation rates to bring the standard of living of disabled veterans in line with that which they would have enjoyed had they not suffered their service-connected disabilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 054

SUPPORT LEGISLATION PROVIDING THAT SPECIAL SEPARATION BENEFITS PAYMENTS NOT BE WITHHELD FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DISABILITY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS

WHEREAS, as a result of the downsizing of our military forces, many career military personnel have left service prior to becoming eligible for longevity retirement pay; and

WHEREAS, these individuals are entitled to separation pay; and

WHEREAS, many of these individuals also become eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation; and

WHEREAS, a VA General Counsel opinion held that any funds received as a result of the Special Separation Benefit (SSB) must be recouped from any VA disability compensation payment; and

WHEREAS, SSB payments are in no way related to a disability; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to clarify that SSB payments are not disability payments and therefore should not be recouped from VA disability compensation payments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 055
CONSIDER TREATMENT FOR A PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITION AS A CLAIM FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, many service members have suffered from diseases that are recognized to be presumptive; and

WHEREAS, veterans suffering from diseases which include many types of cancer, as well as diabetes and other chronic diseases may not be aware that they may be eligible for service connection, even if they are being treated in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility; and

WHEREAS, many VA medical facilities are not currently staffed or equipped to provide appropriate counseling to veterans or their families on how to file a claim for service-connected benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to enact legislation requiring that treatment by the VA for a condition or disease recognized as presumptively service-connected will be considered to be an Intent to File for service connection for compensation purposes.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 056
OPPOSE LUMP-SUM PAYMENTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, disability compensation is paid monthly to an eligible veteran on account of and at a rate commensurate with diminished earning capacity resulting from the effects of service-connected disease or injury; and

WHEREAS, such compensation, by design, continues to provide relief from the service-connected disability for as long as the veteran continues to suffer its effects at a compensable level; and

WHEREAS, by law, the rate of compensation is determined by the level of disability present, thereby requiring reevaluation of the disability upon a change in its degree; and

WHEREAS, various entities have suggested lump-sum payments as a way for the government to avoid the administrative costs of reevaluating service-connected disabilities and as a way to avoid future liabilities to service-connected disabled veterans when their disabilities worsen or cause secondary disabilities; and

WHEREAS, such lump-sum payments would not, on the whole, be in the best interests of disabled veterans but would be more intended for government savings and convenience; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any change in law to provide for lump-sum payments of Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation.

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RESOLUTION NO. 057
SUPPORT A MORE LIBERAL REVIEW OF OTHER THAN HONORABLE DISCHARGES IN CASES OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER, TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY, MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AND OTHER TRAUMA FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, former service members who receive a nonpunitive administrative discharge characterized as other than honorable (“bad paper”) are generally not considered eligible for care and treatment from the Veterans Health Administration or other Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits; and

WHEREAS, the current rate of bad paper discharges by Afghanistan and Iraq service members with undiagnosed traumatic brain injury (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), military sexual trauma (MST) and other trauma are twice that during the Vietnam era and nearly four times the rate of veterans during the World War II era; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the Secretary of Defense provided policy guidance to the Military Department Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NR) to give “liberal consideration” in examining requests for discharge upgrades to evidence that PTSD may have contributed to the misconduct leading to less than honorable discharges; and

WHEREAS, former service members who have potentially suffered TBI, PTSD, MST or other trauma and are awarded bad paper discharges are likely to need medical care and benefits related to their military service; and

WHEREAS, without access to VA medical care and benefits, these former service members may be at higher risk of suicide and homelessness, along with involvement in the criminal justice system; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports a more liberal review of other than honorable discharges for purposes of receiving VA benefits and health care services in cases of former service members whose PTSD, TBI, MST or other trauma contributed to their administrative discharges characterized as other than honorable.

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RESOLUTION NO. 058
OPPOSE THE IMPOSITION OF TIME LIMITS FOR FILING COMPENSATION CLAIMS

WHEREAS, some veterans suffer lifelong impairments from disabilities incurred in connection with military service; and

WHEREAS, disability compensation is a benefit available to veterans at any time they choose to claim it; and

WHEREAS, veterans who, for whatever reason, do not initially desire to claim and receive compensation should not forfeit the right to claim and receive it at some later time; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Claims Adjudication Commission, created by Congress to study the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claims processing system, suggested a time limit for filing compensation claims as a way to reduce the VA's workload; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any change in law to limit the time for filing compensation claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 059
OPPOSE ANY CHANGE THAT WOULD REDEFINE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY OR RESTRICT THE CONDITIONS OR CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH IT MAY BE ESTABLISHED

WHEREAS, current law authorizes service connection for disabilities incurred or aggravated during service in the United States armed forces in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, various proposals have been made to limit service connection to disabilities caused directly by the performance of duty; and

WHEREAS, disability incurred in the line of duty is sometimes not directly due to a job injury but may be due to less obvious factors attributable to the armed forces environment; and

WHEREAS, proof of a causal relationship may often be difficult or impossible notwithstanding an inability to dissociate the disability from service-related factors; and

WHEREAS, current law equitably alleviates the onerous burden of establishing performance of duty or other causal connection as a prerequisite for service connection; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes changes in current law so as to redefine and restrict the conditions under which service connection may be established.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 060
OPPOSE CHANGE OF DEFINITION OF A HERBICIDE AGENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF ESTABLISHING SERVICE CONNECTION FOR DISABILITIES RELATED TO HERBICIDE EXPOSURE

WHEREAS, section 1116, title 38, United States Code (USC), defines a "herbicide agent" as a chemical in an herbicide used in support of the United States and allied military operations in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and

WHEREAS, 38 USC, §1116 that for the purposes of establishing service connection for a disability or death resulting from exposure to a herbicide agent, including a presumption of service connection, a veteran who, during active military, naval or air service, served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, shall be presumed to have been

exposed during such service to a herbicide agent containing dioxin or 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid, and may be presumed to have been exposed during such service to any other chemical compound in a herbicide; and

WHEREAS, congressional records indicate the Secretary of Defense acknowledged herbicides were used on the Korean demilitarized zone as early as April 1968; and

WHEREAS, the VA manual M21-1 acknowledges herbicides were used at eight specific Thailand Royal Air Force bases; and

WHEREAS, the Administration's proposed budget for fiscal year 2019 seeks to amend 38 USC, §1116 redefine herbicides as only those containing tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (TCDD); and

WHEREAS, the Administration's proposal states that herbicides with TCDD were only used in Vietnam and not on any other military base outside Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the Administration's proposal is inconsistent with known herbicide use outside Vietnam and would only serve to limit service connection for herbicide exposure to only veterans with Vietnam service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any change of definition of herbicides that would limit service connection only to those veterans physically in Vietnam.

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RESOLUTION NO. 061
SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR ADDITIONAL DISEASES RELATED TO CONTAMINATED WATER AT CAMP LEJEUNE

WHEREAS, military personnel and their families were exposed to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, from August 1, 1953, to December 31, 1987; and

WHEREAS, the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 established 15 different conditions where the exposed military personnel and their families were eligible to seek treatment at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health facilities at no cost; and

WHEREAS, the conditions identified for cost-free health care were esophageal cancer, lung cancer, breast cancer, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, leukemia, multiple myeloma, myelodysplastic syndromes, renal toxicity, hepatic steatosis, female infertility, miscarriage, scleroderma, neurobehavioral effects and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs established the presumptive list for service connection for diseases associated with said water supply exposure as of January 2017 and included only eight conditions: adult leukemia, aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, liver cancer, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary will continue to review relevant information to support the creation of additional presumptive conditions, as it becomes available; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 900,000 service members were potentially exposed to the tainted water; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to consider expanding the presumptive list to include all conditions set in the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154) that were not previously included.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 062
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR DISEASES AND ILLNESSES RELATED TO CONTAMINANTS AT FORT MCCLELLAN, ALABAMA

WHEREAS, after World War II until the base closed in 1999, Fort McClellan, located in Anniston, Alabama, was home of the Chemical Corps and Chemical Weapons school for the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, in 1953, Fort McClellan conducted "Operation Top Hat" which used military personnel to test exposure and decontamination methods that included sulfur mustard and nerve agents; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Fort McClellan added the Biological Radiological Agency, Aberdeen Proving Grounds; and

WHEREAS, Monsanto Chemical Plant, located in Anniston, was instrumental in the development and testing of the herbicides used during Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Monsanto Chemical settled a class action law suit with more than 200,000 residents of Anniston for more than $700 million; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, Contaminants in the Subsurface: Source Zone Assessment and Remediation, shows that there were 67 different disposal sites on Fort McClellan containing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) trichloroethylene (TCEs), polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs), semi-volatile organic compound (SVOCs), pesticides, explosives, heavy metals (Pb), unexploded ordinance (UXO), radioactive sources and non-stockpile chemical materials.

WHEREAS, the 2005 IOM report recognizes that both the groundwater and soil were contaminated by those noted above; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration has recognized the potential exposures at Fort McClellan, noting in part:

Some members of the U.S. Army Chemical Corp School, Army Combat Development Command Chemical/Biological/Radiological Agency, Army Military Police School and Women's Army Corps, among others, may have been exposed to one or more of several hazardous materials, likely at low levels, during their service at Fort McClellan. Potential exposures could have included, but are not limited to, the following:

- Radioactive compounds (cesium-137 and cobalt-60) used in decontamination training activities in isolated locations on base.
- Chemical warfare agents (mustard gas and nerve agents) used in decontamination testing activities in isolated locations on base.
- Airborne PCBs from the Monsanto plant in the neighboring town; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls upon Congress to immediately introduce legislation to authorize scientific studies of the environmental and toxic exposures at Fort McClellan; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to establish a concession of exposure to toxins and legislation to establish presumptive service connection for the veterans who were exposed on Fort McClellan.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 063
COMPENSATE PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS SUFFERING FROM ILLNESSES CIRCUMSTANTIALLY LINKED TO THEIR SERVICE IN THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

WHEREAS, DAV has a significant concern regarding the multitude of ailments reported by a growing number of Persian Gulf War veterans who were exposed to both identified and unknown health hazards; and

WHEREAS, Persian Gulf War veterans were exposed to numerous and various environmental health hazards, including smoke from oil field fires and other petroleum agents, depleted uranium, chemical and biological elements, desert parasites, vaccines, chemoprophylactic agents and vehicle paints; and

WHEREAS, primary investigations and multifarious studies have thus far failed to identify the source or sources of these ailments; and

WHEREAS, the scientific/medical community's inability to identify the source(s) and pathological nature of the disease has caused considerable anxiety for these veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, there appears to be a commonality of ailments plaguing Persian Gulf War veterans; and

WHEREAS, these ailments have been unofficially labeled "Persian Gulf Syndrome," "Multiple Chemical Sensitivity" and "Chronic Fatigue Syndrome"; and

WHEREAS, based on Government Accounting Office (GAO) Report (GAO 17–511) findings, approval rates for Gulf War Illness claims are about three times lower than for all other claimed disabilities which is due, in large part, to current law requiring veterans to suffer from an "undiagnosed " or "medically unexplained" illness for eligibility to receive disability compensation for medical conditions occurring in Persian Gulf War veterans; and

WHEREAS, based on the available medical evidence medical examiners must rule out all known diseases that could cause the veteran's symptoms for it to be determined as an undiagnosed illness or unexplainable illness; and

WHEREAS, clinicians are highly unlikely to provide a diagnosis of an undiagnosed illness or unexplainable illness in most cases creating an unfair standard for Gulf War veterans to be properly service connected for conditions related to their military service; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the requirements in the existing law, these brave veterans suffering from these unknown ailments are often prevented from obtaining service connection and providing for their own basic needs and for the needs of their families; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, vigorously supports the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) expeditious handling of Persian Gulf War veterans' claims and the payment of fair and just compensation for those diagnosed and undiagnosed conditions associated with their service in the Persian Gulf theater or related exposures to certain chemical, biological and environmental toxins; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV strongly urges that these Persian Gulf War veterans continue to receive priority medical treatment for those ailments that may be associated with their service in the Persian Gulf; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we vehemently urge the VA, the Department of Defense, and Department of Health and Human Services to continue to cooperate in tests and studies to unlock the mysteries surrounding the ailments suffered by Persian Gulf War veterans, including the possibility of exposure to chemical agents by United States military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 064
AMEND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SCHEDULE FOR RATING DISABILITIES FOR MENTAL DISORDERS

WHEREAS, under section 4.130, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, the criteria for evaluating mental disorders is ambiguous; and

WHEREAS, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, delirium, dementia, and amnestic and other cognitive disorders, anxiety disorders, dissociative disorders, somatoform disorders, mood disorders and chronic adjustment disorders are all evaluated using the same general rating formula for mental disorders; and

WHEREAS, the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders specifically lists different symptoms for post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia and other psychiatric disorders; and

WHEREAS, one veteran service connected for schizophrenia and another veteran service connected for another psychiatric disorder should not be evaluated using the same general formula; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports amendment of section 4.130, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, to formulate different criteria to evaluate the various mental disorders under the appropriate standards applicable to each diagnosis.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 065
SUPPORT SUFFICIENT, TIMELY AND PREDICTABLE FUNDING FOR ALL DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROGRAMS, BENEFITS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, DAV believes that wounded, injured and ill veterans, through their extraordinary sacrifices and service, earned the right to health care, benefits and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, this nation's first concern should be to fulfill its obligation to those who served in the military services in defense of this country; and

WHEREAS, DAV worked for more than two decades to reform the budget process in order to assure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for VA health care programs; and

WHEREAS, DAV developed and supported new legislation to assure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for VA health care through the technique of advance appropriations, as well as through new transparency and accountability requirements covering VA health care budget requests; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of budget caps and sequestration have often limited the ability of congressional appropriations committees to fully fund all veterans programs, services and benefits; and

WHEREAS, spurred by DAV, Congress enacted Public Law 111–81, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009, a law that requires advance appropriations for the VA's three medical care accounts that fund VA health care programs; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted Public Law 113–235, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015, that requires advance appropriations for three mandatory accounts of the Veterans Benefits Administration, compensation and pensions, readjustment benefits, and veterans insurance and indemnities; and

WHEREAS, the VA's leadership, employees and veterans served by VA health care facilities have universally reported that advance appropriations have allowed the VA to more efficiently and effectively deliver timely, quality health care to enrolled veterans; and

WHEREAS, VA health care programs and veterans mandatory benefits have largely been protected from the adverse effects of government shutdowns; and

WHEREAS, the remainder of the VA's discretionary budget, which includes information technology (IT), medical and prosthetic research, construction and general operating expenses—primarily the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)—could benefit from the timeliness and predictability offered by advance appropriations, particularly when unrelated budget stalemates, continuing resolutions and sequestration occur; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 111–81 required the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study and report to Congress and the public on the VA's budget submissions in fiscal years 2011, 2012 and 2013, including an evaluation of the VA's budget estimates compared to the forecasts made by the VA's internal actuarial model; and

WHEREAS, GAO reported significant findings of unjustified, questionable changes the VA made during the internal budget development process, limitations of budget justifications and questionable reliability of proposed savings estimates; and

WHEREAS, recent budget requests for advance appropriations by the Administration and advance appropriations amounts provided for by Congress continue to be insufficient to meet the full demand for VA benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, DAV and congressional sponsors of the advance appropriations concept anticipated that full implementation of Public Law 111–81 would require continued oversight from Congress, DAV and others; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to authorize advance appropriations for all of the VA's discretionary and mandatory budget, which would extend advance appropriations to include IT, medical and prosthetic research, major construction, minor construction, State Home construction, state cemetery construction grants, general operating expenses (VBA and general administration), the National Cemetery Administration, the Office of Inspector General and all other mandatory benefits; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV continues to call on Congress and the VA to fully and faithfully implement Public Law 111–81, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009, to assure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for veterans health care; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to permanently extend the GAO study and reporting requirements included in the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 103
SUPPORT LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING THE PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR ALL RADIOGENIC DISEASES AND ELIMINATE DOSE ESTIMATE REQUIREMENTS

WHEREAS, members of the United States armed forces participated in test detonations of nuclear devices; served in Hiroshima or Nagasaki, Japan, following the detonation of nuclear weapons, including "cleanup" operations at test sites; and have conducted other activities exposing them to ionizing radiation; and

WHEREAS, the United States government knew or should have known the potential harm to the health and well-being of these service members, but did not consistently keep adequate records on radiation exposure; and

WHEREAS, those described as "atomic veterans" served our nation with honor, courage and devotion to duty; and

WHEREAS, remedial legislation passed by Congress in 1984 has not been effective in ensuring that all atomic veterans are compensated for their radiogenic diseases; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has indicated only about 50 claimants have been awarded disability compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation pursuant to Public Law 98–542, the Veterans' Dioxin and Radiation Exposure Compensation Standards Act; and

WHEREAS, section 3.311, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, requires dose estimate exposure levels for claims based on radiation, and is a higher standard than for other disabilities associated with exposure such as claims based on herbicide exposure during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, the government has spent tens of millions of dollars to provide dose reconstruction estimates that do not accurately reflect actual radiation dose exposure of these veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on Congress to enact legislation to provide presumptive service connection to atomic veterans for all recognized radiogenic diseases; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any veteran involved in cleanup operations following a detonation of a nuclear device hereinafter be considered an atomic veteran for purposes of eligibility for benefits and services provided by VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress to support the elimination of dose exposure estimates required for diseases presumptive to ionizing radiation exposure and presume exposure to ionizing radiation for any radiation-exposed veteran with proof of radiation risk activities to include atmospheric and underwater detonations.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 105
SUPPORT ELIMINATION OF THE LINK BETWEEN CHRONICITY AND CONTINUITY WITH THE CHRONIC DISEASES AS LISTED IN FEDERAL REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, service connection may be granted for a disability resulting from disease or injury incurred in or aggravated by service; and

WHEREAS, to prevail on the issue of service connection there must be competent evidence of a current disability, medical or lay evidence of in-service occurrence or aggravation of a disease or injury, and medical or lay evidence of a nexus between the present disability and the in-service occurrence or aggravation; and

WHEREAS, a veteran may establish service connection by "chronicity" if the evidence demonstrates the existence of a chronic disease in service and later manifestations of the same disease; and

WHEREAS, prior to the precedent decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in Walker v. Shinseki, 708F.3d 1331 (Fed. Cir. 2013), veterans could establish a nexus between a present disability and an in-service occurrence or aggravation by "chronicity" when evidence demonstrates the existence of a disease in service and present manifestations of the same disease; and

WHEREAS, prior to the precedent decision, the veteran may alternatively establish service connection by "continuity of symptomatology" if the evidence demonstrates a condition was "noted" during service, there is post-service evidence of the same symptomatology, and there is medical or lay evidence of a nexus between the current disability and the post-service symptomatology; and

WHEREAS, the precedent decision limited establishing service connection by chronicity only for the specific chronic diseases listed in section 3.309(a), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the precedent decision additionally abrogated previous decisions by the court extending the use of "continuity of symptomatology" to establish service connection for chronic diseases not specifically listed in the regulation, thereby overruling an entire body of case law; and

WHEREAS, the precedent decision removes veterans' ability to argue "chronicity and continuity of symptomatology" in all claims for service connection and places a higher standard than intended or required by the plain language of the statute, thereby hindering the non-adversarial nature of the Department of Veterans Affairs claims system; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to establish service connection for a disease not specifically listed in 38 CFR, §3.309(a), using chronicity or continuity of symptomatology.

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RESOLUTION NO. 106
SUPPORT THE ELIMINATION OF THE 30-DAY REQUIREMENT FOR DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINANTS IN THE WATER SUPPLY AT CAMP LEJEUNE

WHEREAS, section 3.307(a)(7)(i), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), provides contaminants in the water supply means the volatile organic compounds (VOC) trichloroethylene (TCE), perchloroethylene (PCE), benzene and vinyl chloride, were in the on-base water supply systems located at United States Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune; and

WHEREAS, 38 CFR §3.307(a)(7)(iii) notes that a veteran, or former reservist or member of the National Guard, who had no less than 30 days (consecutive or nonconsecutive) of service at Camp Lejeune during the period beginning on August 1, 1953, and ending on December 31, 1987, shall be presumed to have been exposed during such service to the contaminants in the water supply; and

WHEREAS, the 30-day requirement is not based on the potential systemic, external and internal exposures to the VOCs; and

WHEREAS, review of the National Research Council, Committee on Contaminated Drinking Water at Camp Lejeune study, Contaminated Water Supplies at Camp Lejeune: Assessing Potential Health Effects, notes that the internal doses of TCE from showering provide inhalation and dermal exposure that is equivalent with ingesting 2 liters of water; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) notice of proposed rulemaking on the above-referenced subject, as published in the Federal Register on September 9, 2016, notes, "VA experts agree that there is no science to support a specific minimum exposure level for any of the conditions"; and

WHEREAS, the VA plainly states, the 30-day requirement is intended to provide consistency with the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012, Public Law 112–154; and

WHEREAS, the VA notes in multiple instances that the 30-day requirement is to keep consistency with the requirement for health care but does not assert that there is a scientific basis or legal requirement for the 30-day period; and

WHEREAS, the 30-day requirement is not consistent with any other laws or regulations providing presumptive service connection for exposure to toxic substances, such as veterans exposed to herbicide agents during service in Vietnam; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the elimination of the 30-day requirement for diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune as it is not based on the potential systemic, external and internal, exposures to the VOCs; predicated on any science; based on any legal requirements; nor consistent with existing laws and regulations concerning presumptive service connection for exposure to toxic substances.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 107
PROVIDE FOR A COMPENSABLE RATING FOR HEARING-IMPAIRED VETERANS REQUIRED TO USE HEARING AIDS

WHEREAS, veterans can be rated at 0% based on their audiometric results and still be required to use hearing aids due to their specific type of hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Schedule for Rating Disabilities is predicated on the industrial impairment that each disability provides to the disabled veteran; and

WHEREAS, hearing loss can impact a veteran's ability to communicate and negatively affect relationships, school/work performance, safety and emotional well-being; and

WHEREAS, section 4.10, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, notes that "The basis of disability evaluations is the ability of the body as a whole, or of the psyche, or of a system or organ of the body to function under the ordinary conditions of daily life including employment"; and

WHEREAS, a National Institutes of Health study, The Socioeconomic Impact of Hearing Loss in U.S. Adults, published in March 2014 noted, "Even after controlling for education and important demographic factors, hearing loss is independently associated with economic hardship, including both low income and unemployment/underemployment. The societal impact of hearing loss is profound"; and

WHEREAS, the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities does account for required prosthetics or required medication for control as it provides a 10% evaluation for over 15 different disabilities that require daily medication for control of said disability; and

WHEREAS, it is a general principle of the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities that ratings are not offset by the function artificially restored by a prosthetic device; and

WHEREAS, assigning a compensable rating for medically required hearing aids would be consistent with minimum ratings otherwise provided throughout the rating schedule; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the VA granting veterans with high-frequency hearing loss a compensable rating (10%) when it has been medically determined that the veteran requires and has been issued a hearing amplification device.

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RESOLUTION NO. 108
SUPPORT REFORMS RELATING TO RECOVERY OF DEBTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, it is a reasonable expectation that recipients of overpayments are required to repay the debt; and

WHEREAS, the current overpayment and debt system allows the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to collect debts regardless of when the debt was created; and

WHEREAS, debt collections by the VA include complete recoupment of the veteran's monthly benefit payments, and in many cases, put the veteran at risk of financial hardships; and

WHEREAS, additional amounts of debt created by the VA's lack of timely action are often added to the debt, thus creating an inequity on the veteran; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to reform the VA overpayment and debt collection systems; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to limit the amount of monies recouped from the veteran's monthly payment to not greater than 25% of the payment amount; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation preventing the VA from collecting debts incurred more than five years prior; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation that any additional amounts of debt created by the VA's lack of timely action not be the veteran's responsibility.

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RESOLUTION NO. 109
SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT RECOGNIZES PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR HYPERTENSION, BLADDER CANCER, HYPOTHYROIDISM, AND PARKINSON-LIKE TREMORS AS RELATED TO EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE AND HERBICIDES

WHEREAS, over the decade from 1961 to 1971, our military forces sprayed approximately 21 million gallons of herbicide agents in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, these herbicide agents, the most common of which was designated "Agent Orange," contained the contaminant dioxin, one of the most toxic substances known to exist; and

WHEREAS, the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) delivered its report, Veterans and Agent Orange; Update 2014 to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in March 2016, after reviewing medical and scientific literature published from October 1, 2012, through September 30, 2014, NAM found evidence to support changing the strength of association of herbicide exposure and these ailments; and

WHEREAS, in the case of bladder cancer, hypertension and hypothyroidism, NAM found "limited or suggestive" evidence of an association to herbicide exposure; and

WHEREAS, when Parkinson's and ischemic heart disease were added to the presumptive list, "limited or suggestive" evidence was judged strong enough; and

WHEREAS, NAM also studied whether Parkinson's-like symptoms should fall into the same "limited and suggestive" category as Parkinson's disease itself; and

WHEREAS, NAM found no rational basis for excluding Parkinson-like symptoms from the same risk category; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to add bladder cancer, hypertension, hypothyroidism

and Parkinson's-like symptoms to the presumptive list in section 3.309(e), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 110
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCREASE MAXIMUM EVALUATION FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED HEADACHES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) rating schedule notes that the minimum schedular rating for consideration of Individual Unemployability is 60% for a single condition, or a combination of 70% with one of them being at least 40%); and

WHEREAS, at present, a veteran with the highest schedular rating for headaches, 50%, must be shown to have a very frequent completely prostrating and prolonged attack productive of severe economic inadaptability as stated at diagnostic code 8100, section 4.124a, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations; and

WHEREAS, a veteran currently in receipt of the maximum 50% rating for headaches due to very frequent completely prostrating and prolonged attacks productive of severe economic inadaptability would not also qualify for consideration of a claim for Individual Unemployability based on that single disability; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, proposes that the VA amend its regulations to increase the maximum evaluation for an individual with migraine headaches from the current 50% evaluation to a 60% rating to more appropriately address the industrial impairment attributable to that level of disability.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 111
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCLUDE CHILDREN IN LEGAL CUSTODY AS A DEPENDENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PURPOSES

WHEREAS, per section 1072(2)(I), title 10, United States Code, military service members and military retirees can claim a dependent child that is an unmarried person who is placed in the legal custody of the member or former member as a result of an order of a court of competent jurisdiction in the United States (or possession of the United States); and

WHEREAS, 38 USC §101 (4)(A), in part, defines dependent child as a person under the age of 18 years, or who before attaining the age of 18, became permanently incapable of support, or who after attaining the age of 18 but not after attaining the age of 23, is attending an education or training program; and

WHEREAS, a child is a person who is a legitimate child, or a legally adopted child, or a stepchild who is a member of the veteran's household; and

WHEREAS, when a child is placed in the legal custody or guardianship of a veteran, the child does not meet the above criteria as a dependent for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) purposes; however, the child would be recognized by the Department of Defense, therefore creating an inequity; and

WHEREAS, the veteran and the child are placed at an disadvantage of not being able to utilize VA programs and benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to amend the definition of a child to include those placed into legal custody or guardianship of the veteran, even if on a temporary basis.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 112
SUPPORT A CHANGE IN REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR TEMPORARY TOTAL DISABILITY RATINGS

WHEREAS, with advances in modern medicine and increasing emphasis on more efficient use of health care resources, health care providers are being encouraged to utilize suitable alternatives to inpatient care; and

WHEREAS, as a consequence, veterans are often treated through home health services or convalesce at home rather than in hospital; and

WHEREAS, convalescent ratings are currently only authorized where inpatient or outpatient treatment resulted in surgery or immobilization of a major joint by cast; and

WHEREAS, instances occur in which a veteran's treatment does not involve surgery or casting of a major joint, but the veteran undergoes healing, convalescence or a therapeutic course in the home, with a duration of one month or more; and

WHEREAS, exacerbation of a service-connected disability sometimes contraindicates work or other activities for periods of one month or more; and

WHEREAS, in such instances, a therapeutic course, convalescence or restriction from work for one month or more would occur in the home in lieu of hospitalization; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports a change in section 4.30, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, to provide a temporary total rating of a veteran if treatment or exacerbation of a service-connected disability results in a condition of temporary total incapacity for employment or temporary unavailability for employment by reason of home health care or ambulatory care, bed rest or confinement to the home, or contraindication of work activities for one month or more.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 116

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CREATE PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS OF ANTI-MALARIAL MEDICATIONS

WHEREAS, malaria is a serious infectious disease transmitted by mosquitoes and is found in Iraq, Afghanistan and many areas in Africa, South America and Asia; and

WHEREAS, mefloquine, an anti-malarial drug, was approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in May 1989 and was widely prescribed to U.S. military service members until 2009; and

WHEREAS, the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine reported on three randomized controlled trials between 2001 and 2003 and the studies confirmed mefloquine's potential for causing psychological illness, and all three study reports described an excess of neuropsychiatric adverse effects in the mefloquine arm; and

WHEREAS, in the December 2010 study Suicide by Skull Stab Wounds: A Case of Drug-Induced Psychosis, it was the first report of a completed suicide with very strong evidence of mefloquine implication; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the FDA published a safety alert on mefloquine and added a black box warning (its strongest warning) to the drug label; and

WHEREAS, the FDA notice pointed out that neurologic side effects can include dizziness, loss of balance (vestibular problems), tinnitus and psychiatric side effects which can include anxiety, paranoia, depression or hallucinations.

WHEREAS, the FDA noted that the neurologic or psychiatric side effects may occur at any time during drug use, and may last for months to years after the drug is stopped; and

WHEREAS, the study Neuropsychiatric Outcomes After Mefloquine Exposure Among U.S. Military Service Members, published in January 2017, found that relative risks for adjustment disorder, anxiety, insomnia and post-traumatic stress disorder were higher for mefloquine when compared with doxycycline, another anti-malarial drug; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to establish presumptive service connection for the long-term health effects caused by anti-malarial drugs to include mefloquine.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 118

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXPAND THE RECOGNIZED WARTIME SERVICE PERIODS TO INCLUDE THOSE VETERANS WHO SERVED IN COMBAT ENVIRONMENTS FROM HOSTILE MILITARY OR TERRORIST ACTIVITY FROM NOVEMBER 4, 1979, THROUGH AUGUST 1, 1990

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recognizes specific periods of time as being wartime periods; and

WHEREAS, the Vietnam era ended on May 7, 1975, and the Persian Gulf War era began on August 2, 1990 (section 3.2(f) and (i), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations); and

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of U.S. service members were subjected to combat environments from hostile military or terrorist activity beginning on:

- November 4, 1979, with the seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and the subsequent ill fated rescue mission, Operation Eagle Claw;

- May 1981 terrorist threats from and resulting combat action with Libya;
- the April 18, 1983, bombing of the US Embassy in Beirut;
- the October 23, 1983, bombing of the Marine Barracks in Beirut;
- the October 25, 1983 invasion of Grenada;
- the December 12, 1983, bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait;
- the September 20, 1984, bombing of the U.S. Embassy annex northeast of Beirut;
- the April 5, 1986, bombing of La Belle, a discotheque in West Berlin known to be popular with off-duty U.S. servicemen; and
- the resulting Operation El Dorado Canyon on April 15, 1986, that involved 200 U.S. aircraft bombing Libya;
- the 1989 buildup of U.S. troops in Panama with increasing tensions and hostilities leading to the December 20, 1989 invasion of Panama by U.S. troops in Operation Just Cause;
- the unknown number of anti-terrorist activities that remain classified to this day; and

WHEREAS, any of the military participants of any of these combat environments from hostile military or terrorist activity who were wounded, physically or mentally, are entitled to service-connected compensation from the VA, they are otherwise not entitled to pension; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports a new wartime period covering the time frame of November 4, 1979, until August 1, 1990, to allow these service-disabled veterans eligibility for pension.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 119
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW FOR THE USE OF AN INTENT TO FILE IN CASES WHERE AN INITIAL OR SUPPLEMENTAL CLAIM FOR THE SAME OR SIMILAR BENEFIT ON THE SAME OR SIMILAR BASIS WAS PREVIOUSLY DECIDED

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published regulations allowing for the use of an Intent to File (ITF) that would make it easier for veterans to file fully developed claims that would allow for quicker decisions easing the backlog of cases with the VA; and

WHEREAS, with the enactment of the Appeals Modernization Act on February 19, 2019 VA regulations specifically restricted the use of the ITF with a supplemental claim, defined by the VA as any complete claim for a VA benefit on an application form prescribed by the VA Secretary where an initial or supplemental claim for the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, the typical veteran does not maintain the legal sophistication to clearly understand when the claim they are presently seeking to file is a claim for the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, the VA relies on its partnership with veterans service organizations (VSOs) to assist with many claim related activities; and

WHEREAS, VSOs in turn rely on the development and submission of claims from a wide range of volunteer assistants; and

WHEREAS, the VSO volunteers have no reasonable way to understand when the veteran they are assisting is presenting a claim where the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, by accepting the use of the ITF in supplemental claims, the VA would have the opportunity to notify the veteran of the fact that the claim filed was considered to be the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis which was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, that would allow the veteran, with VSO volunteer and professional staff assistance to prepare a better claim; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to allow for the use of an ITF for any claim, to specifically include supplemental claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 120

SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION FOR INCLUDING CONDITIONS OF THE THYROID AS A PRESUMPTIVE GULF WAR DISORDER

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has an established list of disabilities that are presumptively associated with service in Southwest Asia (SWA); and

WHEREAS, SWA refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea and the airspace above these locations for certain veterans (section 3.317(e)(2), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations); and

WHEREAS, the VA recognizes signs or symptoms of undiagnosed illness and medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses associated with SWA service to include (1) fatigue, (2) signs or symptoms involving skin, (3) headache, (4) muscle pain, (5) joint pain, (6) neurological signs or symptoms, (7) neuropsychological signs or symptoms, (8) signs or symptoms involving the respiratory system (upper or lower), (9) sleep disturbances, (10) gastrointestinal signs or symptoms, (11) cardiovascular signs or symptoms, (12) abnormal weight loss and (13) menstrual disorders; and

WHEREAS, 10 of the common symptoms of a thyroid disorder include fatigue; weight changes (gain too much weight with hypothyroid and too little weight with hyperthyroid); muscle and joint pain; neck swelling (goiter); hair and skin changes; bowel changes; menstrual abnormalities; depression; carpal tunnel (weakness or tingling in the arms, wrists, hands, and legs); and, finally, family history; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, proposes that the VA immediately establish studies to determine whether thyroid disorder(s) are more common in veterans with SWA service than the general population given that many of the common symptoms of a thyroid disorder are also the currently recognized signs or symptoms of undiagnosed illness and medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses associated with SWA service.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 121

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH MULTIPLE AUTOMOBILE GRANTS FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS

WHEREAS, Congress authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide financial assistance to eligible veterans through an automobile grant in the amount of $21,058.69; and

WHEREAS, this one-time grant is used toward the purchase of a new or used automobile to accommodate a veteran or service member with certain disabilities that resulted from a condition incurred or aggravated during active military service; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation reports the average useful life of a vehicle is 11.5 years; vehicles that have been modified structurally, including modifications to accommodate the weight of a veteran and their wheelchair, can have an accelerated depreciation of usefulness.; and

WHEREAS, on average, the cost to replace modified vehicles ranges from $40,000 to $65,000 when the vehicle is new and $21,000 to $35,000 when the vehicle is used; these substantial costs, coupled with inflation, present a financial hardship for many disabled veterans who need to replace their primary mode of transportation once it reaches its life of service; and

WHEREAS, the cost of replacing modified vehicles purchased through the VA automobile grant program presents a financial hardship for veterans who must bear the full replacement cost once the adapted vehicle has exceeded its useful life; the divergence of a vehicle's depreciating value and the increasing cost of living only compounds this hardship; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to establish multiple automobile grants, for veterans to use once every 10 years, equaling the current grant maximum in effect at the time of vehicle replacement.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 122
SUPPORT WAIVING ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS OF DEBT CREATED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LACK OF TIMELY ACTION

WHEREAS, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) report of September 2007,indicated that between 2004 and 2006, an estimated additional, $50 million in overpayments were created by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and were avoidable; and

WHEREAS, the June 2016 OIG report determined that between 2008 and 2015, that the VA's ineffective actions in processing incarceration veteran adjustments resulted in improper payments totaling more than $100 million, and that another $200 million in overpayments could accrue from 2016 to 2020; and

WHEREAS, the OIG has concluded that the biggest causes of additional overpayments are that the VA does not place sufficient priority on processing dependency changes, income changes, drill status, education changes or incarceration adjustments, as they consider these nonrating claims to be a lower priority compared to rating claims for disability compensation; and

WHEREAS, it is a reasonable expectation that recipients of overpayments are required to repay the debt; and

WHEREAS, the burden of repaying these debts can negatively impact a veteran's quality of life, put them at risk of homelessness and affect their access to VA health care; and

WHEREAS, recipients of overpayments are currently required to pay for the additional amounts created by the VA's own lack of action; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation that requires the VA to waive the amount of additional debt created by their own lack of timely action on evidence and information received regarding, but not limited to, dependency changes, income changes, drill status, education changes or incarceration adjustments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 123
ESTABLISH IMMEDIATE AUTHORIZATION OF GRANTS BY THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS ON ALL CASES ADVANCED ON THE DOCKET

WHEREAS, in a case before the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board), an appellant can request the case advanced on the docket due to financial hardship, homelessness and/or a serious illness; and

WHEREAS, once the Board grants an appeal that is advanced on the docket, it is then sent to either the agency of original jurisdiction (AOJ) or the Appeals Resource Center (ARC) for the decision to be granted, authorized and promulgated prior to payment of benefits to an appellant; and

WHEREAS, the average processing time of these cases by the AOJ or the ARC can be more than 90 days; and

WHEREAS, many appellants with serious illness die prior to the grant and authorization; and

WHEREAS, this delay defeats the purpose of the Board granting a case to be advanced on the docket; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the allocation of VA resources either to the Board of Veterans' Appeals or via the National Work Queue, to grant, authorize and promulgate all cases advanced on the docket and granted by the Board of Veterans' Appeals within 30 days of the decision.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 124
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE VETERAN'S PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION FROM HIS/HER CLAIM IDENTIFICATION

WHEREAS, an individual's Social Security number is now assigned at birth and is directly linked to bank accounts, income taxes and all personal credit references; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans affairs promised many years ago to discontinue using veterans' Social Security numbers as the veteran's claim number; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, that the Department of Veterans Affairs discontinue using Social Security numbers and promptly assign a unique "C" or Claim Number to all veterans who have or will file a disability claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 125
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO OPPOSE THE PAYMENT OF ATTORNEY FEES BASED ON PERIODS WHEN THE ATTORNEY WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE CLAIM

WHEREAS, revisions in the law and regulations governing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have allowed for private agents and attorneys to charge for their representation of claimants before the VA; and

WHEREAS, those regulations, section 14.636(e), title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, contain some indications that there may be provision for limitation of the final payment awarded to the private agents and attorneys based on reasonable limitations, as noted in the written description of Fees Permitted:

Fees permitted for services of an agent or attorney admitted to practice before the VA must be reasonable. They may be based on a fixed fee, hourly rate, a percent age of benefits recovered or a combination of such bases. Factors considered in determining whether fees are reasonable include:

- the extent and type of services the representative performed;
- the complexity of the case;
- the level of skill and competence required of the representative in giving the services;
- the amount of time the representative spent on the case;
- the results the representative achieved, including the amount of any benefits recovered;
- the level of review to which the claim was taken and the level of the review at which the representative was retained;
- rates charged by other representatives for similar services;
- whether, and to what extent, the payment of fees is contingent upon the results achieved; and

WHEREAS, the VA rarely, if ever, restricts the amount of fee paid to the private agents and attorneys beyond restricting the amount to 20% of any retroactive amount payable; and

WHEREAS, many private agents and attorneys act in the role of representative in a particular case for only a matter of months, providing limited interaction on behalf of the claimant, and not demonstrating any particular knowledge of the case; and

WHEREAS, regardless of whether the private agent and/or attorney did any actual work that resulted in the eventual grant of benefits the claimant is required to pay the 20% fee; and

WHEREAS, this frequently results in a windfall payment to the private agent and/or attorney at the immediate and direct expense of the claimant; and

WHEREAS, some private agents and/or attorneys, once they have engaged the signature of the client on the representation agreement have prematurely disengaged as the representative without waiving their right of recovery for any future award; and

WHEREAS, that future award is often years later resulting in an ever-expanding amount of retroactive pay; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to restrict the amount of payment to a private agent and/or attorney to a reasonable analysis of the actual work put into the case, and in no case should the payment extend beyond the date when either the claimant or the private agent and/or attorney ends the representation, and withdrawal by the private agent and/or attorney should result in a loss of all rights to recovery where they, for whatever reason, have opted to break the client-representative relationship.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 126
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A SUPPLEMENTARY SPECIAL HOME ADAPTION GRANT

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides grants to service members and veterans with certain permanent and total service-connected disabilities to help purchase or construct an adapted home or modify an existing home to accommodate a disability; and

WHEREAS, the Special Home Adaptation (SHA) grant helps veterans with certain service-connected disabilities adapt or purchase a home to accommodate the disability; and

WHEREAS, the SHA grant can be used to adapt an existing home the veteran or a family member already owns in which the veteran lives, adapt a home the veteran or family member intends to

purchase in which the veteran will live, help a veteran purchase a home already adapted in which the veteran will live; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2019 maximum SHA grant amount is $17,130 and cannot be used more than three times up to the maximum dollar amount allowable; and

WHEREAS, eligible veterans can use the VA adapted-housing grants, not to exceed the maximum amount at the time of the grant and once the maximum amount is reached, these veterans must bear the full cost of continued accessible living should they move, need to modify a home or suffer an increase in the severity of their service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, these veterans should not have to choose between surrendering their independence by moving into an inaccessible home or staying in a home simply because they are unable to afford the cost of new modifications; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to establish a supplementary SHA grant for eligible veterans needing to relocate and for veterans experiencing an increase in the severity of their service-connected disabilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the supplementary grant amounts be at least half of the maximum amount at the time of application for the supplementary grant.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 127
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A SUPPLEMENTARY SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANT

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides grants to service members and veterans with certain permanent and total service-connected disabilities to help purchase or construct an adapted home or modify an existing home to accommodate a disability; and

WHEREAS, the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant helps veterans with certain service-connected disabilities live independently in a barrier-free environment; and

WHEREAS, SAH grants can be used to construct a specially adapted home on land to be acquired, build a home on land already owned if it is suitable for specially adapted housing, remodel an existing home if it can be made suitable for specially adapted housing, apply the grant against the unpaid principal mortgage balance of an adapted home already acquired without the assistance of a VA grant; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2019 maximum SAH grant amount is $85,645 and must be used for the purpose of constructing or modifying a home to meet adaptive needs; and

WHEREAS, the maximum grant amount adjusts annually, and the grant benefit cannot be used more than three times up to the maximum dollar amount allowable; and

WHEREAS, eligible veterans can use the VA adapted-housing grants, not to exceed the maximum amount at the time of the grant and once the maximum amount is reached, these veterans must bear the full cost of continued accessible living should they move, need to modify a home or suffer an increase in the severity of their service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, these veterans should not have to choose between surrendering their independence by moving into an inaccessible home or staying in a home simply because they are unable to afford the cost of new modifications; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to establish a supplementary SAH grant for eligible veterans needing to relocate and for veterans experiencing an increase in the severity of their service-connected disabilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the supplementary grant amounts be at least half of the maximum amount at the time of application for the supplementary grant.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 128
SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) TO PROVIDE CHILD CARE SERVICES/ASSISTANCE TO VETERANS ATTENDING VA PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not provide child care assistance or services for veterans; and

WHEREAS, multiple studies and surveys reveal that a significant barrier for veterans seeking and obtaining VA services is child care; and

WHEREAS, child care services would assist in removing a major obstacle for veterans, while vastly improving their ability to successfully comply with health care treatment and complete training, rehabilitative and education programs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation for the VA to provide child care services/assistance to veterans attending VA health care, VA benefits programs, VA educational programs, VA employment services, VA homeless programs and VA rehabilitative programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 143
REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO REQUEST MEDICAL RECORDS PRIOR TO ROUTINE FUTURE EXAMINATIONS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is required to reexamine disabilities which have not become stabilized and are likely to improve; and

WHEREAS, VA regulations require a reduction in rating based on reexaminations disclosing improvement, physical or mental health conditions; and

WHEREAS, VA is not required to request any additional private or government medical records from the veteran prior to a future examination; and

WHEREAS, without any additional medical records prior to the examination, the VA rating specialist will not have sufficient evidence to determine whether the evidence makes it reasonably certain that any improvement will be maintained under the ordinary conditions of life and work; and

WHEREAS, reductions or proposed reductions based solely on VA examinations and not the entire medical evidence available, will not reflect the veteran's true disability picture and functional impairment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, vigorously supports regulatory and statutory requirements to require VA be mandated to request any private or government medical records prior to scheduling any future examination.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 144
SUPPORT USING THE PROPOSED REDUCTION DUE PROCESS TO ALL DISABILITY EVALUATION REDUCTIONS

WHEREAS, section 3.105(e), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, requires that a reduction in a disability evaluation which results in a reduction of compensation payments or the overall combined evaluation must include a notice of a proposed reduction with all material facts, a 60-day period to present additional evidence and the right to request a predetermination hearing prior to a final reduction decision; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has determined that if a reduction in a disability evaluation does not result in a reduction of compensation payments, overall combined evaluation, a proposed reduction is not warranted; and

WHEREAS, in many instances, the VA will grant increases and new benefits in the same decision as reducing a disability evaluation but not changing the previous combined evaluation, thus leaving the veteran without proposed reduction due process to include submitting new evidence and requesting a predetermination prior to a final reduction decision; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the proposed reduction due process be applied to all reductions of a disability evaluation even when it does not change compensation payments or the overall combined evaluation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 156
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO AWARD SPECIAL MONTHLY COMPENSATION AT R(1) TO VETERANS WITH ANATOMICAL LOSS OR LOSS OF USE OF THREE EXTREMITIES

WHEREAS, veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use, or a combination of anatomical loss and loss of use, of three extremities are significantly impaired in their ability to conduct activities of daily living; and

WHEREAS, veterans with loss or loss of use of three extremities require the assistance of others for the ability to dress and undress themselves, or to keep themselves clean and presentable, or to perform frequent adjustment of special prosthetic or orthopedic appliances, or to attend to bowel and bladder self-care, or to protect themselves from hazards or dangers incident to their daily environment; and

WHEREAS, these factors are considered basic criteria for determining the need for regular aid and attendance by the Department of Veterans Affairs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to award special monthly compensation under the provisions of section 1114(r)(1), title 38, United States Code, to veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use of three extremities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 158
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE A REALISTIC INCREASE IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMPENSATION RATES TO ADDRESS LOSS OF QUALITY OF LIFE

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission (the Commission) was established by Public Law 108–136, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2004, to address several measures, one of which was loss of quality of life; and

WHEREAS, current law requires that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) rating schedule to compensate service-disabled veterans for average impairment of earning capacity; and

WHEREAS, the Commission concluded early in its deliberations that VA disability compensation should recompense veterans not only for average impairments of earning capacity but also for their inability to participate in usual life activities and for the impact of their disabilities on quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine (now the National Academy of Medicine) reached the same conclusion; moreover, it made extensive recommendations on steps to develop and implement a methodology to evaluate the impact of disabilities on veterans' quality of life and to provide appropriate compensation; and

WHEREAS, the Commission concluded that the VA rating schedule should be revised to include compensation for the impact of service-connected disabilities on quality of life; and

WHEREAS, for some veterans, quality of life is addressed in a limited fashion by special monthly compensation for loss of limbs or loss of use of limbs; and

WHEREAS, the Commission urged Congress to consider increases in some special monthly compensation awards to address the profound impact of certain disabilities on quality of life and to assess whether other ancillary benefits might be appropriate; and

WHEREAS, while a recommended systematic methodology is being developed for evaluating and compensating for the impact of disability on quality of life, the Commission recommended that an immediate interim increase of up to 25% of compensation rates be enacted; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 168
REMOVE THE DELIMITING DATE FOR PERSIAN GULF VETERANS' ILLNESSES

WHEREAS, thousands of Gulf War veterans still suffer from chronic and unexplained physical symptoms; and

WHEREAS, current law limits filing dates for illnesses and injuries in veterans from certain service during active-duty periods, including the Southwest Asia theater of military operations; and

WHEREAS, section 3.317(i), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, stipulates that diseases associated with service in the Persian Gulf must "manifest either during active military, naval, or air service in the Southwest Asia theater of operations, or to a degree of 10% or more not later than December 31, 2021"; and

WHEREAS, the numerous symptoms experienced by sick Gulf War veterans are not well understood, and the causes of such symptoms remain elusive and answers could likely remain obscure for some time; and

WHEREAS, little significant research is being conducted on long-term health effects of many of the agents to which veterans were potentially exposed during the Gulf War; and

WHEREAS, additional research into the long-term health effects of exposures is needed, a fact confirmed in "Gulf War and Health: Volume 10: Update of Health Effects of Serving in the Gulf War, 2016" on the health effects of exposures during the Gulf War; and

WHEREAS, filing periods for injuries and illnesses related to service in any theater of military operations must remain open ended to assure that benefits and services are available when those conditions ultimately manifest; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to support legislation to remove the delimiting date for disabilities as a result of active-duty services in the Southwest Asia theater of operation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 169
OPPOSE REGIONAL DISPERSION OF THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

WHEREAS, veterans and other claimants for veterans benefits may appeal ratings and other decisions of the various and geographically dispersed benefit offices and medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, inaccuracy and lack of uniformity are pervasive among the claims decisions of the many VA field offices; and

WHEREAS, one board, the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) in Washington, D.C., hears all appeals; and

WHEREAS, appellants, Board members and taxpayers derive numerous benefits from an appellate board housed in one centralized location, some of the more obvious of which are:

- Availability of the collective expertise of the entire board;
- Professional interaction and association among Board members and staff;
- Shared and uniform training;
- Common and shared goals and responsibilities;
- Economies of scale from pooled resources and the most efficient workload distribution, with the flexibility and capacity to readjust the workload as necessary between members and support staff;
- A positive environment and employee incentives for developing creative solutions and innovations to meet and overcome the challenges inherent in a system of mass adjudication of claims;
- More efficient and effective centralized case management and storage;
- More effective centralized Board administration and hands-on employee oversight; and

WHEREAS, Congress created the Board after repeated failed experiments with various configurations of regional appellate panels that were plagued by persistent inefficiencies and problems and were proven impractical and poorly suited to properly dispose of veterans' appeals; and

WHEREAS, such regional reorganization of the Board would be extremely unwise, wholly unwarranted and not in the best interests of veterans or taxpayers; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, categorically opposes any decentralization of the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 170
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CAP ATTORNEYS' FEES FOR BENEFITS COUNSELING AND CLAIMS SERVICES BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, our nation established veterans programs to repay or reward veterans for their extraordinary service and sacrifices on behalf of their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, in the spirit in which special benefits are provided to especially deserving beneficiaries, our citizens intended these benefits to be dispensed through an open, helpful and informal system in

which the government is duty bound to receive every claimant as entitled and provide every reasonable assistance in developing and shepherding the claim through the entire administrative process while affording consideration of all legal avenues toward granting every benefit that can be supported in law; and

WHEREAS, the programs are also designed in a manner that ensures veterans and their families will receive the full measure of aid from disability compensation and other payments without taxation and with protections that ensure they are not diverted to others who have no entitlement to them; and

WHEREAS, Congress has set the rates of these modest benefits to be minimally adequate for their intended purposes, such as assisting disabled veterans and their families in purchasing the necessities of life or obtaining services necessary to ameliorate the effects of disability, and the amounts provided do not contemplate or allow for any reduction or diminishment in buying power such as will occur when a portion is diverted to attorneys; and

WHEREAS, acquiescence in any general situation in which obtaining veterans benefits required hiring an attorney and surrendering a portion of disability compensation or other benefits obtained to the attorney fundamentally contradicts and undermines the spirit of the benefit programs created solely to aid and meet the special needs of disabled veterans and their dependents and survivors; and

WHEREAS, it is inappropriate for Congress to disavow the government's obligation to ensure veterans receive the benefits due them by passing them off to the legal profession where their plight might well depend on or be determined by their potential for producing attorney fees; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, Congress passed legislation, Public Law 109–461, the Veterans Benefits, Health Care and Information Technology Act of 2006, which allows attorneys to charge a veteran a fee for counseling and claims service following the filing of a Notice of Disagreement; and

WHEREAS, the initial intent of veterans benefits recognized that no disabled veteran should have to pay an attorney significant fees to obtain the benefits that a grateful nation provides and the veteran is rightfully due; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks legislation to provide for a reasonable cap on the amount of fees an attorney can charge veterans for benefits counseling and claims services before the Department of Veterans Affairs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 171
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS TO DECIDE EACH OF APPELLANT'S ASSIGNMENTS OF ERROR

WHEREAS, Congress passed the Veterans' Judicial Review Act of 1988 (VJRA) and created the United States Court of Veterans Appeals (currently the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims) (Court); and

WHEREAS, the VJRA granted the Court the authority to decide all relevant questions of law and to hold unlawful and set aside or reverse any finding of material fact adverse to the claimant, which is clearly erroneous; and

WHEREAS, due to long delays in claims processing at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), it can take veterans years to get their appeals before the Court; and

WHEREAS, in many appeals, the Court will ignore the appellants' legal arguments and remand an appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) based on the General Counsel's confession of error that the Board failed to provide adequate reasons or bases for its decision to deny the benefit; and

WHEREAS, a remand due to lack of reasons or bases allows the VA to reopen the evidentiary record and obtain other evidence to support the continuation of the denial; and

WHEREAS, a veteran must appeal to the Court a second time and, in some cases, a third or fourth time to obtain a decision on the merits of his or her appeal; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation that would require the Court to decide each assignment of error and to reverse any such errors found; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should enact legislation providing the Court should have the authority to modify or remand any Board decision found to contain any error or errors, that the authority to modify should include the power to order an award of benefits in appropriate cases, and that an appellant should be expressly permitted to waive confessions of error made by the appellee.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 172
EXTEND ELIGIBILITY FOR VETERANS' MORTGAGE PROTECTION LIFE INSURANCE TO SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS RATED PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED

WHEREAS, Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) is presently available to veterans entitled to the specially adapted housing award under section 2101(a), title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, service-connected veterans rated as permanently and totally disabled cannot obtain mortgage life insurance through commercial insurance companies; and

WHEREAS, their survivors and dependents must bear an undue hardship upon the death of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VMLI program provides mortgage life insurance to severely disabled veterans and service members who have also received a specially adapted housing grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend VMLI to service-connected veterans who are rated as permanently and totally disabled.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 173
SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BURIAL ALLOWANCE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS AND PROVIDE AUTOMATIC ANNUAL ADJUSTMENTS

WHEREAS, the National Cemetery Administration burial allowance provides partial reimbursement for eligible funeral and burial costs, with a maximum payment of $2,000 for service-connected burial allowance, $300 for non-service-connected burial allowance and $749 for non-service-connected plot allowance; and

WHEREAS, passage of Public Law 111–275, the Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010, resulted in an increase in both plot allowance and burial allowance from $300 to $749 for non-service-connected deaths in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, effective October 1, 2011; and

WHEREAS, this law did not increase the $2,000 for burial and funeral expenses for service-connected deaths outside of VA facilities, nor is it indexed to the Consumer Price Index for annual adjustments; and

WHEREAS, the plot allowance introduced in 1973 was an attempt to provide a plot benefit for veterans who did not have reasonable access to a national cemetery, but neither the plot allowance nor the burial allowance was intended to cover the full cost of a civilian burial in a private cemetery; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to increase the burial allowance payable in the case of death due to service-connected disability regardless of whether the death occurs in a VA facility and provide for automatic annual adjustments indexed to the rise in the cost of living.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 174
INCREASE THE HOME IMPROVEMENT AND STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS GRANT

WHEREAS, under section 1717, title 38, United States Code, the Home Improvement and Structural Alterations (HISA) program, veterans with service-connected disabilities or veterans with non-service-connected disabilities may receive assistance for any home improvement necessary for the continuation of treatment or for disability access to the home and essential lavatory and sanitary facilities; and

WHEREAS, a HISA grant is available to veterans who have received a medical determination indicating that improvements and structural alterations are necessary or appropriate for the effective and economical treatment of the veteran; and

WHEREAS, a veteran may receive both a HISA grant and either a Special Home Adaptation grant or a Specially Adapted Housing grant; and

WHEREAS, the HISA improvement benefit provides up to $6,800 to service-connected veterans, and up to $2,000 to non-service-connected veterans as a result of the Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls for a reasonable increase in HISA benefits for veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 263
ESTABLISH STUDIES ON THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO BISPHENOL A AS FOUND IN PLASTIC DISPOSABLE WATER BOTTLES

WHEREAS, according to studies by the National Institute of Environmental Health, plastic disposable water bottle can leach bisphenol A (BPA) (also known as phthalates), from the plastic into the drinking water when exposed to extreme or moderate heat over time; and

WHEREAS, according to studies by Johns Hopkins University researcher Dr. Rolf Halden chemicals called phthalates are "environmental contaminates that can exhibit hormone-like behavior by acting as endocrine disrupters in human and animals"; and

WHEREAS, studies reveal that heated plastics can increase the leaching of phthalates from containers into food or water and studies further reveal that some of the common effects are cancers; and

WHEREAS, plastic disposable water bottles were used on a massive scale in Iraq, Afghanistan and other extreme-temperature locations for active-duty personnel; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to allow for additional research and studies from the National Academy of Science and/or other research facilities to determine the long-term health effects, to include cancers, of exposure to heated plastics and water bottles.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 267
OPPOSE ALL ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE THE BASIS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RATING SCHEDULE FROM THE "AVERAGE IMPAIRMENTS OF EARNING CAPACITY" STANDARD

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD) requires that "ratings shall be based, as far as practicable, upon the average impairments of earning capacity," as stated in section 1155, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, the standard of "average impairments of earning capacity" was first adopted under the War Risk Insurance Act of 1917, and except for a short-lived alteration between 1924 and 1933 attempting to reflect individual occupational factors, this philosophy has formed the basis for determining levels of veterans disability compensation for almost a century; and

WHEREAS, the current VASRD has been updated, revised and modified numerous times to reflect advances in medical knowledge, diagnosis, treatment and technology for injuries, illnesses and disabilities related to military service, but the standard of average impairments of earnings capacity has remained unchanged due to its practicality, equity and fairness to disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, determining rating levels based on the average impairments of earning capacity ensures that veterans who have similar manifestations of the same disabilities are treated equally and fairly without consideration of their age, education, work experience or current work status; and

WHEREAS, by basing the VASRD on the average impairments of earnings capacity, rather than on individual measurements of earnings loss or functionality, disabled veterans are actually encouraged to seek vocational rehabilitation training in order to find jobs and become more productive wage earners without fear of being penalized for doing so; and

WHEREAS, the VA is currently updating the entire VASRD and has committed to update each body of the section of the VASRD every five years, and throughout this process numerous proposals have been made, and will be considered, to alter the VASRD; and

WHEREAS, any attempt to replace average impairment of earnings capacity with a new standard based on individual earnings loss or measurements of functionality would dramatically alter the purpose and effectiveness of the VA disability compensation program, create disincentives for veterans interested in rehabilitation and work, and lead to reductions in compensation for millions of disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS any attempt to eliminate all consideration of impairments and impacts outside of the workplace fails to properly recognize that disability affects a veteran's entire life—including social, marital, familial, emotional and spiritual aspects—all of which have some effect on their earnings capacity; and

WHEREAS, any attempt to model the VA disability compensation program on the Social Security Disability Insurance or workers' compensation programs fails to recognize that those programs have separate purposes based on injuries and illnesses incurred in the civilian workplace that do not compare with the unique challenges faced and sacrifices made by veterans who have served in our armed forces; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any attempt to change or modify the VASRD, or the statute and regulations underlying it, which would change the longstanding, accepted and successful policy that ratings shall be based, as far as practicable, upon the average impairments of earning capacity.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 328

AMEND PROVISIONS REGARDING ELIGIBILITY FOR AUTOMOBILE ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT TO INCLUDE ANY VETERAN WHOSE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY INHIBITS THE ABILITY TO SAFELY OPERATE A MOTOR VEHICLE

WHEREAS, section 3902, title 38, United States Code, and section 17.119(a), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, restrict the eligibility for adaptive automobile equipment to those veterans who qualify for the automobile grant as specified in section 3901, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, not all veterans whose service-connected disabilities prohibit the safe operation of a motor vehicle meet the requirements of section 3901, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, these service-connected disabled veterans should be provided the adaptive equipment necessary to safely operate a motor vehicle; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation that would authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide or assist in providing the adaptive equipment deemed necessary to any veteran whose service-connected disability interferes with the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 345

SUPPORT CHANGE IN LAW ALLOWING A COMPENSABLE RATING FOR UNFAVORABLE OR FAVORABLE ANKYLOSIS OF THE RING OR LITTLE FINGER

WHEREAS, diagnostic codes 5224, 5225 and 5226, section 4.71(a), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), allow a compensable rating for the thumb, index finger and long finger respectively, due to unfavorable or favorable ankylosis; and

WHEREAS, a significant component of grip resides in the ring and little finger; and

WHEREAS, unfavorable or favorable ankylosis of the ring or little finger results in loss/loss of use of the involved digit; and

WHEREAS, unfavorable or favorable ankylosis of the ring or middle finger results in impairment of the entire hand; and

WHEREAS unfavorable or favorable ankylosis of the ring or little finger impacts employment for any occupation that requires delicate and precise use of the hand and fingers (jewelers, data entry, upholsterer, mechanic, surgeon); NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the assignment of a compensable rating for unfavorable or favorable ankylosis of the ring or little finger, pursuant to 38 CFR §4.71(a), diagnostic code 5227.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 356

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REFORM AND IMPROVE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS LIFE INSURANCE

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans are currently entitled to apply for Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) within two years from the date the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) grants service connection for any disability; and

WHEREAS, Congress created the S-DVI program in 1951 by Public Law 82–23, the Insurance Act of 1951, to provide life insurance to service-connected disabled veterans at standard rates; and

WHEREAS, under Public Law 82–23, S-DVI premiums are based on rates a healthy individual would have been charged when the program was established in 1951, in accordance with 1941 mortality tables as prescribed by section 1922, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, inflation has rapidly increased and diminished the value of the insurance since the maximum coverage was set by law at $10,000; and

WHEREAS, section 401 of Public Law 111–275, the Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010, increases Supplemental Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (SS-DVI) for totally disabled veterans from $20,000 to $30,000, effective October 1, 2011, but the act did not increase coverage for other service-connected disabled veterans with lower disability ratings; and

WHEREAS, many service-disabled veterans are unable to obtain private life insurance due to their disabilities, are restricted from applying based on eligibility or cannot afford the current premium rates currently in effect for VA life insurance programs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to reform and improve service-disabled veterans life insurance to include providing an open period for application, an increase in the maximum value, reduction in premiums based on current actuaries or a new life insurance program consistent with these concerns.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 357
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO STREAMLINE AND IMPROVE THE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSING OF SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANTS AND THE SPECIAL HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANTS

WHEREAS, the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant and the Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) grant have eligibility requirements, benefits and limitations that are very specific and distinct from each other, which can cause confusion among veterans and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) adjudicators; and

WHEREAS, once eligibility has been established by the VA, the remaining grant processes have numerous requirements, which can be cumbersome and lengthy, that include feasibility studies, minimum property requirements and the veteran finding three separate contractors to solicit bids and then approval by the VA, all of this even before construction begins; and

WHEREAS, while the required SAH modifications must be compliant with both local municipalities' building codes and the VA's own code, there must be a balanced focus on the immediate needs of the veteran; and

WHEREAS, contractors often decline to participate in these projects as the VA has not completely digitized its payment processes, thus contractors may wait months before payment, all while increasing the processing time; and

WHEREAS, these often lengthy processes become of great concern for veterans with severely restricting disabilities or terminal illnesses, as veterans with ALS and other terminal illnesses often do not survive long enough to benefit from the improvements that an SAH grant could afford them; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to streamline the SAH and SHA eligibility requirements, improve the length of processing time, digitize VA payments, and expedite all applicants with ALS and other terminal illnesses.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 358
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROTECT CLAIMANTS FROM THOSE CHARGING FEES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLAIMS PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, OR PROSECUTION

WHEREAS, claims agents and attorneys recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can assist a claimant in the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of a claim; and

WHEREAS, fees may not be charged, allowed or paid for services of agents or attorneys with respect to services provided before the date on which a notice of disagreement is filed with respect to the case; and

WHEREAS, veterans service organizations (VSOs) and the VA provide free assistance in the claims process; and

WHEREAS, many reports, past and present, have identified that certain entities charge claimants fees for the preparation, presentation or prosecution of a claim; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to prohibit and penalize those who knowingly solicit or contract for charges or receive any fee or compensation for providing advice on how to file a VA claim, the preparation, presentation or prosecution of such a claim, or unlawfully withhold from any claimant any part of a benefit or claim, all prior to the date on which a notice of disagreement has been filed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 359
SUPPORT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MODERNIZATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND IMPROVEMENTS TO INCLUDE DIGITAL SHARING, ADEQUATE FUNDING, AND IMPROVED ACCESS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, updated and modern information technology (IT) with digital sharing of information within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DOD), is critical to the delivery of VA health care, VA benefits and VA educational services; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) made a critical decision to transform its paper-based claims system and replaced it with electronic streamlined business processes such as the Veterans Benefits Management System, National Work Queue, Case Flow, eBenefits and the Stakeholders Enterprise Portal; and

WHEREAS, several VA sites, including VA forms and application, have been reported as not having ease of access by visually impaired veterans; and

WHEREAS, veterans service organizations (VSOs) providing representation for veterans and their families rely on VA systems while VBA has determined to no longer fund upgrades or updates to some of the existing programs; and

WHEREAS, lacking appropriate IT funding led to the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment's $12 million IT debacle and the Education Service's continuing problems in making accurate payments under the new GI Bill program; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) will be integrating the new VA Electronic Health Records (EHR) Modernization program, a commercial health IT program in collaboration with DOD, over the next 10 years, while its existing Veterans Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) program will remain throughout the implementation phase; and

WHEREAS, the cost of full integration of the Cerner EHR is projected at $16 billion over the next 10 years, with $5.8 billion of those funds set aside to manage and support the current VistA infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, VHA and VBA must compete with other offices and agencies within VA for the limited IT funding available each year, delaying development and deployment of critical IT systems and programming; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports reforming and improving the budgeting and funding of VA IT systems for each individual Department within the VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports secure and protected digital information sharing between DOD and VA, as well as sharing within VA agencies; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports improving IT access for VSO representatives and veterans with disabilities, including those who are visually impaired.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 360
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE AND REFORM DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION BENEFITS

WHEREAS, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) was created in 1993 and has only been minimally adjusted since then; and

WHEREAS, DIC payments were intended to provide surviving spouses with the means to maintain some semblance of economic stability; and

WHEREAS, survivors who rely solely on the disabled veteran's compensation face significant financial hardships upon the death of the veteran; and

WHEREAS, monthly benefits for survivors of federal civil service retirees are calculated as a percentage of the civil service retiree's Federal Employees Retirement or Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) benefits, up to 55%; and

WHEREAS, survivors in receipt of DIC benefits risk losing entitlement if they remarry before the age of 57; and

WHEREAS, remarried survivors of retirees of CSRS are allowed to maintain their benefits if remarried after the age of 55; and

WHEREAS, survivors of veterans that are in receipt of Survivors Benefit Plan are permitted to continued entitlement if remarriage occurs at the age of 55; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, strongly supports legislation that improves and reforms DIC benefits to include increasing the monthly amount and lowering the remarriage age for survivors of disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 362
SUPPORT LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR CERTAIN DISEASES BASED ON HERBICIDE EXPOSURE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO SERVED AT AIR BASES IN THAILAND DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

WHEREAS, during the Vietnam War, American military personnel stationed at air bases in Thailand were exposed to herbicides; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently acknowledges certain personnel as having been exposed to herbicides who performed duties on the perimeters of these bases; and

WHEREAS, veterans who file claims related to their proximity to base perimeters are challenged to prove that they in fact performed duties resulting in exposure; and

WHEREAS, most personnel assigned to bases in Thailand were quartered in open-air barracks near perimeters where herbicides were habitually sprayed by the United States government; and

WHEREAS, the VA already presumes exposure to herbicide agents for any veteran who served in Vietnam, including some veterans who served in Vietnam's inland waterways; and

WHEREAS, spraying of herbicide agents along air base perimeters in Thailand would affect not only the service members who were assigned perimeter duties, but also other personnel stationed at these locations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on Congress to support legislation to provide presumptive service connection for illnesses and diseases related to herbicide exposure in veterans who were stationed at air bases in Thailand during the Vietnam War.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 363
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FIDUCIARY PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Fiduciary Program was established to protect veterans and other beneficiaries who, due to injury, disease or age, are unable to manage their own financial affairs; and

WHEREAS, a VA payee, referred to by the VA as a VA fiduciary, is a paid position held by an individual or organization appointed to manage a veteran's VA benefit payments when a veteran is deemed to be financially incompetent by a court or by the VA; and

WHEREAS, the VA Fiduciary Program has been rife with fraud stemming from fiduciaries funneling money and assets from vulnerable veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that the Eastern Area Fiduciary Hub (EAFH), located in Indianapolis, did not properly investigate most complaints against fiduciaries, and of the 12 determinations that were made by EAFH almost $1 million had been stolen from veterans, which means that the total dollar amount of misuse and potential fraud was likely well over $1 million had the VA properly investigated the matter—other OIG investigations have uncovered millions more missing from veteran accounts in other hubs; and

WHEREAS, part of the problem is a lack of oversight, some of the VA-appointed fiduciaries have criminal records but were still approved; and

WHEREAS, OIG investigations also found that the required audits of the fiduciaries were not being done by the VA, and this allowed the thefts to continue for years; and

WHEREAS, in some cases the VA doesn't tell the veteran that they appointed a fiduciary and emptied the bank accounts of the veteran; and

WHEREAS, in some cases, VA employees (unlawfully) gave VA fiduciaries permission to sell the veteran's home and unlawfully took the Social Security payments of the veteran's wife and gave those to the VA fiduciary; and

WHEREAS, in some cases the veteran called the VA to report the financial abuse but was denied help by VA employees, because the vulnerable veteran could not provide "proof" of the abuse; and

WHEREAS, formal complaints filed with VA OIG about VA Fiduciary Program employees (i.e., field examiners and designated fraud investigators) are being denied because VA OIG no longer investigates complaints filed against the VA Fiduciary Program, rather veterans are being redirected to the applicable fiduciary hub suspected of malfeasance so the VA Fiduciary Program at that fiduciary hub can investigate itself for malfeasance; and

WHEREAS, vulnerable veterans are being wronged by both malfeasance of the VA fiduciary and the institutional incompetence of the VA Fiduciary Program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation and changes to applicable regulations that require the VA to improve the VA Fiduciary Program by creating a better monitoring system, a timely dispute resolution system when beneficiaries make complaints; initiate investigations based on suspected reports of fiduciary fraud rather than putting the burden of proof on the vulnerable veteran; and make an outside agency, such as VA OIG, responsible for investigating complaints of VA employees who work in the VA Fiduciary Program and fiduciary hubs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 364
INCREASE THE GRANT AND SPECIALLY ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR AUTOMOBILES AND OTHER CONVEYANCES TO CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS, AND AUTHORIZE REIMBURSEMENT FOR NEW ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGIES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides grants to assist eligible disabled veterans and military service members in purchasing specially equipped automobiles or other conveyances; and

WHEREAS, when originally established, the grant was set at an amount sufficient to cover the average retail cost of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, later adjustments elevated grants to amounts representing 80% of the average cost of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, the amount of the automobile allowance has not been further adjusted concurrent with increases in costs of automobiles, resulting in substantial erosion of the value of the benefit due to inflation; and

WHEREAS, the current grant level constitutes about 66% of the total average retail price of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, the VA also provides reimbursement for special adaptive equipment, but the rates of reimbursement have not kept pace with present-day costs to repair or replace such equipment; and

WHEREAS, advances in new automobile technologies, such as collision warning systems, electronic stability control, backup cameras and GPS systems, would enable disabled veterans to more safely operate vehicles; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to increase the automobile grant level to an amount representing 80% of the average cost of new automobiles; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation and policies that would increase the rates of reimbursement for repairs and replacement of specially adaptive equipment for automobiles and other conveyances consistent with present-day costs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress and the VA to support legislation and policies that would expand the items approved for reimbursement, such as collision warning systems, electronic stability control, backup cameras, GPS systems and other available safety technologies.

* * *

(Whereupon, the Committee on Legislation and Veterans' Rights Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thanks, Jim. You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MR. LABELLE: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. LABELLE: Al Labelle, Department of Wisconsin, Chapter 57, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER NIXON: In accordance with Rule 9 now is the time to read any rejected resolutions. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none, those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed. So ordered. Thank you, Jim.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Legislation and Veterans' Rights Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now we will call on Chairman Wanda Janus for the report of the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services. Good morning.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services Chairman advanced to the podium.)

HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WANDA JANUS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JANUS: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services was called to order on August 4th, 2019, by the Committee Advisors Adrian Atizado and John Kleindienst.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chair and secretary. I, Wanda Janus, was elected the chairman and Natche Miller was elected the secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolutions.

005, require a veterans attending VA physician to provide a medical opinion with regards to a claim for VA disability compensation benefits when requested; 018, support legislation to provide comprehensive support services for caregivers of severely-wounded, injured and ill veterans from all eras;

020, support enhanced medical services and benefits for women veterans; 029, apply a consistent, coordinated care policy in the VA for traveling veterans; 030, repeal the Beneficiary Travel Deductible for service-connected disabled veterans and increase reimbursement rates;

031, provide beneficiary travel benefits for unscheduled acute and urgent care from the VA; 071, support legislation to require the President, Vice-President and members of Congress to receive health care exclusively from the VA; (Applause)

071, support legislation to require the President—I'm sorry; 072, support state veterans' home program; 076, support VA research into the medical efficacy for cannabis for service-connected disabled veterans; 077, require the Secretary of VA to increase efficiency in the recruitment, hiring and credentialing of certain health care professionals undergoing separation from the Armed Services;

079, establish urgent-care benefits and approve emergency care benefits; 080, encourage VA to process volunteer applications in a timely manner; 081, support legislation to extend the eligibility of a qualifying veterans' adult child for CHAMP-VA;

082, ensure timely access to quality VA health care and medical services; 083, adequately fund and sustain the Successful Readjustment Counseling Service of the VA and its highly-effective vet center program; 084, oppose means testing of service-connected veterans for VA health care;

085, support humane, consistent pain management programs in the veterans' health care system; 086, support programs to provide psychological support and mental health counseling services to family members of veterans suffering from post-deployment mental challenges or other service-connected conditions;

087, oppose recovery of third-party payments for service-connected disabilities; 089, support effective recruitment, retention and development of the VA health care workforce; 090, reduce VA medication co-payments to an amount equal to or less than the lowest charged by private sector commercial outlets;

091, support modernizing VA health care infrastructure; 092, support enhanced treatment for military sexual trauma; 093, support legislation to improve VA programs designed to prevent and treat substance use disorders in veterans;

096, oppose weakening, diminishing, or dismantling the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system; 133, support VA medical and prosthetic research programs; 185, provide comprehensive dental care to all service-connected veterans;

186, support legislation to create a Rehabilitative Special Events Office within VHA; 187, support new models of care within the VA for veterans with dementia; 219, support top-priority access for service-connected veterans within the VA health care system;

222, urge the VA to provide an enclosed animal relief area for service animals; 289, urge the VA to support comprehensive research on health effects of children of male Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange; 305, encourage the Department of Veterans Affairs to submit candidates for the George J. Seal Memorial Award program;

310, implement a pilot program to assess the effectiveness of post-traumatic stress growth; 330, provide easy and equitable access to VA transportation benefits and services; 335, increase capacity at VA facilities by operating on weekends and extended hours;

365, support legislation to eliminate or reduce VHA and DOD health care co-payments for service-connected disabled veterans; 366, support sufficient resources for VA to improve health care for veterans living in rural and remote areas;

367, improve timely reimbursements by VA for (Indistinguishable) care and protect veterans from debt collection and adverse credit reporting associated with such care; 368, strengthen, reform, and sustain the VA health care system;

369, support sustained and sufficient funding to improve services for homeless veterans; 370, support program improvements and enhanced resources for VA mental health programs and suicide prevention; 371, enhance CHAMP VA benefits and services;

372, enhance long-term services and support to service-connected disabled veterans; 373, support equity and access to services and benefits for racial and ethnic minority service-connected veterans; 374, support legislation to protect veterans using VA community care;

375, ensure the VA clinical appeals process protects veterans; 376, support legislation to authorize scholarships for new mental health practitioners in exchange for agreements to serve veterans in VA facilities; 377, support the rights and benefits earned by service-connected Native American and Alaska native veterans;

378, support the provision of comprehensive VA health care services to enrolled veterans; 379, oppose any restriction on eligibility of military retired veterans to receive care in DOD or VA health care systems; 380, support consistent, reasonable access for service and guide dogs in VA facilities;

381, improve the care provided to veterans with service-connected disabilities that affect the ability to procreate through assisted reproductive technology; 382, support sufficient resources for polytrauma units at VA medical centers;

383, support sufficient funding for VA prosthetics and sensory aids service and timely delivery of prosthetics items; 384, require assistive technology training for VA staff who work to rehabilitate blind and visually-impaired veterans;

385, support a robust, comprehensive rehabilitative and research programs for veterans with traumatic brain injury; 386, urge VA to provide service-connected veterans meaningful access to personal health information; 387, encourage the Department of Veteran Affairs to submit candidates for the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship program; 399, let's extend the appreciation to the Orlando VA Medical Center at Lake Nona for the success of the 98th DAV National Convention.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report on the Committee of Hospitals and Voluntary Services. On the behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

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RESOLUTION NO. 005

REQUIRE A VETERAN'S ATTENDING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) PHYSICIAN TO PROVIDE A MEDICAL OPINION WITH REGARD TO A CLAIM FOR VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, section 5103A, title 38, United States Code, requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist a veteran by providing a medical examination and opinion when necessary to make a decision on a claim for disability benefits; and

WHEREAS, section 3.159, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, requires Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care providers, under specified circumstances, to provide statements and medical opinions on conditions, employability and degree of disability; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) policy describes Disability Benefit Questionnaires (DBQ) as a documentation tool designed for easy use and provides a format for documenting medical evidence that aids Veterans Benefits Administration rating specialists in making decisions on claims; and

WHEREAS, it is also VHA policy that DBQs are intended for use by VHA primary care and specialty care providers, and VHA clinicians who are not disability examiners may complete DBQs; and

WHEREAS, the VA's continued mission is to be a provider of choice for enrolled veterans, and delivering to them a comprehensive medical benefits package; and

WHEREAS, through education, training and experience, VA physicians gain special insight into the veterans' experience and specialized knowledge of the diseases and disabilities common to military service; and

WHEREAS, when VA physicians refuse to provide statements or opinions for veteran patients, those denials are inconsistent with the goal of VHA to provide comprehensive care and place a serious burden on veterans who may not be able to afford a private medical opinion; and

WHEREAS, providing medical information for disability evaluations or examinations to support adjudication of claims remains inconsistent, because some local VA facilities' practices resist completing DBQs requested by claimants; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to develop and implement a consistent policy requiring VA health care practitioners to provide medical statements or opinions when requested by veterans in conjunction with claims for VA benefits.

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RESOLUTION NO. 018
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE AND PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR CAREGIVERS OF SEVERELY WOUNDED, INJURED AND ILL VETERANS FROM ALL ERAS

WHEREAS, severely disabled veterans present great challenges to the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for acute, rehabilitative and long-term care health needs; and

WHEREAS, immediate family members and dependents are involved in the care and rehabilitation of severely injured veterans and are responsible for performing complete clinical care once provided by medical professionals, often with little to no relief while shouldering a great and lifelong burden as home and institutional caregivers and attendants; giving up or severely restricting their employment, future financial security, education and social interactions; and suffering severe financial and personal penalties as a consequence in order to care for a severely ill loved one; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of such caregivers, the burden of direct care would fall on DOD and VA facilities or other institutions, at significantly higher financial cost and a reduced quality of life for these veterans; and

WHEREAS, the United States government owes its highest obligation to those who are put in harm's way at the call of the nation, and become wounded, injured and ill as a consequence of that service; and

WHEREAS, in 2011 the VA established two distinct and unequal caregiver assistance programs under Public Law 111–163, where eligibility is based primarily on whether the veteran is injured or ill rather than the needs of the veteran and caregiver; and

WHEREAS, following implementation of the VA's caregiver support program, DAV commissioned a veterans caregiver survey and report published in 2017 which confirmed that despite a government that provides some services to support family caregivers of veterans, over 80% indicate they do not receive those services most important to them such as medical training, caregiver education, home health aide services, respite care and direct financial assistance; and

WHEREAS, 25% of family caregivers report their veteran would need to be placed into institutional care, such as a skilled nursing or assisted living facility, now and an another 50% in the future; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 and again in 2018, the VA announced a suspension of adverse decisions when VA medical centers were found discharging veterans and their caregivers out of the Comprehensive Family Caregiver Support Program at alarming rates, and an internal review recommended better communications with veterans and their family caregivers, improving internal processes and procedures, and additional staff training; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 VA medical centers were again found discharging veterans and their caregivers out of the Comprehensive Family Caregiver Support Program citing inconsistent application of eligibility requirements and are again under a moratorium on discharges and tier reductions; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–251) requires the expansion of eligibility for the VA's Comprehensive Family Caregiver Support Program, in two phases, to all veterans severely injured before September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, in equity and fairness, caregivers of all severely disabled veterans should be recognized and afforded generous relief, assistance and care for the duration of the lives of veterans injured or made ill by military service to our nation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on the VA to dedicate appropriate resources and support needed to timely implement the expansion of the Comprehensive Family Caregiver Support program required by Public Law 115–182; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should conduct strict oversight of the Comprehensive Family Caregiver Support Program and to ensure the VA receives the resources needed to timely and equitably expand eligibility and to provide supports and services; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation that would expand access to and improve the provision of comprehensive caregiver support services, including but not limited to fully recognizing family caregivers, adequate financial support, sufficient health and homemaker services, respite, education and training, and other necessary relief, to caregivers of all veterans severely ill and injured due to military service; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress and the VA must create and execute a strategic plan for military and veteran caregiver research, including longitudinal surveys and assessments, to evaluate current programs and services, and monitor the health and well-being of caregivers to ensure the program's effectiveness and better inform policymakers.

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RESOLUTION NO. 020
SUPPORT ENHANCED MEDICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, the number of women serving in our military and veterans population continue to grow, with women now comprising 10% of all veterans and 16% of our active-duty service members; and

WHEREAS, women are now included in virtually all military occupations, including combat roles that expose them to the same injuries as male peers; and

WHEREAS, the number of women veterans using Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care has doubled in the last decade, and women of recent service eras are younger, more likely to have service-connected conditions and are more reliant upon VA health care; and

WHEREAS, 42% of women veteran users of VA care are under the age of 45 and therefore within their child-bearing years, and their gender-specific needs represent challenges to the current model and delivery of VA health care, which has traditionally focused on men; and

WHEREAS, significant numbers of women veterans, including those returning from current military deployments, are the primary or sole providers of dependent children, which can limit their ability to access services in inpatient, intensive outpatient or residential settings that have traditionally been available to address post-deployment mental health readjustment needs; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of women report military sexual trauma and domestic violence and need specialized mental health services from the VA; and

WHEREAS, the VA has too few proficient, knowledgeable health care providers with expertise in women's health, and many facilities fail to adequately address environment of care standards that assure the safety, privacy and dignity of women patients; and

WHEREAS, many non-VA health providers which fill important gaps in VA services for women veterans, including mammography, maternity care and gynecology, lack the informatics to assure they are meeting VA care standards, including wait times; and

WHEREAS, the VA must improve outreach and services to meet the unique needs of women veterans who were catastrophically wounded, suffering amputations, blindness, spinal cord injury, post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, or who were sexually assaulted; and

WHEREAS, DAV's 2014 report *Women Veterans, The Long Journey Home* found that despite a generous array of benefits to assist veterans with transition and readjustment following military service, serious gaps are evident for women in every aspect of existing federal programs;

WHEREAS, DAV's 2018 report *Women Veterans, The Journey Ahead* found that the VA system still struggles to provide equitable access to women veterans by adapting existing programs and facilities to

meet their distinct needs in a culture that honors women's service and sacrifices, and assures that they feel safe and welcome; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks to ensure the provision of health care services and specialized programs, inclusive of gender-specific services, by the VA to eligible women veterans are provided to the same degree and extent that services are provided to eligible male veterans, inclusive of counseling and/or psychological services incident to combat exposure or sexual trauma; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the VA to strictly adhere to stated policies regarding privacy and safety issues relating to the treatment of women veterans and to proactively conduct research and health studies as appropriate; periodically review, adjust and improve its women's health programs; and seek innovative methods to address barriers to care, thereby better ensuring women veterans receive the quality treatment and specialized services they so rightly deserve.

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RESOLUTION NO. 029
APPLY A CONSISTENT COORDINATED CARE POLICY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR TRAVELING VETERANS

WHEREAS, many service-connected disabled veterans temporarily split their principal residence between two locations; and

WHEREAS, coordination and continuity of care are core features of high-quality primary care and have been shown to offer significant benefits, including lower rates of hospitalization and lower mortality; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration policy defining how patients are assigned to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) primary care providers states that, in general, each veteran receiving VA primary care must be assigned a single primary care provider within the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, under this policy, veterans who spend a significant part of the year living between two regions and who have complex health care needs requiring close, ongoing care management may have primary care providers assigned at more than one facility; and

WHEREAS, some service-connected veterans who would otherwise be eligible for a second VA primary care provider may be denied this critical service; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected veterans are unaware of this policy and are not being educated by their VA provider that they can be evaluated to determine eligibility for a second VA primary care provider to better coordinate execution of a personal health care plan between two VA facilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to consistently apply the established primary care standards nationwide, educate veterans who live in multiple regions about this policy and add VA-rated service-connected disabilities as one of the critical factors used in determining the need for dual primary care providers.

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RESOLUTION NO. 030
REPEAL BENEFICIARY TRAVEL DEDUCTIBLE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS AND INCREASE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized under section 111 (g)(1), title 38, United States Code, to reimburse transportation expenses for certain service-connected veterans for VA authorized examination, medical treatment or care; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 110–387 required the VA to permanently reduce to $3.00 the applicable deductible, but service-connected disabled veterans are still subject to the deduction from the amount otherwise payable for each one-way trip unless the Secretary determines in an individual case that such deductible would cause severe financial hardship; and

WHEREAS, veterans currently receive a flat rate of 41.5 cents per mile for all transportation effective November 17, 2008; and

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans eligible for beneficiary transportation reimbursements should not be required to help defray the cost of travel, in the form of a deductible, to and from a VA medical facility for medical examination, or health care treatment; and

WHEREAS, it is grossly unfair for the VA Secretary to impose the deductible upon service-connected disabled veterans seeking treatment for service-connected conditions and service-connected veterans rated 30% or more when traveling in connection with any disability; and

WHEREAS, adequate travel expense reimbursement is directly tied to access to care for many veterans and is not a luxury; and

WHEREAS, the VA, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, the Secretary of Transportation, the Comptroller of the United States and representatives of veterans service organizations, is required to conduct periodic investigations on the actual cost of travel incurred by veterans traveling to and from VA facilities for covered purposes; and

WHEREAS, after analyzing and adopting the findings of an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) report on operating costs for a privately owned automobile, the General Services Administration (GSA) determined that the per-mile operating costs for the official use of a privately owned vehicle by a federal employee is 55 cents per mile; and

WHEREAS, the VA continues to maintain that increasing veterans' beneficiary travel reimbursement rate to a rate more comparable to the GSA-approved rate would result in a reduction of funds available for direct medical care to our nation's veterans, and service-connected veterans should not shoulder the burden of receiving either medical care or adequate beneficiary travel payments; and

WHEREAS, when rates do not cover the cost of travel, veterans without resources are likely to delay health care access until their needs may become critical, resulting in higher health care costs and poorer health outcomes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to repeal the Secretary's authority to impose a deductible for service-connected disabled veterans from the amount payable for beneficiary travel pay for medical examination, treatment or care; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to adopt the IRS mileage reimbursement rate to protect against erosion of the value of the benefit due to inflation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to make provision in its budget for the cost of increasing veterans' beneficiary travel reimbursement rates to a more reasonable amount so that it can make the needed adjustment without the reduction in funds for direct medical care to sick and disabled veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 031
PROVIDE BENEFICIARY TRAVEL BENEFITS FOR UNSCHEDULED VISITS TO RECEIVE CARE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, a cornerstone of patient-centered care is having excellent access to appropriate clinical care using appropriate modes of health care delivery at the time patients want and need the care; and

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) beneficiary travel provides payment of travel expenses within the United States under section 111, title 38, United States Code, to help veterans and other persons obtain care and services from the VA; and

WHEREAS, it is VA policy to pay travel expenses only for one-way travel to veterans who receive VA care without a scheduled appointment; and

WHEREAS, the nature of acute medical or psychiatric illness or minor injuries, for which there is a pressing need for treatment to prevent deterioration of the condition or impairing possible recovery, is generally unscheduled and episodic; and

WHEREAS, VA facilities have developed local policy to provide care to veterans on a "drop-in" basis rather than through a scheduled appointment and without properly documenting such a pre-scheduled encounter, thus limiting travel benefits for service-connected veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–251) provides veterans urgent care benefits through contracted community providers but will only pay beneficiary travel on a one-way basis, having also defined urgent care as an unscheduled visit; and

WHEREAS, VA policy also subscribes to the principle that access to appropriate primary and urgent care must be unrestricted and ensure sufficient capacity to accommodate unscheduled "walk-in" patients; and

WHEREAS, VA beneficiary travel partial reimbursement for unscheduled visits runs counter to the stated purpose of the benefit, which is to "help ensure that beneficiary travel is covered only when necessary for the provision of care or services"; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress and the VA to change current beneficiary travel policy to pay round-trip travel expenses to veterans who receive VA care without a scheduled appointment.

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RESOLUTION NO. 071
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE HEALTH CARE EXCLUSIVELY FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, even though veterans health care is funded through an advance appropriation, it is still at the discretion of Congress to provide the level of funding necessary for the veterans health care system to meet the medical care needs of ill and injured veterans; and

WHEREAS, the President and many members of Congress insist that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system is adequately funded; and

WHEREAS, the VA is recognized as the best health care system in the United States, and for providing high-quality health care services; and

WHEREAS, by using the VA health care system, the President, Vice President and members of Congress would be in a better position to judge the resource needs of the VA to enable it to provide timely quality health care to our nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, similar to the members of the military, the President, Vice President and most members of Congress are required to spend a significant amount of time away from their homes, families and friends while Congress is in session; and

WHEREAS, because of the patriotism, devotion and sacrifices of our President, Vice President and members of Congress, ours is the most free nation on earth, where our citizens enjoy unequalled rights, privileges and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the President, Vice President and members of Congress should therefore be granted the privilege of using the VA health care system for their health care needs; and

WHEREAS, if the President, Vice President or member of Congress is a veteran, he or she should be classified into the appropriate priority group for purpose of receipt of VA health care; and

WHEREAS, if the President, Vice President, or member of Congress is not a veteran, he or she should be classified equivalent to a non-service-connected veteran in either Priority Group 7 or 8, depending on their income and assets; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to require the President, Vice President and members of Congress to enroll in VA health care services and receive health care exclusively from the VA health care system.

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RESOLUTION NO. 072
SUPPORT STATE VETERANS HOME PROGRAM

WHEREAS, State Veterans Homes were founded for Union soldiers and sailors following the American Civil War, and have ably served veterans for nearly 150 years; and

WHEREAS, under title 38, United States Code, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized to make per diem payments up to 50% of the national average cost of care in State Veterans Homes; and

WHEREAS, the VA is also authorized to enter into provider agreements with State Veterans Homes to pay the full cost of care provided to veterans with 70% or higher service-connected disabilities or who require nursing home care for service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, under the State Extended Care Facilities Grant Program the federal government provides grants to cover up to 65% of the cost to construct, expand, rehabilitate or repair a State Home, with states required to cover a minimum of 35% of the cost of projects in matching funding; and

WHEREAS, there are over 161 State Veterans Homes in all states and in Puerto Rico, that provide hospital, skilled nursing, rehabilitation, long-term care, dementia and Alzheimer's care, domiciliary care, respite care, end of life care and adult day health care daily to almost 30,000 veterans and their dependents; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the growing long-term health care needs of elder veterans, the State Veterans Home program and innovations in delivering needed services will continue to be a major partner with the VA in meeting the health care needs of aging veterans; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing skilled nursing care, many State Veterans Homes also provide domiciliary care and some provide adult day health care, further increasing the options for long-term service and supports offered to veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA promulgated a new regulation (RIN 2900-AO88) in 2018 that changes the rules and requirements for operating domiciliary and adult day health care programs, which may increase the cost of these programs without providing commensurate increases to per diem for these programs; and

WHEREAS, more State Veterans Homes must continue their cultural transformation away from traditional State Homes providing long-term services and supports that emphasize veterans direction and staff empowerment through small home model community living centers for which studies show has a positive impact on the quality of care, improves veterans' social interactions and enhances staff engagement, reducing staff turnover; and

WHEREAS, the evidence also suggest that the costs of construction and operation of the small house model can be less or no more than those associated with constructing traditionally designed nursing homes, with some State Homes already favoring the small home design; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on Congress and the VA to support the use of small home design when constructing new or renovating State Veterans Homes; AND

BE IT BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports sufficient funding for the State Home Construction Grant Program to include the renovation to and construction of small house model; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DAV supports an adequate the VA per diem payment to State Homes of not more than 50% of the national average cost of providing care in a State Veterans Home, as authorized by law; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DAV calls on Congress and VA to ensure that State Veterans Home are provided an adequate per diem for domiciliary and adult day health care programs that properly recognizes the differences in levels of care within each program.

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RESOLUTION NO. 076
SUPPORT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH INTO THE MEDICAL EFFICACY OF CANNABIS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Controlled Substances Act of 1970 classifies cannabis as a Schedule I substance, determined to have a high potential for abuse and no accepted medical use, making illegal the possession and use of cannabis even under a medical nature; and

WHEREAS, across 33 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Guam and Puerto Rico, state medical marijuana laws vary greatly, but all recognize the therapeutic effect of cannabis and cannabinoids; and

WHEREAS, the growing accessibility of cannabis and acceptance of its use for medical purposes by states set against federal law have raised important issues including public health concerns; and

WHEREAS, the lack of any amalgamated knowledge of cannabis-related health effects has led to uncertainty about what, if any, are the harms or benefits from its use; and

WHEREAS, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine conducted a rigorous review of scientific research published since 1999 about what is known about the health impacts of cannabis and cannabis-derived products—such as marijuana and active chemical compounds known as cannabinoids—ranging from their therapeutic effects to their risks; and

WHEREAS, the study, published on January 12, 2017, considered more than 10,000 scientific abstracts, many of which did not have control study groups, to reach nearly 100 conclusions; and

WHEREAS, the study found evidence to support that patients who were treated with cannabis or cannabinoids were more likely to experience a significant reduction in pain symptoms; oral cannabinoids provided relief for multiple sclerosis-related muscle spasms; and there was conclusive evidence the use of certain oral cannabinoids was beneficial for patients with chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting; and

WHEREAS, the study suggests that cannabis use increases certain risks, including but not limited to, being involved in a motor vehicle accident; developing schizophrenia, other psychoses and social anxiety disorders, developing cannabis use disorder; and

WHEREAS, this and other studies in their entirety are not conclusive, comprehensive clinical studies of cannabis, cannabis-derived products and their delivery systems are needed to prove medical efficacy for veterans who receive health care as provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports more comprehensive and scientifically rigorous research by the VA into the therapeutic benefits and risks of cannabis and cannabis-derived products as a possible treatment for service-connected disabled veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 077
REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY IN THE RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND CREDENTIALING OF CERTAIN HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS UNDERGOING SEPARATION FROM THE ARMED SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has demonstrated difficulty in timely filing vacant health care positions required to meet the needs of service-connected disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, active members of the armed forces serve in a health care capacity and are being discharged from the armed forces under honorable conditions and are looking for work; and

WHEREAS, veterans should receive hiring priority with the VA; and

WHEREAS, the VA historically takes an excessive amount of time to recruit, screen and hire new employees, actions that could be expedited by hiring qualified veterans with current training and background checks; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to require the VA to carry out a program to increase efficiency in the recruitment and hiring by the VA of health care workers that are undergoing separation from the armed forces and to create uniform credentialing standards for certain health care professionals of the VA.

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RESOLUTION NO. 079
IMPROVE URGENT AND EMERGENCY CARE BENEFIT FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) aims to provide enrolled veterans a uniform benefits package that emphasizes preventive and primary care, and provides a comprehensive health care benefit plan including hospital, outpatient and long-term care; and

WHEREAS, a health care benefits package is incomplete without access to and coverage for urgent and emergent care; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–251) authorizes the VA furnish veterans urgent care, which is typically lower cost than emergency treatment, and with sufficient access can encourage veterans to receive health care in the appropriate setting; and

WHEREAS, the VA's emergency care statutory authorities, regulations, processes, and procedures are complex, inconsistently applied across the Veterans Health Administration and cause significant confusion for VA staff, veterans and community care providers; and

WHEREAS, the August 2019 VA Office of Inspector General report found a significant number of emergency care claims were inappropriately denied and many rejected claims were inappropriately processed, with some leading to wrongful denials and rejection of claims, and potentially placing undue financial risk on thousands of veterans; and

WHEREAS, such denied claims have transferred the liability of billions of dollars from the VA to veterans, resulting in serious financial challenges; and

WHEREAS, fear of incurring enormous financial liability from denied VA payment or reimbursement for emergency care causes many veterans to avoid or otherwise delay seeking or contacting emergency medical services; and

WHEREAS, Congress over the years enacted legislation to address barriers to emergency care and payment or reimbursement for such care for disabled veterans due to the VA's narrow interpretation of the existing authority for emergency care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to simplify the eligibility for urgent and emergency care paid for by the VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to provide a more liberal and consistent interpretation of the law governing payment for urgent and emergency care and reimbursement to veterans who have received emergency care at non-VA facilities.

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RESOLUTION NO. 080
ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROCESS VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER

WHEREAS, many DAV members want to join the ranks of volunteers who serve disabled veterans in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and in local communities associated with the VA; and

WHEREAS, there is great variability in both the process and timeliness of providing prospective volunteers all the required screenings, interviews, orientations and training prescribed by the VA facility; and

WHEREAS, these volunteers must undergo an arduous clearance process and background check that can require months of delay, as well as complete a lengthy application to volunteer and thus lose their services and the opportunity for voluntary activities to aid veterans; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the VA Voluntary Service program manager to ensure that volunteer applications are processed in an expeditious manner, because volunteers perform a valuable service to veterans in facilities and save taxpayers millions of dollars; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, strongly encourages each Voluntary Service program manager at every VA medical facility to standardize and expedite the process, better leveraging information technology to attract and ensure volunteers are able to serve disabled veterans in VA medical facilities and in their communities.

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RESOLUTION NO. 081
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND ELIGIBILITY OF A QUALIFYING VETERAN'S ADULT CHILD FOR THE CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, dependent children of certain veterans are provided medical care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA); and

WHEREAS, a child of a veteran is eligible for CHAMPVA if the veteran is rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected disability, was rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition at the time of death, died of a service-connected disability or died on active duty, and the dependent is ineligible for Department of Defense TRICARE benefits; and

WHEREAS, the eligibility of a dependent child for CHAMPVA ends at the age of 18, unless that dependent is enrolled in an accredited school as a full-time student until the age of 23, or marries or is a stepchild who no longer lives in the household of the CHAMPVA sponsor; and

WHEREAS, current law requires private health plans and insurers to offer coverage to adult children of beneficiaries to age 26 regardless of the child's financial dependency, marital status, enrollment in school, residency or other factors; and

WHEREAS, children of severely disabled veterans and survivors of veterans who paid the ultimate sacrifice should not be penalized or denied the same rights and privileges as other citizens of a grateful nation enjoy; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to extend the eligibility of a qualifying veteran's child for CHAMPVA coverage to age 26 under the same conditions of covered adult children of beneficiaries in private health plans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 082
ENSURE TIMELY ACCESS TO QUALITY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES

WHEREAS, wounded and ill veterans' demands for care at many Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities have overwhelmed the VA's current capacity; and

WHEREAS, given the VA's limited resources, in some cases, the VA is forced to ration care, leaving many of its nearly 9.2 million veteran patients waiting long periods and driving farther for primary, specialty and dental care appointments; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law115–251) established a new Veterans Community Care Program and made all veterans enrolled in the VA health care system eligible for care in the community, yet the VA is unable to systematically monitor the timeliness of veterans' access to such care; and

WHEREAS, the VA should identify and immediately correct the underlying problems to properly manage its health care capacity and identify additional resources needed to ensure timely access to primary, specialty and dental care for all service-connected disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, short-term solutions, such as staff reassignments, redirection of patients to alternative sites of VA care and restrictions of individual practitioners' available time with each patient while adding additional appointments to their daily schedules, can provide some immediate relief but are only temporary solutions in light of recognized clinical and administrative vacancies across the VA health care system; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to request and for Congress to provide necessary authorities, sufficient resources and staff to reduce waiting times so wounded, ill and injured veterans can realize timely access to all medically necessary services.

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RESOLUTION NO. 083
ADEQUATELY FUND AND SUSTAIN THE READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND ITS VET CENTER PROGRAM

WHEREAS, in 1979, Congress authorized the establishment of the Readjustment Counseling Service, an independent counseling activity within the then–Veterans Administration's Department of Medicine and Surgery; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, the Veterans Administration opened the first "Vet Center" to provide readjustment services and psychological counseling to Vietnam combat veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other conditions related to combat exposure and their experiences in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the Vet Centers, now numbering 300 locations, 80 mobile vet centers and 19 vet center outstations nationwide, have proven to be a most useful and effective tool to assist veterans of all eras who seek care for issues associated with exposure to traumatic combat situations, challenges with reintegrating into families and communities and military sexual trauma, in addition to other problems and to certain family members; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers provide cost-effective and highly beneficial services, including counseling for PTSD and other readjustment challenges, suicide prevention and crisis intervention, marriage and family counseling, and family bereavement counseling beneficial to recovery; and

WHEREAS, the Vet Center program has been successful counseling veterans from all prior conflicts needing such readjustment services, including World War II, the Korean War, the war in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, and veterans of combat service in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers lead all Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) mental health programs in conducting veteran-to-veteran peer counseling services, wherein veterans who have themselves experienced post-deployment mental health issues related to their military experience are trained to provide counseling to those still suffering ill effects; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers are now charged with selecting and administering the peer retreats in both gender-exclusive and mixed gender groups of veterans ; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, commends the work of the Readjustment Counseling Service and of its Vet Centers of the VA, and encourages the Vet Centers maintain funding levels commensurate with the growth in veterans' demand for services and to accommodate outreach to meet unmet needs of additional veterans within the Vet Center catchment areas.

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RESOLUTION NO. 084
OPPOSE MEANS TESTING SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS, Public Law 104–262 requires 0% service-connected disabled veterans to be means tested in order to receive treatment in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility; and

WHEREAS, countless thousands of veterans have relied on care from VA medical facilities for decades and now face the possibility of losing access to VA medical care because of income levels, consequently causing them undue financial hardship, pain and suffering; and

WHEREAS, these 0% service-connected disabled veterans have been relegated to the lowest eligibility categories for care and, in some cases, below non-service-connected veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the exclusion of service-connected disabled veterans from the requirements of means testing for treatment or service received at VA medical facilities and the inclusion of 0% service-connected disabled veterans in Priority Group 3.

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RESOLUTION NO. 085
SUPPORT HUMANE, CONSISTENT PAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN THE VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, pain is one of the most prevalent reasons individuals, including wounded, injured and ill veterans, seek health care; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of veterans suffer from traumatic amputations and other severe injuries incurred during military service, while others suffer from a host of painful organic diseases and disabling conditions; and

WHEREAS, chronic pain is closely linked with depression and other mental health challenges, including suicidal ideation; and

WHEREAS, over a decade ago, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) established a new national health policy adding pain as the "fifth vital sign" in patients, along with blood pressure, temperature, pulse and respiration; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2001, the VA established and formalized a national pain management program for the purpose of promoting greater public awareness, training and educating health professional students, VA providers and their staffs, and veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, the VA has adopted a patient-centered and holistic approach to delivering health care in order to maintain and improve the health and quality of life of veterans and the VA's pain management program has been emulated in other public and private health care settings nationwide; and

WHEREAS, millions of veterans enrolled in VA health care have been aided by the VA's efforts to better manage pain, while reducing the use of opioids and other drugs in the treatment of chronic pain; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of veteran patients with chronic pain who have been prescribed pain medication over long periods have been abruptly denied further access to prescription medications for pain, contrary to its own pain management policy of tapering to reduce or to eventually discontinue opioid therapy when risks exceed benefits; and

WHEREAS, the VA recognizes non-pharmacological therapies, including complementary and integrative health therapies such as yoga, massage, acupuncture and chiropractic, as the best alternative in managing pain, yet VA policy does not require such therapies be available and be offered without locally imposed restrictions; and

WHEREAS, because VA facilities and all prescribers are subject to the Controlled Substances Act of 1970, as amended, and some veterans have had their pain medication prescriptions managed in such a way that creates great anxiety and sometimes produces ill effects of withdrawal because of the Act's 30-day limit on Schedule II drug prescriptions and VA prescribing policies and practices that may fail to resupply them on a timely basis; and

WHEREAS, pain management programs should be concerned uppermost about both patient safety and humane treatment to reduce pain and its underlying causes, with or without narcotics; and

WHEREAS, without appropriate psychological counseling and transition to suitable alternatives to controlled substances, including Schedule II controlled medications, veterans can suffer physical and mental anguish needlessly and thereby are not receiving patient-centered, holistic care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to redouble its efforts to conduct a uniform national pain management program to ensure that veterans with chronic pain who have used prescribed pain medications over long histories are managed in a patient-centered environment, with balanced regard for both patient safety and humane alternatives to the use of controlled substances, and while under VA care receive their prescribed medications in a timely fashion; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV encourages the VA at all levels to monitor local pain management efforts and resolve any conflicts between the effects of the Controlled Substances Act of 1970 and VA prescribing policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with the VA's national pain management policy and guidelines, and consistent with the intent of this resolution.

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RESOLUTION NO. 086
SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS SUFFERING FROM POST-DEPLOYMENT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES OR OTHER SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, veterans exposed to combat and other hardship deployments are known to be at risk for development of post-deployment mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and other serious mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS, left untreated or inadequately treated, a veteran suffering the chronic effects of PTSD, depression or other mental illnesses may suffer marriage and relationship breakdown, underemployment or loss of employment, financial hardship, social alienation and even homelessness, or involvement with the justice system; and

WHEREAS, a combat-exposed veteran who is not appropriately counseled for the psychological effects of PTSD or depression stands at greater risk of emotional and mental decompensation, whose consequences often fall directly on family members and dependents of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) embraces recovery from mental illness as its guiding principle in all VA mental health programs, and involvement of family members and dependents is often vital to a veteran's eventual recovery from mental illness; and

WHEREAS, subsection 1712A(b)2 , title 38, United States Code, authorizes the VA Readjustment Counseling Service, through its Vet Center program, to provide psychological counseling and other necessary mental health services to family members of war veterans under care in such Vet Centers, irrespective of service-connected disability status; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted section 301 of Public Law 110–387 for the express purpose of authorizing marriage and family counseling in VA facilities to address the needs of veterans' families, including spouses and other dependent family members of veterans who are experiencing mental health challenges with attendant marital or family difficulties; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted sections 101–103 of Public Law 111–163 and sections 161–163 of Public Law 115–182 or the purpose of authorizing a wide array of support, care and counseling services for personal caregivers of severely injured veterans from all eras of military service; and

WHEREAS, section 1782, title 38, United States Code, authorizes a program of counseling, training and mental health services, including psychological support, for immediate family members of disabled veterans who need care for service-connected disabilities; who have service-connected disabilities rated at 50% or more disabling; who were discharged or retired from the armed forces for injuries or illnesses incurred in the line of duty; who are World War I or Mexican Border Period veterans; who were awarded the Purple Heart; who are former prisoners of war; who were exposed to radiation or toxic substances; or who are unable to defray the expenses of their care; and

WHEREAS, section 1781, title 38, United States Code, authorizes a program of health care, including certain mental health services, for immediate family members and dependents of a veteran who is totally and permanently disabled from service-connected disabilities or who died from disabilities incurred during military service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish appropriate and effective programs to ensure that veterans who are enrolled in VA health care receive adequate care for their wounds and illnesses, including mental health-related illnesses, and, when appropriate, family members—whether family caregivers, spouses or other family dependents—receive necessary counseling, including psychological counseling, training and other mental health services authorized by law to aid in the recovery of veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 087
OPPOSE RECOVERY OF THIRD-PARTY PAYMENTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, the primary mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is to provide high-quality medical care to veterans eligible by reason of their service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the VA is authorized to recover or collect the cost of care from third-party health insurers when insured veterans receive health care from the VA for non-service-connected conditions; and

WHEREAS, the collection of payments from third parties for the treatment of veterans' service-connected disabilities would abrogate the VA's and the federal government's responsibility to provide such care and may result in increased premium payments by veterans; and

WHEREAS, to improve its ability to generate revenue on the backs of service-connected disabled veterans, some continue to propose implementing a policy to eliminate the current practice of first applying third-party payments to offset veterans' copayment debts; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any legislation that would require the VA to recover third-party payments for the care and treatment of a veteran's service-connected disabilities.

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RESOLUTION NO. 089
SUPPORT EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WORKFORCE

WHEREAS, staffing shortages and vacancies at every level of the VA health care system and across numerous critical positions impede service-connected disabled veterans who rely on the VA to receive timely, high-quality veteran-centric medical care; and

WHEREAS, section 7412, title 38, United States Code, requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) to determine and report on the top five clinical and nonclinical occupations of Veterans Health Administration (VHA) personnel covered under section 7401, title 38, United States Code, for which there are the largest staffing shortages; and

WHEREAS, the VA OIG found six occupations as having the largest staffing shortages in the identified time period, physicians, nurses, physician assistants, psychologists, physical therapists and medical technologists, and found the most commonly cited challenges to staffing were the lack of qualified applicants, non-competitive salary and high staff turnover; and

WHEREAS, the VA continues to fail in fully meeting the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–251) requirement to report on a public website the number of personnel vacancies and hiring to ensure transparency in gains and losses of employees in an agency that continues to experience chronic health care professional shortages since 2015; and

WHEREAS, despite the total number of VA employees providing and supporting direct clinical care to veterans has grown from 211,192 in 2015 to 342,911 in the second quarter of 2019, to meet the medical care needs of service-connected disabled veterans, the VA has identified at least 40,880 vacancies throughout the VA health care system at the end of March 2019; and

WHEREAS, there is a nationwide shortage of qualified doctors, nurses and specialists particularly in rural areas because the VA must compete with the private sector for-profit and nonprofit hospitals to recruit and retain the best and brightest clinical staff, and the federal hiring process for clinical staff remains lengthy and convoluted; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports a simple-to-administer alternative VHA personnel system, in law and regulation, which governs all VHA employees, applies best practices from the private sector to human capital management, and supports pay and benefits that are competitive with the private sector.

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RESOLUTION NO. 090
REDUCE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICATION CO-PAYMENTS EQUAL TO, OR LESS THAN, THE LOWEST CHARGED BY PRIVATE-SECTOR COMMERCIAL OUTLETS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has periodically increased medication co-payments from the original charge of $2.00 to the current co-payment structure of $5.00 for generic medications, $8.00 for preferred generics and $11.00 for brand name medications; and

WHEREAS, Congress has not agreed to eliminate co-payments for VA health care services and medications, despite the origin of the requirement that was justified as a "temporary" measure to reduce the federal deficit; and

WHEREAS, numerous private-sector commercial pharmaceutical outlets make medications available for much lower co-payments than the VA charges veterans in VA care, in some cases as little as half of the VA's current charges; and

WHEREAS, in many instances VA clinicians prescribe over-the-counter medications to veterans that would cost far less if purchased in a commercial pharmaceutical outlet (but also including the VA's own Veterans Canteen Service (VCS) than charges in co-payments for the same medications; and

WHEREAS, VA medication co-payments cause an undue financial hardship for many sick and disabled veterans who need relief due to their high health care costs and fixed incomes; and

WHEREAS, the VA should continue its policy to first apply third-party payments to offset veterans co-payment debts; and

WHEREAS, although DAV adamantly opposes health care and medication co-payments for military retirees and veterans, DAV believes the VA should not charge veterans required co-payments that exceed co-payments charged by large commercial pharmaceutical sources, and should not charge co-payments that exceed the full retail prices of prescribed over-the-counter medications that are sold in the VCS; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation that will reduce the amount of medication co-payments paid by veterans to be equal to, or less than, the lowest price co-payments charged by private-sector commercial outlets to veterans and nonveterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in the case of over-the-counter medications, Congress should prohibit the VA from charging medication co-payments that exceed the retail cost of these drugs sold in VCS retail stores.

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RESOLUTION NO. 091
SUPPORT MODERNIZING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the largest integrated health care system in the United States, with over 1,800 sites of care, including comprehensive medical centers, community-based outpatient clinics, nursing homes, readjustment counseling "Vet Centers," residential rehabilitation treatment programs and other facilities for the delivery of health care; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the VA's capital infrastructure medical centers are located on large, campus-style settings in excess of 50 years old and were designed and built under an outmoded concept of health care delivery founded on centralized hospital inpatient episodes of care; and

WHEREAS, the VA needs to modernize its health care system and programs to meet veterans' current and future health care needs while providing optimal efficiency and enhanced access to the system of care; and

WHEREAS, the VA has internally identified needs for up to $67.4 billion in capital facilities improvements and new construction through its Strategic Capital Investment Planning (SCIP) program; and

WHEREAS, continuing appropriated funding levels at a fraction of the internally identified need will prevent the VA from modernizing its facilities for decades, despite well-recognized needs in the VA's 10-year capital plan; and

WHEREAS, because of insufficient appropriated funding the VA and Congress must look for new and innovative ways to include public-private partnerships, which may hold promise in reforming the VA's

capital infrastructure program and should be explored as another way to address the VA's infrastructure needs; and

WHEREAS, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have produced over 1.2 million injured and ill war veterans who have enrolled in VA health care and who will need a variety of comprehensive VA health care services for decades, alongside the existing enrolled veteran population of over 8 million individuals from earlier service periods; and

WHEREAS, given the VA's expected continuing costs for new major medical facility construction, consolidation and modernization, the VA may revise its construction policy to further emphasize primary and specialty outpatient services, with complex and intensive inpatient services to be provided through affiliated arrangements with non-VA institutions and other private partners; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of leased VA community-based outpatient clinics are in jeopardy due to a change in congressional budget rules that clouds the future of this cost-effective approach to veterans health care, and in fact may deny that care; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–182) included a section to establish an Asset and Infrastructure Review that would review all VA health care infrastructure to develop a plan for strengthening, expanding and realigning VA facilities, starting in 2021 and completing by 2023, in an open and transparent process that includes participation from the VA, Congress, the President and veterans service organizations; and

WHEREAS, the VA's primary mission is to meet the needs of ill and disabled veterans through complex inpatient and rehabilitative hospital care, outpatient primary and specialty care, therapeutic residential care and long-term care in government facilities operated by the VA for the exclusive benefit of veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to continue its efforts to request adequate funding in future budgets to ensure at minimum that the VA fulfills the intent of its strategic capital planning initiative; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should carefully monitor any intended VA changes in infrastructure that could jeopardize the VA's ability to meet veterans' needs for primary and specialized VA health care and rehabilitative services, or be the cause of diminution of the VA's established graduate medical and other health professions education and biomedical research programs, consequential to deployment of any new facilities model of health care delivery; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the VA and Congress should implement the Asset and Infrastructure Review fully and faithfully as intended, consulting with veterans service organizations as required in the law, and following all of the timelines therein; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to continue to provide appropriated funding sufficient to fulfill the needs for infrastructure identified through the strategic capital planning process.

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RESOLUTION NO. 092

SUPPORT ENHANCED TREATMENT FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

WHEREAS, the fiscal year (FY) 2018 Department of Defense Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response annual report on sexual assault in the military included reports of 6.2% of active-duty women and 0.7% of active-duty men experiencing sexual assault and 24.2% of service women and 6.3% of service men reporting experiences of sexual assault in the past 12 months indicating statistically significant increases in prevalence of sexual assault for women in all service branches and for men in the Air Force over 2016; and

WHEREAS, the growing prevalence of sexual assault in the military is alarming and often results in lingering physical, emotional or chronic psychological symptoms in assault survivors; and

WHEREAS, 25% of women and 1% of men enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system report they had experienced military sexual trauma (MST); and

WHEREAS, in FY 2014, more than 76% of women veterans in the VA who screened positive for MST received outpatient care for either a mental or physical health condition related to MST; and

WHEREAS, the VA provides specialized residential and outpatient counseling programs and evidence-based treatments for MST survivors within VA medical centers, clinics and vet centers; and

WHEREAS, based on VA clinical determinations, some veterans request or are referred to VA medical facilities other than their local facilities or closest Veterans Integrated Service Network to receive the specialized care they need; and

WHEREAS, the VA's current policy in beneficiary travel permits reimbursement to a veteran only from a veteran's home of record to the nearest VA facility by road mileage, whether or not that

facility possesses the expertise needed for a particular type of care, including inpatient and residential treatment for MST-related needs; and

WHEREAS, if a VA clinician determines an MST survivor needs specialized care from a VA MST inpatient facility, the VA's beneficiary travel policy may serve to obstruct access to that resource or force an MST survivor to self-pay travel costs in order to gain access to these specialized services; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based treatment practices known to successfully treat veterans with MST-related mental health conditions are available but not systemically used by all providers treating these patients; and

WHEREAS, although the VA offers MST-related training and has produced clinical practice guidelines and formulated evidence-based treatments, the VA does not mandate that its mental health providers who treat MST survivors complete specialized training or undergo a certification process to ensure they are qualified to treat such patients; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on the VA to ensure all MST survivors gain access to the specialized treatment programs and services they need to fully recover from sexual trauma that occurred in military service and are enabled to choose gender exclusive treatment options, including their preferred sex of provider, to the maximum extent possible; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to change beneficiary travel policies to meet the specialized clinical needs of veterans receiving MST-related treatment; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to continually improve its MST treatment programs, ensure dissemination of MST evidence-based clinical practice guidelines throughout the VA health care system and develop a formal mandatory certification process for mental health providers who treat MST survivors.

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RESOLUTION NO. 093
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO PREVENT AND TREAT SUBSTANCE-USE DISORDERS IN VETERANS

WHEREAS, the misuse and abuse of alcohol and other addictive substances is a major health problem for many Americans, including veterans; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2018, 520,000 veterans were treated for diagnoses related to substance use or abuse within the VA; and

WHEREAS, long-term use of opioids springing from the chronic pain diagnosed for many veterans has sometimes led to overuse or addiction; and

WHEREAS, substance-use disorders result in significant health and social deterioration and financial costs to veterans, their families and the nation; and

WHEREAS, data from a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national study showed that 40% of VA outpatients reported hazardous use of alcohol and 22% reported full alcohol abuse, but only 31% of the respondents reported being counseled about alcohol use and fewer referred to care; and

WHEREAS, substance abuse increases risk for suicidal behavior in veterans, especially in women; and

WHEREAS, substance-use disorders are also associated with family instability, homelessness, decreased worker productivity and declining health status; and

WHEREAS, veterans are at risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and a wide array of other medical and psychological conditions, which may be associated with veterans' increased use of substances; and

WHEREAS, the VA offers evidence-based treatment for substance-use disorders including stepped care and medication assisted withdrawal for opioid abuse, few integrated treatment programs that would work to address both the substance-use disorder and co-occurring PTSD, depression, anxiety, or other medical or mental health conditions which may cause or exacerbate veterans' inappropriate use of substances; and

WHEREAS, in some locations, the VA lacks timely access to a continuum of available services that ranges from detoxification to rehabilitation in order to effectively treat substance-use disorders; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports program improvement and enhanced resources for VA substance-use disorder programs to achieve a full spectrum of evidence-based accessible and available treatment,

including identification of effective evidence-based psychotherapeutic programs for veterans with co-morbid mental health and substance-use disorder conditions, regardless of their place of residence.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 096
OPPOSE WEAKENING, DIMINISHING OR DISMANTLING THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, operating the nation's largest integrated and specialized health care system, VA is expected to fulfill four critical health care missions: providing timely, high-quality health care to ill and injured veterans; educating and training health care professionals; conducting medical and prosthetic research; and serving society in general in times of national emergency; and

WHEREAS, from assisting with natural disasters, emergencies and chemical, biological, or radiological threats to the stockpiling of drugs, medical devices, and other biological and emergency supplies, the VA carries the responsibility of serving as a backup for the Department of Defense, responding in concert with the Department of Homeland Security, and coordinating with the Department of Health and Human Services to fulfill its indispensable role in our nation's emergency preparedness strategy, often without additional funding and resources; and

WHEREAS, to provide an adequate supply of health personnel to the nation, the VA delivers clinical education and training to over 125,000 clinical trainees across more than 40 health care disciplines through coordinated programs and activities with over 1,800 unique college and university affiliates, all of which contribute substantially to the VA's ability to deliver cost-effective, high-quality care to veterans, recruit and retain health care professionals, and conduct meaningful veteran-centered research; and

WHEREAS, despite insufficient and unpredictable funding for VA research, state-of-the-art technology, equipment, and facilities, the VA Medical and Prosthetic Research program provides a vital service and investment for veterans to develop new treatments restoring their wounds and injuries, to maintain the health of veterans of prior conflicts; and

WHEREAS, the VA's primary mission to furnish service-connected veterans timely, high-quality health services covers a full continuum of care, including, but not limited to such foundational services as primary care through patient-centered medical home, prosthetics services, spinal cord injury and disease care, blinded care, amputee care, polytrauma care, mental health care, treatments for toxic and environmental exposures, pharmacy, and long-term services and support in both institutional and non-institutional settings; and

WHEREAS, the increasing demand for VA health care reflects changes in the veteran patient population such as the advanced aging of many World War II, Korea, and Vietnam veterans in greater need of health care; high veteran satisfaction with the VA's comprehensive and coordinated delivery of health care; and changes in health care practice such as the increasing use of pharmaceuticals, advances in technology and increasing provision of community care; and

WHEREAS, while funding for VA to furnish medical care has increased year after year, it has not kept pace with demand from the rising number of veterans using the VA, the growing volume and intensity of health services being used and the increasing reliance on using the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, as demand outstripped available VA capacity and resources impacting veterans access to care, Congress provided the VA an additional $19.4 billion since fiscal year 2015 to purchase care in the community, and enacted Public Law 115–182 to reform the VA health care system by consolidating VA's community care programs, improving and expanding existing programs and authorities, and developing a long-term plan to realign and modernize VA's health care infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, substantial funding increases for community care are outpacing funding increases for VA medical care, and sequestration and arbitrary budget caps are beginning to have negative effects on the Department's ability to adequately provide veterans care within the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, the VA must maintain a "critical mass" of capital, human and technical resources to promote effective, high-quality care for veterans, especially those with sophisticated health problems, such as blindness, amputations, spinal cord injury or chronic mental health problems; and

WHEREAS, it is well documented in numerous studies of the VA health care system and the quality of care it delivers to millions of veterans that while it faces many challenges, it continues to outperform the U.S. health care system on nearly every quality of care metric, and this unique accomplishment affords the best value to taxpayers in caring for ill and injured veterans and must not be compromised; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any recommendation or proposal that could adversely impact the VA's ability to deliver on its four missions or could lead to weakening, diminishing or dismantling of the VA health care system that millions of service-disabled veterans have chosen and rely upon.

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RESOLUTION NO. 133
SUPPORT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, to restore the wounds and injuries, to maintain the health of veterans of prior conflicts, and to develop new treatments for veterans wounded and injured in today's and future conflicts, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical and Prosthetic Research program provides a vital service and investment for veterans; and

WHEREAS, funded VA researchers are studying injuries and illnesses emanating from war, such as traumatic brain injury, burns, paralysis and amputations, and illnesses and diseases that disproportionately appear in the wartime veteran population, such as toxic environmental exposures, numerous organic illnesses, and post-traumatic stress disorder and other associated mental health sequela of war; and

WHEREAS, VA researchers have been recognized by multiple awards of Nobel Prizes, Lasker Awards (the "American Nobel Prize"), and many other public and private emblems of achievement for elevating the standards of health care not only for wounded and injured veterans but for people all around the world, including publication of tens of thousands of research developments in peer-reviewed medical literature; and

WHEREAS, VA researchers contribute directly to the health of veterans by serving as clinical providers in VA health care facilities, and carry out important faculty and attending duties to sustain the VA's affiliations with the nation's schools of health professions, thereby elevating the standards of health care for all; and

WHEREAS, VA research is conducted only after rigorous scientific peer review, supervised by institutional review boards, and only in conformance with the Common Rule and other ethical and humanitarian constraints to ensure informed consent and safety of all research volunteers, and the efficacy of approved research projects; and

WHEREAS, the VA's clinician-scientists in VA Rehabilitation Research and Development Service, who constitute the world's foremost scientists working in this field, invent and adapt specialized prosthetic, orthotic and other appliances, supports and treatments, using numerous ground-breaking technologies, to improve the lives of countless numbers of severely disabled veterans, including many members of DAV; and

WHEREAS, the annual VA Medical and Prosthetic Research appropriation constitutes less than one-tenth of 1% of the VA's health care budget, but research funding has been subjected to proposed reductions, and its annual appropriation fails even to account for uncontrollable research inflation; and

WHEREAS, an independent report to the VA and Congress has identified almost $800 million in repairs, restorations and replacements that are needed for the VA's research laboratories, some of which involve life and safety risks for VA employees and veteran volunteers, but neither VA nor Congress has provided designated funding to address these needs; and

WHEREAS, information technology research is considered an important tool to improve health care allowing medical researchers to determine the effectiveness of a particular treatment for a given population or to discover the harmful side effects of an intervention; and

WHEREAS, this requires dedicated resources to the development, operations and maintenance of information technology proportional to the resources provided the VA Medical and Prosthetic Research budget; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, strongly supports the VA's Medical and Prosthetic Research program as a vital investment in the future, affecting wounded, injured and ill veterans, and urges the VA and Congress to adequately fund this program by ensuring there is adequate eradication of infrastructure and information technology deficits so that it may continue its remarkable traditions in helping veterans recover and rehabilitate, to improve the quality of their lives.

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RESOLUTION NO. 185
PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE DENTAL CARE TO ALL SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, DAV recognizes that oral health is integral to the general health and well-being of a patient and is part of comprehensive health care; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system is mandated under section 1712, title 38, United States Code, to provide outpatient dental services to veterans rated 100% service connected, to veterans who were held prisoner of war or to those who have sustained dental trauma in performance of military service; and

WHEREAS, irrespective of service-connected disability, section 1701(9), title 38, United States Code, defines "preventive health services" as a broad collection of VA health services that improve, protect and sustain the general health and well-being of veterans enrolled in VA health care, to include "such other health care services as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to provide effective and economical preventive health care"; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2000 report by the Surgeon General of the United States, Oral Health in America, individuals who are medically compromised or who have disabilities are at greater risk for oral diseases, and, in turn, oral diseases further jeopardize their health, and that oral diseases are progressive, cumulative and become more complex over time, and can affect economic productivity and compromise the ability to work, and often significantly diminish the quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the VA maintains oral and dental programs within its health care system; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide outpatient dental care to all enrolled service-connected disabled veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 186
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CREATE A REHABILITATIVE SPECIAL EVENTS OFFICE WITHIN THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and several congressionally chartered veterans service organizations co-sponsor national rehabilitative special event programs for veterans receiving health care from VA facilities; and

WHEREAS, the VA currently has a program within the Office of Public Affairs tasked with oversight of the national rehabilitative special events; and

WHEREAS, these rehabilitative programs, which include the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, National Veterans Wheelchair Games, National Veterans Golden Age Games, National Creative Arts Festival and National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic, focus on rehabilitation of many severely disabled veterans, and as such, these events should be the responsibility of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), not the Office of Public Affairs; and

WHEREAS, while these programs showcase the preventive and therapeutic values of sports, fitness and recreation, which are key factors in the VA's extensive rehabilitation programs, they are also beneficial to veterans, helping many to overcome or mitigate the physical and emotional impact of severe disabilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to create an office within VHA to oversee these rehabilitative special events and to provide a separate account in the VA appropriation for the national rehabilitative special events office so the VA can continue to contribute its fair share of the funding; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that responsibility for rehabilitative special event programs should be transferred from the Office of Public Affairs to VHA in the new office recommended herein.

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RESOLUTION NO. 187
SUPPORT NEW MODELS OF CARE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR VETERANS WITH DEMENTIA

WHEREAS, veterans are more than twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's disease when compared civilian counterparts; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) faces a large and growing number of veterans with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease and other organic diseases of the brain, it is prevalent in more than 774,000 veterans, including over 400,000 veterans enrolled in VA health care; and

WHEREAS, dementia is a chronic and incurable condition, costing the VA three times more than the average patient; and

WHEREAS, dementia impairs key executive functions, such as memory and cognition, including language, insight, judgment and ability to plan; diminishes the ability for self-care; triggers behavioral and psychological problems; and creates a heavy burden on caregivers; and

WHEREAS, dementia is difficult to diagnose and is often missed by clinicians, creating gaps in care for these veterans; and

WHEREAS, several studies have raised concern that depression, traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder may be linked to an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease; and

WHEREAS, the VA's failure to provide necessary supports to family caregivers of dementia patients damages their psychosocial well-being; and

WHEREAS, there will be 423,000 new cases of Alzheimer's and other dementias among veterans in the decade ending in 2020; and

WHEREAS, through demonstration projects, the VA has developed effective new models of dementia care that are capable of providing integrated care across health care settings, but these projects may be phased out due to lack of VA leadership and resources; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to increase support and resources for effective initiatives to improve dementia care for veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to implement in VA facilities nationwide its best models of integrated dementia care based on proven demonstration projects, to ensure patient-centered, high-quality and cost-effective care is provided to the growing number of veterans suffering from dementia.

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RESOLUTION NO. 219
SUPPORT TOP PRIORITY ACCESS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has issued national directives and policies to affirm its commitment to providing top-priority access to hospital care and medical services to veterans with service-connected disabilities, regardless of the percentage assigned to the service-connected disability rating, in absence of compelling medical reasons to the contrary; and

WHEREAS, many VA facilities are struggling to fulfill this mandate because of budget pressures, insufficient local resources and demand exceeding capacity because of increasing patient workloads; and

WHEREAS, DAV continues to receive complaints from service-connected veterans who are being denied priority access to VA health care services or report their access to care is being delayed; and

WHEREAS, due to inadequate resources, VHA at times has been forced to establish waiting lists and implement other types of health care rationing, absent compelling medical reasons; and

WHEREAS, the VA is poised to realign and expand availability of health care services to meet the diverse needs of future veterans; reform its management by increasing efficiency, transparency and accountability to become more veteran-centric; and restructure all its community care programs into flexible and responsive integrated networks to deliver high-value, quality care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports strict enforcement by VHA, including VHA network and medical center directors, of governing policies providing service-connected veterans priority access to care, unless compelling medical reasons affecting other veterans prevent such priority from being extended to them.

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RESOLUTION NO. 222
URGE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITIES TO PROVIDE ENCLOSED ANIMAL RELIEF AREAS FOR SERVICE ANIMALS

WHEREAS, many veterans have service-connected conditions including visual, hearing or significant mobility impairment for which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will approve use of a service or guide dog upon completion of approved training protocols; and

WHEREAS, the VA recognizes the benefit of service and guide dogs to veterans when their use can facilitate the rehabilitation goals, increase functionality, enhance independence and improve the quality of life for certain veterans; and

WHEREAS, section 1.218, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, and Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive 1188 state the veteran is responsible for the service animal while on VHA property and such responsibility includes providing water, food and elimination breaks for the service animal in an outdoor area; and

WHEREAS, veterans with service-connected visual, hearing or significant mobility impairment require service and guide dogs to safely navigate VHA property to access needed benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, receiving needed medical benefits and services often requires the veteran and their service animal to remain at the VA medical facility for extended periods; and

WHEREAS, veterans must have reasonable access to safe enclosed areas to meet the required responsibility for care and stewardship of service animals while on VHA property for extended periods; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges all VA facilities to provide enclosed areas in which a service animal has access to water and a safe area for exercise and elimination.

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RESOLUTION NO. 289
URGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH ON HEALTH EFFECTS OF CHILDREN OF MALE VIETNAM VETERANS EXPOSED TO AGENT ORANGE

WHEREAS, research studies reviewed by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) have not shown that there are increased rates of birth defects among children of male Vietnam veterans, except for spina bifida, where it found a "limited/suggested" association between paternal exposure to the herbicides used in Vietnam, or to dioxin, and a higher risk of spina bifida among their children; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing body of evidence that exposure to herbicide and its contaminants can induce epigenetic changes that pass from parent to offspring in animal models; and

WHEREAS, the NAM has found that the available epidemiologic studies are of insufficient quality, consistency or statistical power to permit a conclusion regarding the presence or absence of an association with birth defects (other than spina bifida) as well as childhood cancer (including acute myeloid leukemia) in offspring of exposed people; and

WHEREAS, to resolve questions regarding paternally transmitted effects to their offspring, the NAM continues to recommend that laboratory research be conducted to characterize herbicides' and their contaminants' potential for inducing epigenetic modifications, study paternal exposure in the absence of maternal exposure, and review systematically defined clinical health conditions that are manifested later in the offspring's lives and other high-quality research; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to conduct comprehensive research, including those recommended by the NAM, to determine the level of association between herbicide exposure and birth defects and other conditions of children of male Vietnam veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 305
ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SUBMIT CANDIDATES FOR THE GEORGE H. SEAL MEMORIAL AWARD PROGRAM

WHEREAS, DAV created the George H. Seal Memorial Award Program as a means to recruit, retain and recognize volunteers who serve disabled veterans in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and the local community; and

WHEREAS, the George H. Seal Memorial Award annually recognizes the remarkable efforts of an outstanding member of DAV and the Auxiliary who willingly donates their time and energy to disabled veterans in VA Voluntary Service programs; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of each calendar year, DAV solicits every VA Voluntary Service program manager to nominate one deserving member of DAV and the Auxiliary from their facility in order to be considered for the George H. Seal Memorial Award, with little response; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, strongly encourages each Voluntary Service program manager at every VA medical facility to submit the name of a deserving member of DAV and the Auxiliary to be considered for this prestigious award in appreciation of their dedication and service to America's veterans through their voluntary service efforts.

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RESOLUTION NO. 310
IMPLEMENT A PILOT PROGRAM TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS GROWTH

WHEREAS, a significant portion (10–30%) of veterans from all combat eras experience the chronic effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, unsuccessfully treated PTSD is associated with significant adverse consequences such as substance-use disorders, family dissolution, unemployment, homelessness, involvement in the justice system and even suicide; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has developed effective programs for addressing the chronic needs of most veterans struggling with PTSD through trauma exposure-based therapies and pharmaceutical interventions; and

WHEREAS, the VA is an acknowledged world leader in developing effective care for the treatment of PTSD and continues to explore promising interventions; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding their use of effective VA treatment protocols for PTSD, there are high rates of dropouts in many traumatic exposure therapies and significant numbers of veterans continue to struggle: and

WHEREAS, post-traumatic stress growth emphasizes the development of resiliency by encouraging veterans to adopt different belief systems that may improve their abilities to cope, problem solve and find meaning in their lives after exposure to trauma; and

WHEREAS, certain post-traumatic stress growth programs such as the U.S. Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness initiative—Master Resilience Training—and the Boulder Crest Warrior programs have been associated with greater psychological health; and

WHEREAS, these programs are often provided by trained peer counselors who may themselves be in recovery from PTSD; and

WHEREAS, a recent Cochrane review found that outcomes from programs treating complex PTSD are of relatively low quality and scientific power; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to develop a pilot program to assess standardized post-traumatic stress growth programs to ensure effectiveness in achieving long-term health outcomes in meeting the needs of veterans with treatment-resistant, complex post-traumatic stress disorder.

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RESOLUTION NO. 330
PROVIDE EASY AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, because of service-connected disabilities, many disabled veterans face mobility challenges when attempting to access Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, the VA is currently authorized to transport any person for any purposes to any location in connection with vocational rehabilitation, counseling and for the purpose of VA examination, treatment or care; however, transportation programs offered through the VA do not meet all the transportation needs of service-connected disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA Veteran Transportation Program has three components to accomplish its mission to improve the quality of life for veterans by increasing access to health care through integrated and cost-effective transportation solutions; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) is intended to provide veterans with convenient and timely access to transportation services and to overcome barriers to receiving VA health care and services, and in particular to increase transportation options for veterans who need specialized forms of transportation to VA facilities; and

WHEREAS, wide variations in the eligibility for VTS transportation across the VA health care system is not consistent with overcoming barriers to receiving health care provided or purchased by the VA to service-connected veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA Beneficiary Travel program is not available to all service-connected disabled veterans with mobility challenges, and confusion among local VA facilities due to vague policies for using special-mode transportation, such as a wheelchair van, is reflected in lower-than-expected utilization; and

WHEREAS, the VA Highly Rural Transportation Grant program provides grants to assist only veterans in highly rural areas through innovative transportation services to travel to VA medical centers and to otherwise assist in providing transportation services in connection with the provision of VA medical care to these veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA lacks a consistent and comprehensive transportation policy for all service-connected disabled veterans across all established VA transportation and travel programs, benefits and services; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to operate an effective and efficient transportation program for all service-connected veterans and to simplify access to transportation benefits and services to receive timely and high-quality VA health care, benefits and services.

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RESOLUTION NO. 335
INCREASE HEALTH CARE CAPACITY AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES BY OPERATING EXTENDED HOURS AND WEEKENDS

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is committed to provide quality care for eligible veterans when they want and need care; and

WHEREAS, VHA has made significant progress to improve access to health care services as the needs and preferences of the veteran patient population evolved; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected disabled veterans employed in the civilian workforce may already receive from their employers reasonable accommodations for employment, yet require more flexible Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility operating hours to meet their health care needs; and

WHEREAS, regular business hours for VHA services are considered to be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, but offering extended operating hours could ease the burden on service-connected disabled veterans in balancing family, employment, community obligations and other commitments; and

WHEREAS, VHA Directive 2013–001 states VA medical centers and Community Based Outpatient Clinics that treat more than 10,000 unique veterans per year must provide access to a full range of primary care, including Women's Health and Mental Health General Outpatient services through at least two hours beyond regular business hours at least once on weekdays and once every weekend; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted Public Law 114–286 with the express desire to allow veterans to self-schedule, modify and cancel appointments at any time for primary care, specialty care and mental health care; and

WHEREAS, local workload data, no-show rates, cancellation rates, and feedback from the self-appointing program, service-connected veterans and local DAV units should be used to determine which extended hour options would best meet the needs of each facility's enrolled patient population; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to implement extended operating hours to offer early morning, evening and weekend appointments at all VHA health care facilities for services such as primary, specialty and mental health services.

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RESOLUTION NO. 365
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ELIMINATE OR REDUCE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HEALTH CARE CO-PAYMENTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, through service to their nation in which they made extraordinary sacrifices and contributions, veterans have earned the right to certain benefits in return; and

WHEREAS, because of the patriotism, devotion and sacrifices of our veterans, ours is the most free nation on earth where our citizens enjoy unequaled rights, privileges and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, as the beneficiaries of veterans' service and sacrifice, the citizens of our grateful nation want our government to fully honor our moral obligation to care for veterans and generously provide them benefits and health care entirely without charge; and

WHEREAS, premiums, health care cost sharing and deductibles are a feature of health care systems in which some costs are shared by the insured and the insurer in a contractual relationship between the patient and the for-profit company, or of health care through other government programs in which the beneficiary has not earned any right to have the costs of health care benefits fully borne by taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, in the seminal RAND Health Insurance Experiment, which gave rise to the use and increase of cost sharing, other important findings included that cost sharing reduced the use of both effective and less-effective care where the amounts of reductions for each were equal for hospitalizations and drug use, and cost sharing had detrimental health effects the sickest and poorest participating patients; and

WHEREAS, subsequent research continues to question the adverse effects of cost sharing on health outcomes, particularly for patients with chronic disabilities; and

WHEREAS, asking veterans to pay for part of the benefits a grateful nation provides for them is fundamentally contrary to the spirit and principles underlying the provision of benefits to veterans; and

WHEREAS, co-payments were initially imposed upon veterans using the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system under urgent circumstances and as a temporary necessity to contribute to reduction of the federal budget deficit; and

WHEREAS, cost sharing is considered as a means of generating revenues in the Department of Defense (DOD) and VA health care systems; and

WHEREAS, to improve its ability to generate revenue on the backs of service-connected disabled veterans, some continue to propose implementing a policy to eliminate the current practice of first applying third-party payments to offset veterans co-payment debts; and

WHEREAS, Congress has forgotten or abandoned the traditional benevolent philosophy of providing free benefits to veterans as repayment for the unusual rigors, risks and personal deprivation they underwent for the good of our country; and

WHEREAS, based on practices in the private sector, the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs and Defense, in the recent past, moved to dramatically impose fees and increase premiums and co-payments, as if operating a commercial enterprise; and

WHEREAS, as a continuing cost of national defense and as our nation's foremost moral obligation, benefits for service-connected disabled veterans must remain a first priority of our government; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls for legislation to eliminate or reduce VA and DOD health care out-of-pocket costs for service-connected disabled veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 366
ENSURE SUFFICIENT TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY PROVIDERS OFFERING CARE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF VETERANS RESIDING IN RURAL OR REMOTE AREAS

WHEREAS, 44% of active-duty service members identify rural or highly rural areas as their home of record, and 33% of all veterans enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) live in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, many rural areas are designated by the Health Resource Services Administration as Health Professional Shortage Areas for primary care, mental health and dental care or for any combination of these practice areas therein; and

WHEREAS, 56% of all rural veterans are enrolled in VHA, and rural veterans are older (57% of all enrolled rural veterans are elderly), poorer (52% are low income), sicker and less likely to have internet access (36% have no internet); and

WHEREAS, about half of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) community-based outpatient clinics are sited in rural areas, VA rural health and enterprise-wide initiatives have impacted close to a million veterans, VHA telehealth initiatives have served 84,500 enrolled veterans, the VA's Office of Rural Health has funded 450 projects in rural areas, including broadband and transportation programs, and trained (1,400) medical students in rural health; and

WHEREAS, the VA's Office of Rural Health has identified strategies for improving health care for rural veterans, including identifying more opportunities to collaborate with government agencies such as the Health Services Research Administration and the Indian Health Service; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 115–182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018, includes access standards that will enable many rural veterans to use care from community partners which may not have the veteran-specific expertise to which VHA patients are accustomed; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, fully supports the right of rural veterans to be served by the VA to the maximum extent practicable, but urges the VA to develop training materials and conduct outreach to its community and federal partners in rural areas to ensure that these providers have understanding of veteran-specific exposures, risks and evidence-based practices to best address their needs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the VA develop curricula to ensure that federal and community partners are aware of VA resources available to assist rural veterans in their care.

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RESOLUTION NO. 367
IMPROVE TIMELY REIMBURSEMENTS BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR PURCHASED CARE, PROTECT VETERANS FROM DEBT COLLECTION AND ADVERSE CREDIT REPORTING FROM SUCH CARE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized to provide a full continuum of health care to all service-connected veterans enrolled in the VA health care system, including preventive, primary, acute, specialty and rehabilitative care as well as pharmaceutical, mental health and readjustment counseling services; and

WHEREAS, to ensure veterans are able to receive timely comprehensive care, Congress authorized numerous VA programs since the early 1920s to purchase care for veterans from non-VA community providers; and

WHEREAS, according to the Government Accountability Office, the VA's use of purchased care programs has increased 82% since the access to care crisis in 2014; and

WHEREAS, veterans who are treated by non-VA community providers under any VA community care programs should not be under any financial obligation to defray the full costs of VA authorized care; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–251) amended most but not all VA community care programs and instituted standards for the VA to promptly pay for care provided to veterans by community care providers; and

WHEREAS, in innumerable cases service-connected veterans have been billed directly for care provided by community providers despite the VA's obligation to pay, and requirement to pay in a timely fashion; and

WHEREAS, should service-connected veterans be without the means to rectify debt assigned by community providers when VA payment is deficient or delinquent, providers are referring such debt to debt collection agencies as well as reporting such debt to credit reporting agencies, adversely affecting these veterans' creditworthiness when in fact no justification supports such collection actions or credit reporting against veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to improve its administrative practices to promptly pay non-VA community providers for care under all VA purchased care programs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to enact legislation to properly protect veterans' credit ratings and require the VA to engage in collections actions against service-disabled veterans because of delinquent or delayed payment to non-VA community providers.

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RESOLUTION NO. 368
STRENGTHEN, REFORM AND SUSTAIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, this nation's highest obligation is to the men and women who were put in harm's way in its defense, and become wounded, injured and ill as a consequence of that service; and

WHEREAS, America's veterans have earned and deserve high-quality, comprehensive and veteran-focused health care designed to meet their unique circumstances and needs; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system was established to provide for the needs of wounded, injured and ill war veterans, and is authorized by Congress to provide a full continuum of care, including extensive preventive programs and comprehensive primary, acute and rehabilitative care including pharmaceutical, mental health and readjustment counseling services; and

WHEREAS, VA facilities are affiliated with 168 medical schools for physician education and 40 other health professions represented through affiliations agreements with more than 1,800 colleges and universities, and annually train over 69,000 medical students and residents—about 70% of all physicians in the United States—nearly 29,000 nurses and in excess of 30,000 other health professionals; and

WHEREAS, VA biomedical research and development programs have established new treatments and models of care tailored to the needs of disabled veterans, including a vast array of prosthetic, orthotic and other assistive devices, and elevate the standard of care for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, over the past 20 years, the VA health care system has vastly improved and expanded into an integrated environment that is uniquely qualified to treat service-related conditions of injured and ill veterans, offering holistic, integrated, team-based care, a model of care that is rarely available in the private sector; and

WHEREAS, it is well documented in numerous studies of the VA health care system and the quality of care it delivers to millions of veterans that while it faces many challenges, it continues to outperform the U.S. health care system on nearly every quality of care metric, and this unique accomplishment must not be compromised; and

WHEREAS, veterans who use the VA health care system have repeatedly indicated their overall preference for and satisfaction with the care they receive, notwithstanding existing problems that the VA must overcome; and

WHEREAS, an independent assessment of the VA health care system found that the primary cause of access problems was a "misalignment" between the resources provided to the VA, the growing demand for care by veterans, and complex rules to purchase the best-valued care in the community for veterans; and

WHEREAS, the capacity of the VA to purchase community care is constrained by appropriated funding, and without a funding mechanism separate from funds for the VA to directly provide care, such a lack of transparency could diminish and erode the VA health care system and endanger first-priority care to service-connected veterans; and

WHEREAS, the complex legislative authority, decentralized structure and inadequate funding to local VA facilities to purchase care in the community continue to erode the effectiveness of this necessary tool; and

WHEREAS, the VA's antiquated and cumbersome information technology infrastructure used to manage the authorization, claims processing and reimbursement for services acquired in the community is a disincentive for private providers to care for service-connected disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA must implement a long-term strategy to rebuild, modernize, maintain and expand facilities; provide additional resources to maintain sufficient staffing levels; eliminate disparities

in treatment; and improve information technology necessary for the care and treatment of injured and ill veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA must restructure all its community care programs into flexible and responsive integrated networks to deliver high-quality care while strengthening and sustaining the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, the VA must realign and expand availability of health care services to meet the diverse needs of future veterans, including women veterans and veterans who reside in rural and remote regions far from VA facilities; and

WHEREAS, the VA must reform its management by increasing efficiency, transparency and accountability to become more veteran-centric and responsive as an organization; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, believes the nation must continue to honor the service and sacrifices of our nation's ill and injured veterans by strengthening, reforming and sustaining a modern, high-quality, accessible and accountable VA health care system; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in order to provide timely and convenient access to enrolled veterans, the VA health care system must evolve by creating integrated networks with the Department of Defense, other federal partners and academic affiliates, and other high-quality community providers where needed, with the VA acting as the network coordinator and principal provider to ensure veterans receive integrated, high-quality, comprehensive and veteran-focused health care; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress and the Administration to provide transparent, adequate and timely resources to the VA health care system to meet the continuing demand for care by ill and injured veterans in order to fulfill our promises to the men and women who served; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV will oppose any recommendation or proposal that could lead to weakening, diminishing or dismantling of the VA health care system that millions of veterans have chosen and rely upon, or that would weaken VA research or training programs.

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RESOLUTION NO. 369
SUPPORT SUSTAINED AND SUFFICIENT FUNDING TO IMPROVE SERVICES FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

WHEREAS, compared to nonveterans, veterans are at higher risk of homelessness, and women veterans especially face unique challenges that increase their risk of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, many veterans experience post-deployment readjustment conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder, substance-use disorders acquired during or worsened by their military service, or traumatic brain injuries that may make their participation in the workforce difficult or impossible, making them more prone to homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) specialized homelessness programs each year provide health care to almost 150,000 homeless veterans and other services to more than 112,000 veterans; and

WHEREAS, with greater numbers of women serving in military deployments and the greater likelihood of women veterans being single parents, new and more comprehensive housing and child care services are needed; and

WHEREAS, a wide variety of public and private programs are in place to assist veterans in preventing or overcoming chronic homelessness, but these programs are often underfunded; and

WHEREAS, Opening Doors, Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, was launched in 2010 after the VA Secretary's November 2009 plan to end homelessness in five years was announced, which began a campaign to end homelessness among veterans through enhanced collaboration with other federal, state, faith-based, veterans service organization and community partners; and

WHEREAS, annual point-in-time counts, a "snapshot" of homelessness on a given night in America, demonstrate that homelessness among veterans is down 47% since 2009; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges Congress to sustain sufficient funding to continue to support the VA's initiative to eliminate homelessness among veterans and strengthen the capacity of the VA Homeless Veterans program to include increasing its mental health and substance-use disorder programs' capacity, providing vision and dental care services to homeless veterans as required by law, incorporating child

care and legal aid for veterans in homeless programs where possible, and improving its outreach efforts to help ensure homeless veterans gain access to VA specialized health and benefits programs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge Congress to continue to authorize and appropriate funds for competitive grants for transitional housing to community-based organizations; that it fund the Supportive Services for Veterans Families program to ensure prevention of homelessness among veterans and their families; that it authorize vouchers through the Department of Housing and Urban Development and require the VA to provide to effective case management and health and supportive services necessary for them to stay housed; and that it fund the Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program to reengage veterans in employment or other productive activity.

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RESOLUTION NO. 370
SUPPORT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCED RESOURCES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) research indicates that rates of suicide among service members and veterans are significantly higher than for age-adjusted cohorts in the civilian population, with an average of 20 veterans a day committing suicide in 2014; and

WHEREAS, veterans are 21% more likely to commit suicide than their civilian counterparts, while the risk for suicide among female veterans was 2.4 times higher compared to civilian adult females; and

WHEREAS, the VA has made suicide prevention its top clinical priority; developed a national strategy using a public health model to provide population-based initiatives to veterans who use VA health and those who do not and created a crisis intervention hotline, employing suicide prevention coordinators and developing a clinical algorithm to detect veterans with the most risk factors for suicidal ideation or suicide; and

WHEREAS, addressing the underlying conditions that may increase risk of suicide requires a multidisciplinary, comprehensive mental health program that identifies, screens, diagnoses and treats veterans with evidence-based protocols, in a manner that is recovery-oriented, patient centered and culturally sensitive, and strives to tailor care to factors such as ethnic background and gender to ensure treatment engagement; and

WHEREAS, the most recent eras of veterans have demonstrated high reliance upon VA and higher utilization of mental health and substance-use disorder services; and

WHEREAS, the President has recently expanded eligibility to mental health care to all service members within their first year of separation from the military and to emergency mental health care for those veterans who may have discharges characterized as other than honorable; and

WHEREAS, the VA reports that veterans of these recent eras have sought care for a wide range of medical and psychological conditions, including mental health conditions, such as adjustment disorder, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, between fiscal year (FY) 2006 and FY 2018, more than 1.6 million veterans received specialized mental health care from the VA, an increase of 80%; and

WHEREAS, the VA has improved access to mental health services at its 820 community-based outpatient clinics, but such services still are not readily available at all sites; and

WHEREAS, we remain concerned about the capacity in specialized PTSD programs and the availability of a full continuum of VA substance-use disorder services from inpatient detoxification to long-term residential treatment beds; and

WHEREAS, although additional funding has been dedicated to enhancing and improving capacity in these programs, VA mental health providers continue to express concerns about sustained resources to support, and consequent rationed access to, these specialized services; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense and VA share a unique obligation to meet the health care, including mental health care and rehabilitation needs, of veterans who are suffering from readjustment difficulties as a result of wartime service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports program improvements, data collection and reporting on suicide rates among service members and veterans; improved outreach through general media for stigma reduction and suicide prevention; sufficient staffing to meet demand for mental health services; and enhanced resources for VA mental health programs, including Vet Centers, to achieve readjustment

of new war veterans and continued effective mental health care for all enrolled veterans needing such services.

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RESOLUTION NO. 371
ENHANCE THE CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), known as CHAMPVA, is a health benefits program in which the VA shares the cost of certain health services with eligible beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, eligible beneficiaries include the spouse or child of a veteran who the VA rated 100% permanently and totally disabled for a service-connected disability; the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who died from a VA-rated service-connected disability, or who, at the time of death, was rated 100% permanently and totally disabled; the surviving spouse or child of a military service member who died on active duty; and the primary caregiver of a veteran seriously injured during military service on or after September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, VA medical centers are authorized to provide services to CHAMPVA beneficiaries under the CHAMPVA In House Treatment Initiative (CITI) program at no cost to the beneficiary but are provided at the discretion of the VA medical center director and available only on a space-available basis, after the needs of veterans are met; and

WHEREAS, if the local VA medical facility does not participate in the CITI program, the beneficiary must seek care in the private sector and the CHAMPVA beneficiary is responsible for an annual $50 deductible for medical services rendered and 25% of reasonable and customary charges for patient care and pharmaceuticals, up to $3,000 each year; and

WHEREAS, beneficiaries who are chronically ill can incur out-of-pocket medical care costs up to $3,000 per year and such costs can cause undue financial burden on a severely disabled veteran and family members; and

WHEREAS, numerous health care services such as chiropractic services, routine eye examinations, hearing aids, most dental benefits, and institutional and home-based long-term services and supports are not routinely covered under CHAMPVA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to make CHAMPVA more comprehensive, including dental and vision care, institutional and home-based long-term care, and eliminate the co-payments beneficiaries are required to pay out of pocket and lower the out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries who do not live near a VA medical facility that participates in the CITI health care program; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the CITI program and urges VA medical center directors to make that program available to CHAMPVA beneficiaries when resources are available.

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RESOLUTION NO. 372
ENHANCE LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, historically the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) occupied a leadership position in fostering many long-term services and supports (LTSS) programs now routinely available in the private sector, founded the medical specialty of geriatrics in conjunction with affiliated schools of medicine, and led the nation in biomedical research on aging, geropsychiatry and chronic illnesses prevalent in the veteran population; and

WHEREAS, today tens of thousands of service-connected veterans of all ages depend on the VA to meet their health care needs in post-acute and LTSS settings; and

WHEREAS, there is also a subset of service-connected veterans with chronic and terminal illnesses who need LTSS and will need institutional placements; and

WHEREAS, the number of veterans seeking LTSS has increased annually, and the VA estimates this trend to continue into the future; and

WHEREAS, as our nation's veteran population ages, the VA will face an ever-increasing demand for LTSS of all kinds; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, the Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Reform Act, Public Law 104–262, reformed eligibility for VA health care toward a more holistic approach in providing service-connected disabled veterans a lifetime of care, but did not appreciably alter veterans' eligibility for VA institutional LTSS; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act, Public Law 106–117, significantly enhanced the VA's non-institutional LTSS and required such services be provided to any veteran for a service-connected disability and to any veteran who is service connected 50% or greater disabling, yet the VA is only required to provide institutional LTSS to any veteran for a service-connected disability and to any veteran who is service-connected 70% or greater; and

WHEREAS, unresolved LTSS policy issues within Congress, the VA leadership and the Office of Management and Budget leave VA facilities to determine locally their own mix of institutional and non-institutional approaches in providing LTSS, thereby relegating LTSS to a "second tier" of health care service and expectations within the VA system; and

WHEREAS, there is a large and glaring gap in the VA's LTSS program with statutory authority prohibiting the Department from paying for veterans to reside in community residential care facilities despite referring veterans to and inspecting 1,300 such facilities nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the success of noninstitutional and home-based LTSS is critically dependent on the ability of veterans' caregivers, whether they be family or friends, to assist in their care; and

WHEREAS, VA home and community-based programs are not uniformly available in all VA health care facilities resulting in consistent waitlist of veterans in need of such care; and

WHEREAS, the VA has not optimized its relationship with State Veterans Homes to ensure veterans in need of institutional and alternative forms of LTSS may avail themselves of State Home facilities to consider all options for their provision; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to improve the VA's program of long-term services and supports for service-connected disabled veterans irrespective of their disability ratings; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to ensure each VA medical facility is able to provide service-connected disabled veterans timely access to both institutional and non-institutional long-term services and supports.

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RESOLUTION NO. 373

SUPPORT EQUITY IN ACCESS TO SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITY SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

WHEREAS, veterans from minority or ethnic backgrounds are expected to comprise an increasingly large proportion of the veterans population growing from 23.5% in 2014 to 36% by 2043; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Benefits Administration has been unable to provide data to demonstrate equity of access to benefits and services among racial and ethnic veterans and has not implemented repeated recommendations by the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans to make such data available; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration has identified higher rates of service connection and higher utilization of mental health and substance-use disorder services among minority veterans, more research is needed to understand disparate patterns of diagnosed condition rates between whites and minority veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration has been successful in reducing disparities in some care outcomes, it finds that disparities that are often the result of social and behavioral determinants of health, including financial and nonfinancial barriers to care, remain and often result in adverse health outcomes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the Veterans Benefits Administration to routinely report data on numbers of applications, utilization and completion of programs for veterans by racial and ethnic background and gender; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue identifying and addressing social and behavioral determinants that may affect health outcomes in addition to barriers to health care for all service-connected veterans by minority and ethnic groups.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 374
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROTECT VETERANS USING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY CARE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the primary care provider for millions of the nation's wartime and disabled veterans who cannot or do not have any other health care options; and

WHEREAS, the veteran, when receiving services at a VA medical facility or from a VA physician are provided certain protections when an additional disability or death is proximately due to or caused by that care; and

WHEREAS, compensation can be awarded if an additional disability or death of a veteran was caused by hospital care, medical or surgical treatment, or examination furnished the veteran by a VA employee or VA facility; and

WHEREAS, with veterans now having the ability to receive care in their local communities paid for by the VA; and

WHEREAS, the VA has also established a community care network of medical facilities and physicians to meet veterans medical care needs; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that the quality of care provided by the contracted non-VA medical facility or contracted non-VA physician would be as good or better than the care provided by the VA; and

WHEREAS, in the unfortunate circumstance that an additional disability or death occurred while receiving this care and not due to the veteran's own willful misconduct, the veteran or their family should have some type of recourse for such disability or death to be treated as service connected; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation that would treat an additional disability or death of a veteran when receiving care furnished by the VA for a service-connected condition.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 375
ENSURE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLINICAL APPEALS PROCESS PROTECTS VETERANS

WHEREAS, through service to their nation in which they made extraordinary sacrifices and contributions, service-disabled veterans have earned and deserve high-quality, comprehensive and veteran-focused health care designed to meet their unique circumstances and needs; and

WHEREAS, all federal providers and most health insurers have processes to ensure that beneficiaries have enforceable protections that allow them to obtain medically necessary care within their health benefits package; and

WHEREAS, these processes for patient grievances and central projections to receive care and services are imperative, particularly for health care systems such as the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's), which use capitated payment models for which there are incentives to conserve resources; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–251) greatly expanded the VA's purchased community care program making eligible for non-VA care more than 40% of veterans enrolled in the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, the VA's current clinical appeals process remains poorly understood, with many veterans unsure of how to resolve clinical disagreements and disputes; and

WHEREAS, continuity of care or services during the clinical appeals process is not guaranteed under the current process; and

WHEREAS, veterans have no right to external, expedited or independent review, or to timely and fair hearings, including before a multidisciplinary clinical team, an administrative law judge or federal district court in VA current clinical appeals, making the process less comprehensive and fair than appeals processes private health insurers and other federal payers are required to provide; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on Congress to enact legislation requiring a standardized, fair and impartial process to address veterans clinical disagreements, grievances and disputes to include statutory protections that are at least comparable to those afforded patients under other federal and federally supported programs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to revise the current clinical appeal process, with input from service-connected disabled veterans and other stakeholders, to one that is equitable and transparent, and train appropriate staff to execute the new policy in a standardized manner.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 376

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO AUTHORIZE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NEW MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS IN EXCHANGE FOR COMMITMENTS TO SERVE VETERANS IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

WHEREAS, the nation faces a looming shortage of practitioners in mental health, including physicians, nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers, mental health therapists and other counselors; and

WHEREAS, the needs of the newest generation of war veterans suffering the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health challenges, combined with the continuing mental health needs of older generations of veterans, may overwhelm the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) capacity to properly treat them with qualified providers so that they can recover from these illnesses; and

WHEREAS, after serving our nation, veterans should not see their health care needs neglected by the VA because the VA lacks the capacity to serve them; and

WHEREAS, recent public laws have authorized the VA to expand the types and numbers of mental health and other services the VA must make available to veterans, their caregivers, dependents and survivors; and

WHEREAS, an existing scholarship program under chapter 76, title 38, United States Code, targeted to physicians, nurses and a variety of other health professions has been highly successful in recruiting new practitioners to VA careers and has expanded and improved care to wounded, injured and ill veterans; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of VA community-based outpatient clinics and Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers do not directly participate in the existing scholarship program as an aid to their local recruitment and employment efforts; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation or administrative policy changes in the existing scholarship program to make its benefits available more broadly within both the community-based outpatient clinics and Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers of the Department so that these facilities will be able to adequately meet the needs of veterans of all generations who need mental health services and psychological counseling to aid in their recoveries.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 377

SUPPORT THE RIGHTS AND BENEFITS EARNED BY SERVICE-CONNECTED NATIVE AMERICAN AND ALASKA NATIVE VETERANS

WHEREAS, per capita, a higher percentage of Native Americans have served in the armed forces than any other ethnic group, and many return to their communities in Indian Country upon discharge from the military; and

WHEREAS, the sovereign lands in Indian Country often can be hundreds of miles from Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, where poverty, lack of transportation and poor roads put great hardships on Native American veterans who need and have earned VA health care and other benefits; and

WHEREAS, in evaluating the needs of federally recognized Native American and Alaska Native veterans, especially those living on tribal lands, the VA Office of Tribal Government Relations has reported among the most pressing needs to be the great travel distances for them to access VA health care services, a high percentage of overcrowding and unavailable housing, and a lack of local employment opportunity; and

WHEREAS, many Native American veterans who have completed military deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan and who may be challenged by readjustment and mental health disorders are not afforded responsive medical attention due to insufficient mental health service availability from Indian Health Service or Tribal Health Programs; and

WHEREAS, many VA clinical care providers lack knowledge and understanding of Native American and Alaska Native cultures, including traditional healing and ways of managing illness

and disability that are culturally and religiously appropriate, causing additional barriers to care for Native American and Alaska Native veterans; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 and renewed in 2010, the VA executed with the Indian Health Service (IHS) of the Department of Health and Human Services, Memoranda of Understanding to coordinate and provide health care services, including mental health services, to Native American and Alaska Native veterans; and

WHEREAS, nearly a decade after its approval in 2010, the VA and IHS have yet to comprehensively implement the Memorandum of Understanding; and

WHEREAS, due to lack of implementation, tribal governments do not have broad knowledge of the existence of, or commitments in, the Memorandum of Understanding, and therefore have not generally disseminated relevant information to Native American and Alaska Native veterans about their VA and IHS rights and benefits under the agreement; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of Health and Human Services to ensure the Memoranda of Understanding between the VA and the IHS are fully implemented, and that direct providers of services, as well as their leaderships in both agencies, be held accountable to faithfully carry out the agreement so that service-connected Native American and Alaska Native veterans, especially those living on tribal lands, can receive the full benefits and services they have earned and deserve.

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RESOLUTION NO. 378
SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO ENROLLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, it is the policy of DAV that veterans should be afforded quality and timely health care services by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) because of their honorable service to our nation; and

WHEREAS, care provided to veterans in the community when VA care is inaccessible should be done through responsive integrated networks that deliver high-value, quality care; and

WHEREAS, it is the conviction of DAV that quality health care for veterans is achieved when health care providers are given the freedom and resources to provide the most effective and evidence-based care available; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration plays a critical role in the delivery of health care services to our nation's sick and disabled veterans and is the largest direct federal provider of health care services, the largest clinical training ground for the health professions and a leader in medical research; and

WHEREAS, although the veterans health care system is provided advance appropriations for medical care, it is still at the discretion of Congress to provide a sufficient level of funding; and

WHEREAS, due to consistently inadequate appropriations levels, the VA has been forced at times to restrict, ration and deny access to health care implicitly promised in connection with veterans' military service; and

WHEREAS, the VA health care system must be provided sufficient funding to ensure, at a minimum, the following standards are met:

- Promote and ensure health care quality and value, and protect veterans' safety in the health care system;
- Guarantee access to a full continuum of care, from preventive through hospice services, including alternative and complementary care such as yoga, massage, acupuncture, chiropractic and other nontraditional therapies;
- Receive adequate funding through appropriations for care of all enrolled veterans;
- Fairly and equitably distribute resources to treat the greatest number of veterans requiring health care;
- Furnish quality primary care and gender-specific services necessary to meet the needs of a growing population of women veterans;
- Provide all supplies, prosthetic devices and medications, including over-the-counter medication, necessary for the proper treatment of service-connected disabled veterans;
- Preserve VA's mission and role as a provider of specialized services in areas such as blindness, burns, amputation, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and dysfunction, mental illness and long-term care;

- Maintain the integrity of an independent VA health care delivery system as representing the primary responsible entity for the delivery of health care services to enrolled veterans;
- Modernize its human resources management system to enable the VA to compete for, recruit and retain the types and quality of VA employees needed to provide comprehensive health care services to sick and disabled veterans;
- Maintain a strong and veteran-focused research program;
- Establish and sustain effective telehealth programs as an aid to access to VA health care, particularly for rural and remote populations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation that embodies the concepts and principles enumerated above and establishes certainty to clearly defined VA health care services for enrolled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 379

OPPOSE ANY RESTRICTION ON ELIGIBILITY OF MILITARY MEDICALLY RETIRED VETERANS TO RECEIVE CARE IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

WHEREAS, military medically retired veterans were promised and earned lifetime health care through the Department of Defense (DOD) for completion of the required period of military service; and

WHEREAS, as veterans, they are separately entitled to the same health care provided to eligible veterans generally through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, one of the two health care systems may offer advantages that the other does not offer; and

WHEREAS, a veteran's use of this dual entitlement to receive the best services of both systems does not constitute unnecessary duplicate use of health care services or duplication of costs to the government; and

WHEREAS, entitlement to care under one system is not itself justification to end separate entitlement to care through the other system; and

WHEREAS, by virtue of their service and sacrifices, veterans have earned special benefits that are separate and in addition to benefits the government provides to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in VA or DOD health care, especially in the case of service-connected disabled veterans, should never become a bar or obstacle to the receipt of benefits from either of these health care systems; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any action to restrict health care eligibility for military medically retired veterans in either the DOD or VA health care systems.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 380

SUPPORT CONSISTENT REASONABLE ACCESS FOR SERVICE AND GUIDE DOGS IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

WHEREAS, trained guide dogs and other trained service dogs can have a significant role in maintaining functionality and promoting maximal independence of individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, some veterans with disabilities such as blindness, deafness, mental illness, and epilepsy and other seizure disorders are specifically aided by service and guide animals employed for these purposes by persons with such disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) approves guide and service dogs to veterans enrolled in VA health care when therapeutically indicated; and

WHEREAS, the VA has published guidance requiring each VA health care facility to maintain a policy on the admission of guide and service animals to VA premises; and

WHEREAS, each VA medical facility is expected to maintain reasonable policies on the control and admittance of such animals that accompany veterans on their medical visits to VA facilities; and

WHEREAS, the VA is engaged in formal research efforts to determine the efficacy of the use of service dogs in nontraditional applications, such as acting as companions to the mentally ill; and

WHEREAS, veterans have reported that certain VA facilities do not permit service and guide dogs to accompany them into facilities, including primary care or mental health clinic appointments, while other facilities permit them into certain designated areas; and

WHEREAS, the VA is experimenting with dog training programs led by veterans for veterans, to determine if the training of service dogs itself is a therapeutic method to reduce symptoms in veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges that the VA carry out its policies to permit reasonable access to VA facilities by service and guide dogs to veterans consistently throughout the system; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to complete its plan to conduct research and expansion of ongoing model programs to determine the most efficacious use of guide and service dogs in defined populations, in particular veterans with mental health conditions, and to broadly publish the results of that research; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should enact legislation setting forth VA standards for admission to VA properties and management of service and guide animals that are equivalent to rules applicable to every other private and public structure in the United States as dictated by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.

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RESOLUTION NO. 381
IMPROVE THE CARE PROVIDED TO VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES AFFECTING THE ABILITY TO PROCREATE THROUGH ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY

WHEREAS, during the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, reliance on dismounted patrols and frequent exposure to improvised explosive devices have significantly increased genitourinary (GU) trauma; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 12% of war injuries involve some kind of GU trauma; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DOD) Joint Theater Trauma Registry reports that the highest percentage of trauma admissions were GU injuries (the largest report of GU injuries during any military conflict) and that more than half of the service members who suffered a blast-related GU injury were within child-bearing age; and

WHEREAS, sexual functioning can be impaired by physical, psychological and social factors that can diminish the quality of life of military service personnel; and

WHEREAS, DOD currently offers multiple assisted reproductive technology services for military service personnel who have lost procreative ability due to service-related illness or injury to include those suffering neurological, physiological and/or anatomical loss; and

WHEREAS, assistive reproductive services are only provided to consenting personnel who have lost the ability to procreate due to service-related illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has based its guidance on providing assisted reproductive technology to gravely injured veterans or their legal different-sex spouses on DOD policy which limits options available to many other veterans who have made great sacrifices in the protection of the nation; and

WHEREAS, veterans who due to their military service are unable to procreate and require reproductive assistance, or who are unmarried or married to same-sex partners have already paid a price greater than any monetary assessment and have earned the right to have a family; it is incumbent on the VA to make them whole to every extent possible; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation which would include in the VA's health benefits package the use of assisted reproductive technologies for veterans who have lost the ability to procreate due to service-related injury or illness regardless of marital status.

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RESOLUTION NO. 382
SUPPORT SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR POLYTRAUMA UNITS AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Polytrauma System of Care is the largest integrated system of care dedicated to the medical and rehabilitation needs of veterans and service members with combat- and non-combat-related traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and polytrauma; and

WHEREAS, catastrophically injured veterans are treated at five Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers, located in Tampa, Richmond, Minneapolis, San Antonio and Palo Alto, for intensive care and long-term restoration and rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, Polytrauma Support Clinic Teams or Polytrauma Points of Contact are located in VA medical centers across the country to provide specialized outpatient care in coordination with their Polytrauma Network Site (PNS) and offer continued medical and rehabilitation care and support closer to the home community for veterans who have experienced a mild–moderate TBI or polytraumatic injury; and

WHEREAS, veterans spend long periods at PRCs and PNSs recovering from their injuries and receiving patient-centered care in these specialized polytrauma centers; and

WHEREAS, this specialized care is extraordinarily expensive and complex, often addressing complications from multiple amputations, TBI, burns, multiple shell fragment wounds and other catastrophic injuries; and

WHEREAS, since the VA's current nursing home capacity is primarily designed to serve elderly veterans, the VA must make every effort to create an age-appropriate environment for younger veterans that recognizes their different psychosocial needs; and

WHEREAS, having the support of their families and friends is an integral part of these veterans' treatment and recovery process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to request and allocate sufficient resources for polytrauma centers and PNSs to ensure these centers include adequate space and other services for veterans' rehabilitation, social and recreational needs, and dedicated space, including therapeutic residential facilities, for disabled veterans and family members who must often stay for extended periods to assist in veterans' recovery and rehabilitation.

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RESOLUTION NO. 383
SUPPORT SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROSTHETICS AND SENSORY AIDS SERVICE AND TIMELY DELIVERY OF PROSTHETIC ITEMS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has operated a nationwide prosthetics and sensory aids program, organized as Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS), for more than a half-century; and

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of veterans need the VA's life-changing PSAS care and services, and obtain a variety of items including prosthetic limbs, custom wheelchairs, orthotic items, eyeglasses, hearing aids, a variety of implantable surgical devices and supplies—a need that continues to rise due to the aging of the veteran population and grievous injuries in war veterans, past and present; and

WHEREAS, since fiscal year 2013, the VA provided care to 3.4 million veterans. In 2018, it served more than 28,000 veterans with limb loss and about 177,000 with needs for wheeled mobility; and

WHEREAS, in many cases prosthetic items are a truly individualized extension of the body and can impact all aspects of veterans' lives; and

WHEREAS, the VA must maintain flexibility in ordering and delivering a variety of state-of-the-art prosthetic aids to meet the unique needs of wounded, ill and injured veterans, including women veterans who require prosthetics that are sized appropriately for their bodies, and allow for the physical changes in their bodies during pregnancy and menses; and

WHEREAS, PSAS is nearing completion of regulations designed to standardize its procurement policies and administrative processes, and to improve its purchasing power and leverage its position in the prosthetic, orthotic and medical device marketplace; and

WHEREAS, changes in procurement practices have in some cases negatively affected the timeliness of delivery and quality of prosthetic, orthotic and other items to many veterans and may limit veterans' access to prosthetics that "promote, preserve or restore" function in accordance with current law; and

WHEREAS, throughout the process the VA should ensure appropriately trained prosthetic representatives and rehabilitation specialists are available to maintain the VA's strong connection between veterans and clinical components of prosthetic care and services; and

WHEREAS, the VA must rededicate itself to becoming a leader in prosthetic care by providing cutting-edge services and items to help injured, ill and wounded veterans fully regain mobility and achieve maximum independence in their activities of daily living, and in sports activities such as running, cycling, skiing, rock climbing and other physical exercises if they so choose; and

WHEREAS, research and development funding in addition to ongoing training to ensure that prosthetists and procurement officers are up-to-date on all available technologies is integral to the VA's ability to provide such leadership to the field; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the VA to retain centralized funding for PSAS which enables the program to deliver high-quality prosthetic items to all enrolled veterans needing such items and to train veterans on appropriate use and care of the device; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to retain its goal of maximum recovery and independent living for our highest-priority veterans, to adopt procurement policies and staff training on advances in and other practices that accelerate the timely delivery of, and responsive maintenance and repair of, all prosthetic items, and to take fully and fairly into account the unique needs of severely injured and wounded veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 384
REQUIRE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY TRAINING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STAFF WHO WORK TO REHABILITATE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration has established training and assessment protocols for blind and visually impaired veterans and provides them assistive technology training; and

WHEREAS, the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) does not possess a specialty or certification for technology; and

WHEREAS, staff and supervisors within Blind Rehabilitation Service acknowledge that they are unprepared and unable to remain abreast of evolutionary advances in assistive technology for the blind; and

WHEREAS, enhancements of electronic assistive devices are continuously introduced; and

WHEREAS, blind and visually impaired veterans utilize assistive technology to accomplish tasks in manual skills, living skills, orientation mobility, computing and basic quality-of-life needs; and

WHEREAS, any individual within Blind Rehabilitation Service that either provides training or assesses visually impaired veterans must be knowledgeable on the capabilities of such devices; and

WHEREAS, presently Blind Rehabilitation Service, ACVREP and social workers follow no national standard for minimum technical knowledge; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges that the Department of Veterans Affairs Blind Rehabilitation Service ensure that all personnel involved with the assessment and training of blind and visually impaired veterans receive regular training in the form of continuing education credits or achieve independent certification on technological solutions and adaptive aides.

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RESOLUTION NO. 385
SUPPORT A ROBUST COMPREHENSIVE REHABILITATIVE AND RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR VETERANS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

WHEREAS, traumatic brain injury (TBI) has been called the signature wound of veterans serving in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, since 2000, 380,000 service members have been diagnosed with traumatic or acquired brain injury and brain injuries accounted for 22% of all combat injuries in recent deployments (compared to 12% in Vietnam); and

WHEREAS, veterans struggling with the chronic effects of combat injuries, falls, vehicular accidents, and other trauma and illness leading to chronic brain injury that, in the most severe cases, will require a lifetime of services including extensive rehabilitation and lifelong personal and clinical support, including neurological, medical and psychiatric services, and physical, psycho-social, occupational and vocational therapies; and

WHEREAS, blast injuries were responsible for only a small portion of TBI among post-9/11 veterans and service members, and despite significant drawdowns in those returning from deployment, workload in the polytrauma rehabilitation systems of care is projected to grow as veterans and service members continue to be exposed to falls, vehicular accidents and other acquired brain injuries that result in lasting brain damage and that the longer-term rehabilitative needs of veterans continue; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has not yet developed the programs to meet the full spectrum of longer-term needs to fill programmatic gaps the VA acknowledges in neurobehavioral rehabilitation and community reintegration or to provide assisted living or other supported housing arrangements for veterans with moderate to severe TBI; and

WHEREAS, the VA must also maintain programs to identify veterans with milder forms of TBI who may experience a variety of symptoms, including headaches, irritability, sleep disorders, memory problems and depression; and

WHEREAS, research demonstrates that even mild TBI may have long-term mental health and medical consequences including a higher risk of developing dementia, and that symptoms are often co-morbid with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and post-traumatic visual syndrome that can further confound diagnosis and treatment; and

WHEREAS, generations of veterans from earlier wars and conflicts may have suffered TBI, but this injury went unrecognized or was treated as mental illness; and

WHEREAS, milder forms of TBI may not be detected immediately, and the Department of Defense (DOD) and VA have recently released a suite of cognitive rehabilitation products for veterans and service members who sustain mild to moderate TBI, and have lingering cognitive impairment; and

WHEREAS, the VA maintains active research collaborations with the National Institutes of Health, the National Institutes of Disability Rehabilitation Research "model centers" and the Defense Centers of Excellence in Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury; and is an acknowledged world leader in research into TBI; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports permanent authorization for the TBI assisted-living pilot project that has been supporting the neurobehavioral and community reintegration needs of veterans with moderate to severe brain injuries for the past decade; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the DAV urges Congress to support permanent supported housing arrangements with specialized neurobehavioral rehabilitation for veterans with service-connected moderate to severe TBI; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on the VA to expand the universal screening it now provides to post-9/11 veterans to all generations of veterans and maintains resources within its polytrauma system of care to ensure their access to appropriate rehabilitation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges that the VA and DOD continue to engage in TBI studies or research and that such research includes older veterans of past military conflicts who may have suffered similar injuries that went undetected, undiagnosed and untreated.

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RESOLUTION NO. 386
URGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

WHEREAS, America's veterans have earned and deserve high-quality, comprehensive and veteran-focused health care designed to meet their unique circumstances and needs; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system was established to provide for the needs of wounded, injured and ill war veterans, and is authorized by Congress to provide a full continuum of care, including extensive preventive programs and comprehensive primary, acute and rehabilitative care including pharmaceutical, mental health and readjustment counseling services; and

WHEREAS, the VA is estimated to spend $16 billion over 10 years replacing the legacy Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) Electronic Health Record (EHR) system with a commercial EHR system similar to the Department of Defense's (DOD's) MHS GENESIS system to address in large part the need to streamline interoperability between VA, DOD and non-VA providers; and

WHEREAS, in providing veterans a full continuum of high-quality care, electronic health records promise our nation's ill and injured veterans more patient-centered care through clinical research, precision medicine, assuring quality such as timely access and coordination of such care, and public health surveillance; and

WHEREAS, an up-to-date electronic health record tethered to the VA's modernized EHR system would encourage patients to be more engaged in their care by providing access to their health information; and

WHEREAS, health information should be presented in a meaningful way to enable veterans to be knowledgeable participants in care planning, and be "consumer friendly," such as including a single easy-to-read care plan to track the veteran's progress, having a simple method to communicate with their clinical team, and ensuring service coordination when transitioning across the VA's integrated network of care settings with DOD, other federal partners and academic affiliates, and other high-quality community providers; and

WHEREAS, veterans and their family caregivers possess a body of knowledge about the veterans that their VA clinical team does not have, and access to their longitudinal electronic health record can drive better patient decisions, which in turn will improve health outcomes and lead to a higher quality of life; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6 2019, believes the benefits of electronic health records should be extended to provide a user-friendly electronic version of service-connected veterans' health information to empower them and their family caregivers to be active care participants.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 387
ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SUBMIT CANDIDATES FOR THE JESSE BROWN MEMORIAL YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

WHEREAS, DAV created the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program as a means to recruit young volunteers and to recognize the efforts of America's young volunteers who serve disabled veterans in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and the local community; and

WHEREAS, the scholarship program will award a total of $75,000 in 2017 to eight deserving youth volunteers in the form of a first-place $20,000 scholarship, a second-place $15,000 scholarship, a $10,000 third-place scholarship, two $7,500 fourth-place scholarships and three $5,000 fifth-place scholarships; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of each calendar year, DAV solicits every VA Voluntary Service program manager to nominate one deserving youth volunteer from their facility in order to be considered for one of the scholarships, but with little response; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, strongly encourages each Voluntary Service program manager at every VA medical facility to submit the name of a deserving youth volunteer to be considered for one of the scholarships in appreciation of their dedication to serving America's veterans through their voluntary service efforts.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 399
EXTEND APPRECIATION TO THE ORLANDO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER AT LAKE NONA FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE 98TH DAV NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the cooperation and professionalism extended by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical personnel to the delegates and guests of the 98th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary was laudable; and

WHEREAS, many of the delegates to our National Convention were in need of immediate medical treatment and required the assistance of prosthetic equipment to attend the National Convention; and

WHEREAS, in response to these requests, the health care officials from the Orlando VA Medical Center at Lake Nona, staffed and maintained a high-quality outpatient clinic and prosthetic service within the Rosen Shingle Creek hotel; and

WHEREAS, the medical care and prosthetic services rendered to the delegates to this 98th National Convention were extended in a highly compassionate and professional manner; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Orlando VA

Medical Center at Lake Nona for the professional and skillful health care delivered to the delegates to this 98th National Convention and for contributing to the overall success of this Convention.

* * *

(Whereupon, the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services Chairman withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Wanda.

COMMITTEE ON HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES CHAIRMAN JANUS: Thank you.

COMMANDER NIXON: You have heard the motion. Can I have a second?

MR. RANDY BUNTING: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. BUNTING: Randy Bunting, Chapter 173, Department of Kentucky, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER NIXON: In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed. So ordered. Thank you, Ma'am.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now I will call upon Chairman Rachel Fredericks for the report on the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership.

(Whereupon, the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership Chairman advanced to the podium.)

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RACHEL FREDERICKS: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on General Resolutions was called to order on August 3, 2019, by the Committee advisors Steve Wolf and Scott Hope.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. I, Rachel Fredericks, was elected as chairman. And Jeremy Yost was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time, I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolutions.

066, provide weekend burials at national cemeteries; 067, extend military commissary and exchange privileges and space-available air travel to 30% or higher service-connected disabled veterans separated from service prior to October 1949;

068, encourage all disabled veterans to become registered voters and vote; 069, support the continued growth of Veteran Treatment Courts for justice-involved veterans; 129, support legislation to protect honorably discharged noncitizen veterans from deportation while applying for citizenship;

176, seek the immediate release of any Americans who may still be held captive following any war and return the remains of any Americans who died during these wars; 177, oppose any authorization of use of members of the armed forces for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent;

179, support the construction of a courthouse for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; 180, condemn public desecration of the flag of the United States; 211, support legislation to extend U.S. citizenship to honorably discharged service-disabled veterans at the time of discharge;

246—264, excuse me, extend space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to dependents of service-connected disabled veterans having a permanent disability rated 100%; 265, extend the travel area that service-connected disabled veterans having a permanent disability rated 100% may travel from CONUS to CONUS and overseas;

341, support for defense of the POW/MIA Accounting Agency; 342, extend commissary and exchange privileges to service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents; 344, support former POW slave labor claims against Japanese firms;

354, support the move to renew prisoner of war/missing in action discussions; 355, support displaying the POW/MIA flag on certain federal property; 400, appreciation to all who are responsible for the success of the 98th National Convention; 401, appreciation to the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel for the success of the 98th National Convention;

402, appreciation to National Commander Dennis Nixon. According to tradition I will read Resolution 402, Appreciation to National Commander Nixon in its entirety.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 402

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO NATIONAL COMMANDER DENNIS NIXON

"WHEREAS, DAV National Commander Dennis Nixon of China Spring, Texas, served honorably in the United States Marine Corps; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Nixon enlisted in 1964 at the age of 17, trained as a combat engineer and was stationed at Camp Pendleton, California; and

"WHEREAS, while on patrol outside of Da Nang during his second combat tour in Vietnam he sustained injuries from a booby trap to his abdomen and leg which required eight surgeries with the eventual result of his leg being amputated; and

"WHEREAS, after medical retirement from the Marine Corps in 1970, Commander Nixon became a DAV life member and entered DAV's professional staff as a DAV National Service Officer; and

"WHEREAS, his dedicated 36 years serving our nation's ill and injured veterans and their dependents and survivors as a DAV professional, including as the supervisor of the DAV NSO office in Waco, Texas, as well as national area supervisor of Area 7; and

"WHEREAS, his dedication to the men and women did not end there, as he was also engaged with his DAV chapter and served as adjutant of the DAV Department of Texas; and

"WHEREAS, since his retirement Commander Nixon continued to volunteer and assist with the DAV Department of Texas chapter and department service office training program, as well as mentor numerous DAV apprentices at the Waco NSO office; and

"WHEREAS he has served on the national level of DAV, to include the National Executive Committee, and on the DAV Charitable Service Board of Directors; and

"WHEREAS, the membership of the DAV unanimously elected Mr. Nixon to lead the more than 1 million-member organization during the 2018 National Convention in Reno, Nevada; and

"WHEREAS, he has shown outstanding compassion and leadership during his year as national commander, visiting disaster sites; delivering DAV's message before a joint session of Congress, and leading DAV at the National Winter Sports Clinic, all while advancing DAV's mission; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Nixon has advocated passionately on behalf of Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans to ensure that they receive the benefits that they earned and the recognition of their service, culminating in the passage in June 2019 of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Nixon, acknowledging the care, assistance and sacrifices made by disabled veterans' spouses, including his wife, Maxine, has been a critical role in expanding and improving survivor's benefits, specifically Dependents and Indemnity Compensation;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3 through 6, 2019, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Nixon for his sacrifices, selfless service, professionalism and dedication to his fellow wounded, ill and injured veterans, their families, survivors and the DAV during his year as DAV National Commander; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DAV also salutes and extends our sincere appreciation to Commander Nixon's family for their steadfast support and sacrifices during his year as DAV National Commander."

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on General Resolutions. On behalf of the Committee, I move for the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee may be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention. (Applause)

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 066

PROVIDE WEEKEND BURIALS AT NATIONAL CEMETERIES

WHEREAS, scheduling a weekend burial at a national cemetery is not current policy; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 114–315 requires the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) to study the feasibility of weekend burials; and

WHEREAS, NCA operates 135 national cemeteries; and

WHEREAS, available cemetery benefits include a gravesite in any national cemetery with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone or marker, a burial flag and a Presidential Memorial certificate, at no cost to the family; and

WHEREAS, NCA works to continuously improve customer satisfaction, meeting the wishes of veterans and their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, providing weekend burial at a national cemetery eases scheduling and lightens the burden on veterans' survivors, many of whom may need to travel great distances to pay their last respects and honor their loved one as he or she is laid to rest; and

WHEREAS, DAV and other veterans service organizations often provide volunteers who conduct military honors at funeral service burials; and

WHEREAS, weekend burial at national cemeteries will allow more volunteers an opportunity to participate in military honor guard at funeral services due to scheduling; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks legislation that would authorize weekend burials for service-connected veterans at cemeteries operated by the NCA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 067
EXTEND MILITARY COMMISSARY AND EXCHANGE PRIVILEGES AND SPACE-AVAILABLE AIR TRAVEL TO CERTAIN SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, disabled active-duty personnel who were discharged from military service prior to October 1, 1949—the effective date of the Career Compensation Act—are not entitled to disability retirement from the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected disabled veterans have been deprived of the various benefits which all other disabled retired military personnel have enjoyed; and

WHEREAS, due to inflation, service-connected disabled veterans receiving Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation as a sole source of income are experiencing difficulties in keeping pace with the increased cost of living; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation which would extend military commissary and exchange privileges, as well as space-available air travel aboard military aircraft, to enlisted personnel who were discharged from active military service prior to October 1, 1949, for a service-incurred injury or disease rated by the VA as 30% or more disabling and who retained at least a 30% evaluation for a period of five years from the date of separation from active duty.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 068
ENCOURAGE ALL DISABLED VETERANS TO BECOME REGISTERED VOTERS AND VOTE

WHEREAS, members of DAV served their country during time of war in order to preserve the rights and privileges of life in this land of the free; and

WHEREAS, one of the most precious of those rights is the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the President's Administration have failed to fulfill their obligation to our nation's disabled veterans, providing inadequate funding for veterans benefits and health care; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the Administration have targeted veterans programs for unwarranted spending cuts and reductions under the mistaken and misguided theory that veterans do not base their votes on veterans' issues; and

WHEREAS, the failure of disabled veterans to register and vote will result in the perpetuation of this theory; and

WHEREAS, because of their disabilities, disabled veterans have more difficulty than their nondisabled peers in complying with some of the stricter requirements in voter registration laws; and

WHEREAS, veterans, their families and all Americans concerned about veterans' issues need to make their voices heard by becoming registered voters and exercising their votes in local, state and federal elections; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, encourages all DAV members to register to vote and thereby strengthen our organization's ability to preserve and improve our system of veterans benefits and services; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all DAV Departments and Chapters initiate and operate voter registration drives targeted at increasing voter registration among veterans and their families; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all DAV Departments, Chapters and members are encouraged to ensure that all veterans and their family members are able to access polling places to vote.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 069
SUPPORT THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED VETERANS

WHEREAS, many military service members and veterans return from today's overseas combat engagements with signature wounds of polytrauma, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental health and repatriation challenges; and veterans from earlier eras have absorbed their own signature disabilities, including PTSD; and

WHEREAS, some veterans resort to overuse of legal and illegal substances in their attempts to cope with their chronic physical and mental health challenges, other barriers and obstacles, and pain; and

WHEREAS, as a consequence of chronic substance-use disorder or lasting residuals of combat exposure, a minority of veterans display antisocial and even criminal behaviors, and thus become involved with law enforcement and justice systems; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Treatment Courts evolved from a proven national model of diversionary drug courts and mental health courts, to address the specific situations of veterans, and to maximize efficiency of available resources while making use of the distinct military culture to which veterans are accustomed; and

WHEREAS, in a 2016 report, the Government Accountability Office found large increases in workloads and heard reports from justice-involved veterans indicating that there is a need to add staff and resources to the Veterans Justice Outreach Program, in addition to improving effectiveness by developing and monitoring goals for its coordinators; and

WHEREAS, many veterans are eligible for the financial benefits, social supports and health care services available through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and through other national, state and local veterans programs; and

WHEREAS, grouping troubled veterans together within specific court dockets expedites access to helpful resources and promotes the camaraderie and mutual support found among all veterans; and

WHEREAS, veterans in general deeply value their military experiences and share an inimitable bond with their peers, and the veterans courts build upon this bond by enabling veterans to proceed through the treatment court process with people who are similarly situated, and by pairing together veterans and mentors; and

WHEREAS, years of experience from the veterans treatment courts now in existence nationwide has produced a statistically significant reduction of recidivism rates in veterans compared to persons in other treatment courts and individuals not involved in any sort of alternative or diversionary court; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the continued growth of the Veterans Treatment Courts throughout our nation and urges adequate support for the increasing resource needs of the VA program in addition to identification of appropriate goals and metrics to determine the programs' effectiveness; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all DAV Departments and Chapters are encouraged to support additional veterans courts and work with local VA officials and law enforcement to build support for the establishment of these courts; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Departments and Chapters to work in support of state legislation where necessary to authorize veterans courts.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 129
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROTECT HONORABLY DISCHARGED NONCITIZEN VETERANS FROM DEPORTATION WHILE APPLYING FOR CITIZENSHIP

WHEREAS, current law allows documented noncitizens the opportunity to serve in the United States military; and

WHEREAS, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 allows noncitizen service members to apply for naturalization during peacetime after one year of honorable service and allows noncitizen service members to apply for naturalization during periods of hostility after one day of honorable service; and

WHEREAS, noncitizen recruits often receive incorrect or incomplete information regarding their options to become U.S. citizens through military service, and less than half (43.8%) of noncitizen service members naturalize while on active duty; and

WHEREAS, some veterans who enter the criminal justice system do so because of an underlying and untreated mental health condition acquired during service; and

WHEREAS, noncitizen veterans arrested for crimes are subject to immediate deportation; and

WHEREAS, current law does not provide any special protection for wartime-service-disabled veterans who may become subject to deportation post-service; and

WHEREAS, wartime-service-disabled noncitizen veterans who get deported effectively lose access to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care services and access to VA benefits; and

WHEREAS, Veteran Treatment Courts allow wartime veterans arrested for service-related, nonviolent nonfelony crimes to address their service-related mental health or substance abuse issues which may result in removing charges upon successful completion; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to protect honorably discharged wartime noncitizen veterans with service-related injuries or illnesses, from deportation without due process and the opportunity to participate in a program through a Veterans Treatment Court or similar program; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DAV supports the enactment of legislation to protect honorably discharged wartime noncitizen veterans with service-related injuries or illnesses, from deportation while filing and awaiting a decision on their application for U.S. citizenship.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 176
SEEK THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ANY AMERICANS WHO MAY STILL BE HELD CAPTIVE FOLLOWING ANY WAR AND THE RETURN AND IDENTIFICATION OF THE REMAINS OF ANY AMERICANS WHO DIED DURING THESE WARS

WHEREAS, the members of DAV are deeply concerned for the thousands of American service members still unaccounted for in the aftermath of wars; and

WHEREAS, numerous efforts by high-level American delegations, including members of Congress, have visited Southeast Asia in continuing efforts to solve the mystery of the whereabouts and fate of our missing in action (MIA) from the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, the brave families of the missing continue to live in uncertainty and anguish regarding their sons, husbands and other family members; and

WHEREAS, still today more than 73,000 are unaccounted for from World War II, though some 40,000 are deemed unrecoverable, mostly deep sea losses; some 7,500 from the Korean War; over 1,600 still missing in Southeast Asia from the Vietnam War; two from the Persian Gulf War; and two from the Afghanistan/Iraq War, who have not been forgotten; and

WHEREAS, though DAV was disappointed with the timing of our government's decision to normalize relations with the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), prior to having achieved the fullest possible accounting of our prisoners of war (POW) and missing in action from Southeast Asia; and

WHEREAS, DAV believes that the SRV can increase its unilateral efforts to account for Americans still missing in action, especially those who were last known alive in captivity or immediate proximity to capture; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, urges the United States government to ensure this issue be considered as one of America's highest priorities by accelerating efforts to obtain the release of any American who may still be held captive and obtain, to the fullest possible extent, an accounting of those still missing and the repatriation of the remains of those who died while serving our nation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the government of the SRV to increase its unilateral efforts to account for American POW/MIAs, including locating and making available remains of Americans last known alive in captivity that have not previously been returned.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 177
OPPOSE ANY AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES FOR HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION WITHOUT THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMED CONSENT

WHEREAS, those who serve in our nation's armed forces make personal sacrifices to maintain our national security; and

WHEREAS, members of the armed forces should be accorded respect and the gratitude of the nation; and

WHEREAS, their willingness to sacrifice and relinquish their liberty while serving does not surrender their natural right to determine what shall be done with their own bodies and their right to personal dignity; and

WHEREAS, it is a violation of the ethical principle of the right of self-determination to use service members for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent; and

WHEREAS, our government has in the past used military members as "guinea pigs" to test the effects of harmful and injurious substances on the human body; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, opposes any rule or provision that would authorize use of service members for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 179
SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A COURTHOUSE FOR THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

WHEREAS, veterans and other persons claiming benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs have benefited substantially and materially from the jurisprudence of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (Court); and

WHEREAS, the Court has existed for 31 years; and

WHEREAS, the courtroom, chambers and other space are inadequate to meet the current and future needs of the Court and those it serves; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of veterans and their dependents that the Court be accorded the same appurtenances enjoyed by other appellate courts of the United States; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, shall take such actions as may be necessary or advisable in support of legislation to authorize and fund the construction of a suitable and appropriate courthouse for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 180
CONDEMN PUBLIC DESECRATION OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court, by a 5–4 decision, ruled that public desecration of the American Flag, as a form of free speech and expression, is legal and permissible; and

WHEREAS, the American Flag—Old Glory—is our national ensign, the proud and beautiful symbol of our country's precious, free heritage; and

WHEREAS, this symbol, in the form of our irreplaceable Stars and Stripes, has been carried and defended in battle, revered and cherished by citizens, and viewed as a beacon of hope and fulfillment by all the world since it was first unfurled at the birth of our nation; and

WHEREAS, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, and was not intended by our Founding Fathers to enable individuals—who enjoy unfettered freedom to express their views, no matter how abhorrent, in both oral and written form—to publicly and contemptuously desecrate our beloved flag; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, condemns any individual or group who at any time publicly and willfully desecrates the flag of the United States.

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RESOLUTION NO. 211
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP TO HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERANS AT TIME OF DISCHARGE

WHEREAS, hundreds of veterans are deported each year for crimes committed due to their undiagnosed service-related disabilities; and

WHEREAS, current law allows veterans to apply for citizenship if they are age 18 or older; served honorably in the military for at least one year; be a permanent resident when they apply, be able to read, write and speak basic English; have a knowledge of U.S. history and government (civics); and have continuously resided in the U.S. for at least five years and have been physically present in the U.S. for at least 30 months out of the five years immediately preceding the date of filing the application, unless the applicant has filed an application while still in the service or within six months of separation; however, it does not guarantee citizenship; and

WHEREAS, prior to 1945, honorably discharged veterans only had to show good moral character, be attached to the principles of the Constitution, and have a favorable disposition toward the good order and happiness of the United States; The Second War Powers Act of 1942 related to age, race, residence, any educational tests, fees, filing a declaration of intention and enemy alien status; and

WHEREAS, later, a 1944 statute (58 Stat. 885) also eliminated the requirement for proof of lawful entry to the Unite States; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans who honorably served without incident should be entitled to guaranteed citizenship for their honorable service as well as those veterans that have yet to be diagnosed with a service-connected compensable injury, illness or mental health disability; they should have the opportunity to live without fear of deportation from the country they fought for and were wounded in combat, injured or became ill due to their service, those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and gave their lives for our great nation also deserve nothing less; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports the enactment of legislation to provide veterans disabled by their service and those who served honorably be entitled to guaranteed citizenship under the same provisions given those veterans who served in World War II.

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RESOLUTION NO. 264
EXTEND SPACE-AVAILABLE AIR TRAVEL TO CAREGIVERS AND DEPENDENTS OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS

WHEREAS, the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act allows totally disabled service-connected veterans to travel space available on military aircraft; and

WHEREAS, this benefit does not include a veteran's caregiver or dependent; and

WHEREAS, active military and retirees are authorized to travel via space-available travel with their dependents; and

WHEREAS, veterans that are eligible are severely disabled and often need the aid or assistance of a caregiver or family member to deal with the rigors of travel; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to authorize eligible veterans to utilize space-available air travel with their caregivers and dependents to provide aid and assistance as well as to provide parity with Department of Defense requirements.

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RESOLUTION NO. 265
EXPAND THE TRAVEL AREA THAT SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS HAVING A PERMANENT DISABILITY RATED 100% MAY TRAVEL FROM CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES TO CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES AND OVERSEAS

WHEREAS, the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act allows totally disabled service-connected veterans to travel space-available aboard military aircraft; and

WHEREAS, it has been interpreted by the military that the language in the act only allows disabled veterans to travel in the Continental United States (CONUS) or directly between the CONUS and Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa (Guam and American

Samoa travelers may transit Hawaii or Alaska), or traveling within Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands on flights operated by Air Mobility Command; and

WHEREAS, totally disabled service-connected veterans have sacrificed greatly in terms of their impairments and loss of earning capacity; and

WHEREAS, more than any other living group of Americans, such veterans should be eligible for all benefits and privileges that Congress may provide; and

WHEREAS, such totally disabled veterans should be extended the same privileges as other personnel currently authorized to utilize space-available military air travel; and

WHEREAS, the extension of such travel to totally disabled service-connected veterans would not place any additional burden upon the administration of this program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, seeks the enactment of legislation that would extend the travel area for space-available travel that service-connected veterans having a permanent disability rated 100% from CONUS to CONUS and overseas.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 341
SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE PRISONER-OF-WAR/MISSING-IN-ACTION ACCOUNTING COMMAND

WHEREAS, members of DAV have long been deeply committed to achieving the fullest possible accounting for United States personnel still captive, missing and otherwise unaccounted for from all of our nation's wars; and

WHEREAS, personnel and funding for the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Accounting Agency (DPAA) have not been increased at a level commensurate with the expanded requirement to obtain answers on Americans unaccounted for from all of our country's wars and conflicts; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the United States government to account as fully as possible for America's missing veterans, including—if confirmed deceased—the recovery and identification of their remains when possible; and

WHEREAS, DAV deeply appreciates Vietnam's 2009 proposal to expand the pace and scope of POW/MIA accounting cooperation, including use of United States Navy vessels for underwater operations; and

WHEREAS, DAV recognizes the contributions to successful investigative efforts made by the Defense Intelligence Agency's Stony Beach Team of specialists; and

WHEREAS, this accounting effort should not be considered complete until all reasonable actions have been taken to achieve the fullest possible accounting; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, remains steadfast in its commitment to the goal of achieving the fullest possible accounting for all United States military and designated civilian personnel missing from our nation's wars; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon our government to support personnel increases and full funding for the efforts of the DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory, including specific authorization to augment assigned personnel when additional assets and resources are necessary.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 342
EXTEND COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES TO SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

WHEREAS, access to the Department of Defense (DOD) Commissary benefit is similar to other military benefits, including Exchange privileges, which is limited only to active-duty service members, Guard and reservists, medical retirees, retirees, Gold Star widows, service-connected veterans in receipt of total compensation, Medal of Honor recipients and all of their respective dependents; and

WHEREAS, DOD announced in 2016 that all honorably discharged veterans will have access to DOD's online Exchange as of November 11, 2017, and opening the Exchange to the 20 million honorably discharged veterans is a strong business case; and

WHEREAS, the recent downsizing of the military jeopardizes the continued profitable operation of military commissary stores; and

WHEREAS, veterans injured while in service to their nation have earned the privilege to use commissary stores; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to extend commissary privileges to service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 344
SUPPORT FORMER PRISONER-OF-WAR SLAVE LABOR CLAIMS AGAINST JAPANESE FIRMS

WHEREAS, on May 30, 2009, the government of Japan, through then–Ambassador to the United States Ichiro Fujisaki, offered an official apology to American prisoners of war (POWs) for their abuse, misuse, pain and suffering caused by Imperial Japan; and

WHEREAS, in September 2010, the government of Japan reinforced its apology by initiating a visitation program for former POWs to visit Japan, to return to the sites of their imprisonment and to receive the apology directly from senior Japanese government officials; and

WHEREAS, the United States owes much to these soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen, the majority of whom fought in the early heroic battles of World War II in the Philippines, on Wake Island, Guam, Java and in the Sunda Strait; and

WHEREAS, the American POWs of Imperial Japan were forced into slave labor throughout the Japanese Empire in the most unjust, brutal and inhumane conditions; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports and commends the efforts of the American POWs of Japan to reclaim their dignity and attain full justice from the government of Japan and those Japanese private companies that enslaved them; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED DAV insists the government of Japan provide and publicize an official transcript in English and Japanese of the government's 2009 apology to the American POWs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED DAV insists Congress and the Administration work with all parties involved to ensure the continuation of the POW visitation program to Japan, that it be expanded to include family members and descendants, and funds be provided for a dedicated program of research, documentation, exchange and education; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED DAV will work with all parties involved to persuade the private Japanese companies that benefited from POW slave labor during World War II, especially those companies now doing business in the United States, to follow the Japanese government's lead in acknowledging their use and abuse of American POW labor, and join with the Japanese government to create a fund for remembrance, research, documentation, exchange and education on the POW experience in the Pacific and its lessons for war and peace.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 354
SUPPORT RENEWED PRISONER-OF-WAR/MISSING-IN-ACTION DISCUSSIONS

WHEREAS, DAV has long been and is now deeply committed to accounting as fully as possible for United States personnel previously listed as prisoners, missing and unaccounted for from all of our nation's past wars; and

WHEREAS, DAV recognizes the utility and importance of bilateral discussions, separate from those held on strategic issues, but fully integrated with broader policy and national security priorities in an effort to reach agreement for proceeding on a humanitarian basis with prisoner-of-war/missing-in-action accounting cooperation; and

WHEREAS, DAV also recognizes the lead time required between renewing bilateral discussions to reach humanitarian agreements and restoring and increasing unilateral, bilateral and, as needed, multilateral field recovery operations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports renewing and expanding direct bilateral humanitarian efforts for the purpose of restoring and improving U.S. agreements and processes with counterpart nations required to account as fully as possible for unreturned American military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 355
SUPPORT DISPLAYING THE PRISONER-OF-WAR/MISSING-IN-ACTION FLAG ON CERTAIN FEDERAL PROPERTY

WHEREAS, the National League of Families Prisoner-of-War/Missing-in-Action (POW/MIA) flag is designated as the symbol of our nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for; and

WHEREAS, section 902, title 38, United States Code (USC), recognizes that the POW/MIA flag shall be displayed on certain federal property on Armed Forces Day, the third Saturday in May; Memorial Day, the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the third Friday of September; and Veterans Day, November 11; and

WHEREAS, 38 USC §902 recognizes the certain federal locations as the Capitol; the White House; the World War II Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial; and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; each national cemetery; the buildings containing the official offices of the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Director of the Selective Service System; each major military installation, as designated by the Secretary of Defense; each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and each United States Postal Service post office; and

WHEREAS, as a reminder to the American people of the sacrifices of those still prisoner missing, or unaccounted for, the POW/MIA should be displayed more often than the aforementioned six days; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, supports legislation to establish POW/MIA flag display days as all days on which the flag of the United States is displayed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 400
APPRECIATION TO ALL WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE 98TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the success of the 98th DAV National Convention convened in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, depends on the total cooperation, collaboration and unselfish devotion of the state, county, and local officials; and

WHEREAS, the success of this National Convention is also attributed to the Department and local Chapters and Units of the DAV and DAVA, particularly to Convention Chairman, Mr. Jim Sursely; and

WHEREAS, we wish to commend all the news media for their encouragement and assistance at all of our Convention activities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, expresses its sincere appreciation to all groups and/or agencies whose dedication to our principles has made our Convention a successful one; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we wish to extend to the citizens of Orlando, Florida, our deepest gratitude for their personal interest in our great organization; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we wish to extend our appreciation to all of the distinguished guests who participated in our convention and support the ideals and principles of our great organization; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we extend our gratitude to Convention Chairman Jim Sursely, and his entire Committee for providing personalized assistance to our friends and delegates during our Convention stay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 401
APPRECIATION TO ROSEN SHINGLE CREEK FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE 98TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the excellent service and ambiance of the Rosen Shingle Creek contributed greatly to the success of the 98th National Convention of the DAV convened in Orlando, Florida; and

WHEREAS, the courteous team members of the hotel staff ensured the comfort and satisfaction of the DAV officers, delegates and guests; and

WHEREAS, the classic setting, friendly environment, and numerous amenities helped make the 98th National Convention a truly memorable experience; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, expresses its deepest appreciation for the Rosen Shingle Creek and to its entire staff for their friendly, personalized attention which helped make the 98th National Convention a resounding success.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 402

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO NATIONAL COMMANDER DENNIS NIXON

WHEREAS, DAV National Commander Dennis Nixon, of China Springs, Texas, served honorably in the United States Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, Commander Nixon enlisted in 1964 at the age of 17, trained as a combat engineer and was stationed at Camp Pendleton, California; and

WHEREAS, while on patrol outside of Da Nang during his second combat tour in Vietnam, he sustained injuries from a "booby trap" to his abdomen and leg, which required eight surgeries with the eventual result of his leg being amputated; and

WHEREAS, after medical retirement from the Marine Corps in 1970, Commander Nixon became a DAV Life Member and entered DAV's professional staff as a DAV National Service Officer; and

WHEREAS, he dedicated 36 years serving our nation's injured and ill veterans, their dependents and survivors, as a DAV professional, including as the Supervisor of the DAV NSO Office in Waco, Texas, as well as National Area Supervisor of Area 7; and

WHEREAS, his dedication to the men and women did not end there, as he was also engaged in his DAV chapter and served as the Adjutant of the DAV Department of Texas; and

WHEREAS, since his retirement, Commander Nixon continued to volunteer and assist with the DAV Department of Texas chapter and department service officer training program as well as mentor to numerous DAV apprentices at the Waco NSO Office; and

WHEREAS, he has served on the national level of DAV, to include the National Executive Committee and on the DAV Charitable Service Trust Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, the membership of DAV unanimously elected Mr. Nixon to lead the more than one million member organization during the 2018 National Convention in Reno, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, he has shown outstanding compassion and leadership during his year as National Commander, visiting disaster sites, delivering DAV's message before a joint session of Congress, and leading DAV at the national Winter Sports Clinic, all while advancing DAV's mission; and

WHEREAS, Commander Nixon has advocated passionately on behalf of blue water navy Vietnam veterans to ensure that they received the benefits they earned and the recognition of their service, culminating in the passage in June 2019 of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act; and

WHEREAS, Commander Nixon, acknowledging the care, assistance, and sacrifices made by disabled veterans' spouses, including his wife Maxine, has been a critical voice in expanding and improving survivor's benefits, specifically, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 3–6, 2019, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Nixon for his sacrifices, selfless service, professionalism and dedication to his fellow wounded, ill and injured veterans, their families, survivors, and the DAV during his year as DAV National Commander; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DAV also salutes and extends our sincere appreciation to Commander Nixon's family for their steadfast support and sacrifices during his year as DAV National Commander.

* * *

(Whereupon, the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership Chairman withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Boy, if I did all that, no wonder I'm tired. (Laughter) You have heard the motion. Can I get a second?

MR. JOE PINELLA: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. PINELLA: Joe Pinella, Department of New York, Chapter 158, seconds the motion to accept the report.

COMMANDER NIXON: I'm sorry. All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed—oh, there it is. Hold it. (Laughter) In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolution to be read.

Are there any rejected resolutions you wish to read? Once again, those in favor say aye; those opposed, same sign. So ordered. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: That was the first mistake I've made. (Laughter) It is now an honor—I'm good. It is now an honor and a personal privilege to introduce to you one of my personal heroes, the president of the DAV's Charitable Service Trust, Richard Marbes. (Applause)

A Green Bay, Wisconsin native, Mr. Marbes enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1955 and served as an airborne radio operator. While assigned to medical evacuation and troop carrier squadrons in France and Germany he, himself, was medically evacuated back to the United States following an injury that resulted in the amputation of his leg. He was medically retired due to a service-connected disability in 1958.

(Whereupon, Chairman Marbes advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Charitable Service Trust President and Past National Commander Dick Marbes served in DAV's highest elected position from 1993 to 1994. In 1978 he was named the Wisconsin Disabled Person of the Year. Since his retirement in 1987, he has pursued his passion for helping injured and ill veterans full time.

A life member and service officer for Chapter 3 in Green Bay, he has held numerous elected positions at the chapter, department and national levels.

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER RICHARD E. MARBES: Thank you, Commander Nixon, for that kind introduction. But please don't sit down so fast. I have a special short but special presentation here.

(Whereupon, the Commander joined Chairman Marbes at the podium.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES: Two months ago to the day, you came to Wisconsin and honored us along with your lovely wife, Maxine, as the rep at our department convention at Green Bay, Wisconsin, my home chapter.

During your stay we were made aware that you have a lovely little hobby of collecting walking sticks. And it just so happens that we have a fellow Marine, a life member, in Chapter 3 who has a hobby of making walking sticks.

So we talked to Richard and put it together and so we have someone who is making sticks and someone who is taking sticks and we have something here for you today. Here you go, Commander. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Commander was presented with a handcrafted walking stick.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES: Talks about your service as well as national commander and we hope it serves you well.

COMMANDER NIXON: Wow. Thank you very much.

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken, after which the Commander returned to his seat.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES: And let me also extend the DAV Charitable Service Trust's gratitude to National Adjutant Burgess and our national officers and delegates and guests.

As president let me introduce the Trust's governing board. They are Vice President Marc Burgess of Kentucky, Secretary-Treasurer David Tannenbaum of Florida and our Directors: National Commander Dennis Nixon of Texas, Danny Oliver of Oklahoma, JoAnn Martinez of California and Denise Williams from Virginia. On behalf of the Trust and our Board, I am proud to present our 2018 annual report to this national convention.

The transition to civilian life is a major adjustment for those who served, especially for those who were changed as a result of their service.

Veterans are resilient by nature, but even the hearts of war fighters can be challenged when the foundation they know is removed and cannot be fully replaced.

The Trust looks for programs and services to ease this transition and reconnect veterans with opportunities to enhance their health and outlook on life, for them and for their families.

As a veteran myself and an amputee who lost my leg in service, I can't tell you how important families and communities are in helping veterans regain their sense of dignity, purpose and belonging after an injury. Your support of the Trust makes you a stakeholder in our work to renew lives and thank you for that. (Applause)

The Trust carefully evaluates and addresses the most vital needs of ill and injured veterans and their families when empowering them to maximize their quality of life after combat.

More than 96 cents out of every donated dollar directly supports programs that contribute to the victories the Trust makes possible.

Notably, the Trust has also received the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for the 14th time since being evaluated in 2002. As Charity Navigator is the nation's largest independent charity evaluator, this acknowledgment speaks volumes about the Trust's careful and efficient stewardship of donated funds. (Applause)

Corporate matching gift programs, bequests and other forms of contributions from corporations, foundations and individual donors enable the Trust to fulfill its mission.

In 2018 these gifts, along with income derived from investments, totaled more than $12.4 million, allowing the Trust to devote nearly $9 million towards critical health care, education, employment, transition assistance, creative healing, therapeutic activities addressing both physical and psychological barriers and legal services.

Last year the Trust proudly awarded the President and Fellows of Harvard College with a grant of more than $2 million to support its Veterans Legal Clinic and DAV Distinguished Speaker Series.

Through a partnership with DAV and the Trust since 2013, the Veterans Legal Clinic has served more than 1,000 ill and injured veterans with legal assistance through the services of students and staff. Approximately 100 Harvard Law School students have also been trained in disabled veteran advocacy.

Over the next five years it is anticipated that an additional 1,000 veterans will be assisted with representation in federal court, obtaining discharge upgrades and corrections of unjust discharge characterizations, settling tax debt disputes and much more with funds from the Trust.

Funds will also be used for continuation of Harvard Law School's annual DAV Distinguished Speaker Series, which serves as a platform in recognizing leading figures in the veterans community.

I would like to take just a moment to recognize Dana Montalto who is with us here today. Dana is an attorney and clinical instructor with the Veterans Legal Clinic. Dana, please stand to be recognized for what you and the Veterans Legal Clinic do on behalf of our nation's heroes.

(Whereupon, Ms. Montalto stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES: While we all know how families play a pivotal role in a veteran's health and well-being, the Trust has placed an emphasis on assisting organizations dedicated to helping families heal together. In doing so, Trust grants have supported wellness, mentoring programs and alternative therapies aimed to improve the quality of life for veterans and their families.

Through the wide range of initiatives supported by the Trust we are able to aid and assist veterans through a multitude of challenges. Today we are extremely proud to highlight the Veterans Voices Writing Project. The program enables veterans to experience solace and satisfaction through writing.

The Veterans Voices Writing Project started as an outreach program for veterans returning from World War II. Today, it serves all veterans with therapeutic writing programs to heal their unseen emotional and moral wounds. So let's take a look at how this program is helping to change the lives of some of our ill and injured service members.

(Whereupon, a video on the Veterans Voices Writing Project was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming Deann Mitchell, vice president of the Veterans Voices Writing Project. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Mitchell joined Charitable Service Trust President and Past National Commander Marbes at the podium.)

MS. DEANN MITCHELL: Good morning. I'm Deann Mitchell, board vice president of Veterans Voices Writing Project, publisher of Veterans Voices Magazine. My eyes are a little teary after seeing our video on the big screen, so forgive me if I can't read my remarks.

With thousands of nonprofit organizations serving veterans, very few can boast of a 73-year history. We can. Our magazine, Veterans Voices, has been published for 67 years and is the only publication in the U.S. that is devoted exclusively to the expressive work of veterans.

This year we're adding a new dimension to our project by adding a visual art initiative that will draw attention to art as part of the healing process. Veteran artists can submit their work through our website with the possible chance to be published. Beginning with the Fall 2019 edition, Veterans Voices will have a new color centerfold to showcase the chosen works of art.

Another project initiated this year is our digital archive of all of our 200 magazines and nearly 10,000 manuscripts published since 1952. Our archives will be searchable by author, topic, military branch,

conflict and other keywords. The history in our archives is second-to-none and will be available free to the public through our website veteransvoices.org.

Veterans Voices serves veterans in many ways, one of which is by donating 15,000 magazines each year to the Department of Veteran Affairs for distribution to all of the VA medical centers in the nation at a cost that equals about one-third of our annual budget.

Veterans Voices Writing Project is funded by individuals, grants, foundations and veterans' service organizations. We are so grateful for the support of the DAV and the DAV Charitable Service Trust. Thank you for inviting us here today to share our work. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Mitchell withdrew from and Chairman Marbes returned to the podium.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES: Thank you, Ms. Mitchell and thank you for all that you've done to help veterans since World War II with this wonderful program. Let's give her another round of applause. (Applause)

The Trust is proud of its legacy of service to empower veterans. These wonderful programs are truly life-changing and provide much-needed assistance to those who served.

Thanks to the loyal supporters, corporations and foundations who generously donate to the Trust each year veterans are able to access the resources and services they need to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

As I close out this year's report, I want to thank each of you for the work you've done and for the work you continue to do, all in the name of our brothers and sisters who served this nation.

Commander, let me take this opportunity to make this presentation and recognize the tremendous services and support provided by the Trust's grant recipients.

And let me take just a moment to acknowledge the Trust Administrator Bridgette Sorrell and her wonderful staff back at National Headquarters who make all this work so well every day.

God bless each and every one of you and may God continue to bless the U.S. of A. Commander, that concludes my report. (Applause)

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust

Financial Statements as of and for the Years Ended December 31, 2018 and 2017, and Independent Auditors' Report

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust (the "Trust"), which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Trust's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Trust as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 2 to the financial statements, in 2018, the Trust adopted Accounting Standards Update No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities.* Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

April 9, 2019

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018	2017
ASSETS		
CASH	$ 4,918,274	$ 5,459,989
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	37,364	51,803
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	340,575	261,432
CAMPAIGNS' PLEDGES RECEIVABLE—Net of allowance for uncollectible pledges of $249,294 in 2018 and $387,433 in 2017	84,473	120,869
PREPAID EXPENSES AND OTHER	42,604	7,801
INVESTMENTS—Includes charitable gift annuity reserve balances of $5,754,058 and $5,934,478 in 2018 and 2017, respectively	27,952,701	26,266,208
SOFTWARE—Net	6,037	7,762
TOTAL	$ 33,382,028	$ 32,175,864
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS		
LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable—Disabled American Veterans	$ 227,504	$ 471,983
Accounts payable—other	339,895	17,690
Annuity payment liability	4,334,810	4,363,079
Total liabilities	4,902,209	4,852,752
NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	28,479,819	27,323,112
TOTAL	$ 33,382,028	$ 32,175,864

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total	Without Donor Restrictions
		2018		2017
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Contributions—net of assessment fees and provision for uncollectible pledges of $247,149 in 2018 and $518,981 in 2017	$ 6,827,054	$ 805,144	$ 7,632,198	$ 6,953,478
Contributions of charitable gift annuities	233,109		233,109	296,259
Bequests	3,933,894		3,933,894	1,650,056
Net assets released from restrictions	805,144	(805,144)		
Net investment return	(1,438,823)		(1,438,823)	3,181,120
Total support and revenue	10,360,378	-	10,360,378	12,080,913
EXPENSES:				
Program services	8,606,400		8,606,400	6,722,973
Management and general	264,179		264,179	193,104
Fundraising	116,732		116,732	118,705
Total expenses	8,987,311	-	8,987,311	7,034,782
CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY VALUATION ADJUSTMENT	(216,360)		(216,360)	(12,276)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	1,156,707	-	1,156,707	5,033,855
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	27,323,112		27,323,112	22,289,257
NET ASSETS—End of year	$28,479,819	$ -	$28,479,819	$27,323,112

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018				2017			
	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Total	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Total
EXPENSES:								
Allocations to charitable programs	$8,509,489	$ -	$ -	$8,509,489	$6,618,811	$ -	$ -	$6,618,811
Grant proposal processing	58,228			58,228	63,706			63,706
Administrative charges		38,819	102,110	140,929		42,472	102,156	144,628
Travel	4,510	18,056		22,566	2,594	21,443		24,037
Advertising	8,775	585	2,340	11,700	14,405	960	3,841	19,206
Printing, postage and supplies	4,527	4,677	417	9,621	4,207	4,341	96	8,644
Depreciation of software	1,725			1,725	862			862
Legal fees			6,840	6,840			6,840	6,840
Professional fees	17,200	136,042		153,242	16,428	75,785		92,213
Insurance	1,946	1,946		3,892	1,960	1,960		3,920
Banking fees		33,831		33,831		38,873		38,873
Other expenses		30,223	5,025	35,248		7,270	5,772	13,042
TOTAL EXPENSES	$8,606,400	$264,179	$116,732	$8,987,311	$6,722,973	$193,104	$118,705	$7,034,782

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018	2017
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	$ 1,156,707	$ 5,033,855
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Noncash investment contributions	(101,787)	(85,290)
Change in net unrealized depreciation (appreciation) of investments	2,057,645	(2,114,663)
Depreciation of software	1,725	862
Charitable gift annuity valuation adjustment	216,360	12,276
Loss (gain) on sale of investment securities	180,280	(508,992)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Interest and dividends receivable	14,439	7,615
Accounts receivable	(79,143)	32,481
Campaigns' pledges receivable	36,396	171,799
Prepaid expenses and other	(34,803)	(252)
Accounts payable—DAV and other	77,726	(9,503)
Annuity payment liability	(233,109)	(296,259)
Net cash provided by operating activities	3,292,436	2,243,929
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Payment for software		(8,624)
Purchase of investments	(53,800,026)	(10,510,874)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	49,977,395	9,922,901
Net cash used in investing activities	(3,822,631)	(596,597)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Proceeds from gift annuity agreement contributions	571,200	731,326
Payments to annuitants	(582,720)	(597,137)
Net cash (used in) provided by financing activities	(11,520)	134,189
NET (DECREASE) INCREASE IN CASH	(541,715)	1,781,521
CASH—Beginning of year	5,459,989	3,678,468
CASH—End of year	$ 4,918,274	$ 5,459,989

See notes to financial statements.

1. ORGANIZATION

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust (the "Trust") is a not-for-profit service organization formed under the laws of the District of Columbia for the single purpose of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. To carry out this responsibility, the Trust supports physical and psychological rehabilitation programs; enhances research and mobility for veterans with amputations and spinal cord injuries; benefits aging veterans; aids and shelters homeless veterans; and evaluates and addresses the needs of veterans wounded in recent wars and conflicts and their caregivers.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements—The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

New Accounting Standards—In August 2018, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2018-13, *Fair Value Measurement (Topic 820): Disclosure Framework—Changes to the Disclosure Requirements for Fair Value Measurement*. The amendments in this Update modify the disclosure requirements on fair value measurements in Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurement*, based on the concepts in the Concepts Statement, including the consideration of costs and benefits. The effective date of ASU No. 2018-13 is for all entities for fiscal years, and interim periods within those fiscal years, beginning after December 15, 2019. Early adoption is permitted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact on the financial statements.

In March 2017, the FASB issued ASU No. 2017-08, *Receivables—Nonrefundable Fees and Other Costs (Subtopic 310-20): Premium Amortization on Purchased Callable Debt Securities*. ASU No. 2017-08 amends guidance on the amortization period of premiums on certain purchased callable debt securities. The amendments shorten the amortization period of premiums on certain purchased callable debt securities to the earliest call date. The amendments should be applied on a modified retrospective basis through a cumulative effect adjustment to beginning retained earnings. The effective date of ASU No. 2017-08 is for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it is not expected to have a material impact on the Trust's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations.

In June 2016, the FASB issued ASU No. 2016-13, *Financial Instruments—Credit Losses, which is included in ASC Topic 326, Measurement of Credit Losses on Financial Instruments*. The new standard revises the accounting requirements related to the measurement of credit losses and will require organizations to measure all expected credit losses for financial assets based on historical experience, current conditions, and reasonable and supportable forecasts about collectibility. Assets must be presented in the financial statements at the net amount expected to be collected. This standard will be effective for the annual financial statements beginning January 1, 2021. A modified

retrospective approach is to be used for certain parts of this standard, while other parts are to be applied using a prospective approach. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In May 2014, the FASB issued ASU No. 2014-09, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. ASU No. 2014-09 requires an entity to recognize revenue in a way that depicts the transfer of promised goods or services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods and services. ASU No. 2014-09 is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018, and is to be applied retrospectively; early adoption is permitted. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it is not expected to have a material impact on the Trust's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations.

Newly Adopted Accounting Principles—The Trust implemented ASU No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-For-Profit Entities*, in the current year, applying the changes retrospectively. The new standards change the following aspects of the financial statements:

- The temporarily restricted and permanently restricted net asset classes have been combined into a single net asset class called net assets with donor restrictions.

- The unrestricted net assets class has been renamed net assets without donor restrictions.

- The financial statements include a disclosure about liquidity and availability of resources (see Note 4).

The Trust implemented ASU No. 2018-08, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Clarifying the Scope and the Accounting Guidance for Contributions Received and Contributions Made*, in the current year, applying the changes using a modified prospective approach. This update clarifies and improves current guidance about whether a transfer of assets is a contribution or an exchange transaction. The Trust has adopted the guidance in the ASU as of December 31, 2018; however, adoption did not materially impact the Trust's financial statements.

The Trust implemented ASU No. 2016-01, *Financial Instruments—Overall (Subtopic 825-10)—Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities*, on January 1, 2018, applying the changes using a modified retrospective transition approach. ASU No. 2016-01 revises the accounting related to the classification and measurement of investments in equity securities and the presentation of certain fair value changes for financials liabilities measured at fair value. Adoption did not materially impact the Trust's financial statements.

Cash—The Trust considers all highly liquid instruments purchased with a maturity date of three months or less to be cash equivalents and are stated at cost, which approximates fair value. The earnings credit received on the Trust's checking accounts was $59,033 and $20,613 in 2018 and 2017, respectively. The Trust maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. The Trust has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Revenue Recognition—The Trust is a member of Independent Charities of America (ICA) and Military Family & Veterans Service Organizations of America (MFVSOA). ICA and MFVSOA are charitable agency federations, certified by the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to participate in the annual combined federal campaigns, as well as state and corporate workplace giving campaigns.

The Trust recognizes contribution revenue as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions when notification of the campaign designations is received and also recognizes an allowance for uncollectible pledges. Pledge receivables that are outstanding for more than one year are written off in their entirety. The Trust also evaluates pledges receivable for any amounts to be specifically reserved. Pledges receivable of $84,473 are expected to be received in 2019. Amounts received from accounts previously written off are recognized as contribution revenue when received.

As a member of MFVSOA during 2018 and 2017, the Trust was assessed a portion of MFVSOA's annual operating budget based on the relative amount of total pledges made to the Trust compared with the sum of all member agency pledges. Pledges designated to MFVSOA (versus a member agency) and other revenue, such as interest income, are shared among all member agencies in this same proportion. Therefore, if MFVSOA's revenue exceeds expenses, the member agencies share the excess income. This excess income is distributed in the following year. The Trust recognizes such distribution as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions when received. The Trust received $130,040 and $150,964 in 2018 and 2017, respectively, included in contributions within the statements of activities, for excess income recognized by MFVSOA in 2017 and 2016.

Investments—Investments include investment of contributions and charitable gift annuity agreements (see Note 7). Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of the Trust's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or model-derived valuations, in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments. The Trust's policy is to report cash and cash equivalents, which include money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

Contributions and Bequests—Contributions and bequests received are recorded as support with and without donor restrictions depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. The Trust received noncash contributions at a fair market value of $101,787 in 2018 and $85,290 in 2017.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more program or supporting services of the Organization. Those expenses include grant proposal processing and administrative charges, postage, printing, supplies, insurance, and advertising. All expenses are allocated based on estimates of time and effort toward each program or supporting service. Allocation estimates are reviewed annually based on the specific expense and adjusted accordingly.

Income Taxes—As a not-for-profit service organization, the Trust has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions made to the Trust are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Use of Estimates—The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

3. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTION

Beginning in 2018 with the implementation of ASU No. 2018-08, the Trust is showing net assets as received with donor restriction and then showing the subsequent release from restriction on the statement of activities. In years prior to 2018, the Trust used the simultaneous release method for receiving and releasing funds considered restricted. Net assets are released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions in 2018 are as follows:

	2018
Purpose restrictions accomplished:	
To Disabled American Veterans	$742,468
To DAV Departments and Chapters	13,221
To National Service Foundation	1,600
Program services	47,855
Net assets released from restrictions	$805,144

4. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The Trust's working capital and cash flows are attributable to the contributions, net of assessment fees and uncollectible pledges, received throughout the year. As of December 31, 2018 and 2017, the Trust's financial assets (total assets, less prepaid expenses and software) totaled $33,333,387 and $32,160,301, respectively. All financial assets with the exception of the Charitable Gift Annuity Reserve investment of $5,754,058 and $5,934,478 as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively, are available to fund expenditures within one year following the Statement of Financial Position date.

The Trust has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its fundraising costs and general and administrative expenses come due. In addition, the Trust awards grants to board-approved applicants. As part of its liquidity management, the Trust invests cash in excess of daily requirements in various short-term investments. The short-term investments are invested for capital preservation and liquidity for cash flow requirements, such as money market funds, certificates of deposit, and commercial paper.

The Trust's long-term investment portfolio is for the deposit of proceeds and payment of obligations from charitable gift annuities. The portfolio is invested in marketable fixed-income and equity securities, index and actively managed mutual funds, and Exchange Traded Funds (ETF)s. A portion of the balance is invested as required in accordance with governing regulatory agencies to pay the long-term charitable gift annuity beneficiary obligations. See Note 8 for further information. The remaining is invested with the intent of providing capital appreciation and total return to cover future expenditures and grants awarded.

5. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Accounting Standards Codification 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, provides a framework for measuring fair value. This framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value, as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market, but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The Trust did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3) during 2018 or 2017.

The Trust's policy is to recognize transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers during 2018 and 2017.

Asset Valuation Techniques—Valuation techniques used maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs. The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets recorded at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at December 31, 2018 and 2017.

Cash equivalents, composed of money market funds, are categorized as Level 1, and are valued at cost, which approximates fair value. The money market funds represent the Trust's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

US government securities (US Treasury notes), common stocks, and ETFs, categorized as Level 1, are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

Certificates of deposit and commercial paper categorized as Level 2 are valued at fair value, which approximates amortized cost.

US government agency notes and municipal and corporate bonds, categorized as Level 2, are valued using third-party pricing services. These services may use, for example, model-based pricing methods that utilize observable market data as inputs. Broker-dealer bids or quotes of securities with similar characteristics may also be used.

Shares of registered investment companies (mutual funds), categorized as Level 1, are valued at quoted market prices that represent the net asset value of shares held at year-end.

The major categories of the Trust's financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, are as follows:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
2018 Asset Category	**Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)**	**Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)**	**Total**
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 482,758	$ -	$ 482,758
Commercial paper		7,624,151	7,624,151
U.S. government securities	1,890,134		1,890,134
Certificates of deposit		1,464,905	1,464,905
U.S. government agency notes		437,494	437,494
Municipal bonds		398,404	398,404
Corporate bonds		1,647,401	1,647,401
Common stocks	4,306,309		4,306,309
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	5,619,407		5,619,407
International equity funds	4,081,738		4,081,738
Total mutual funds/ETFs	9,701,145	-	9,701,145
Total assets	$ 16,380,346	$ 11,572,355	$ 27,952,701

2017 Asset Category	Fair Value Measurements Using Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 549,271	$ -	$ 549,271
Commercial paper		2,362,250	2,362,250
U.S. government securities	1,525,982		1,525,982
Certificates of deposit		1,485,342	1,485,342
U.S. government agency notes		2,554,892	2,554,892
Municipal bonds		401,836	401,836
Corporate bonds		1,727,246	1,727,246
Common stocks	4,451,272		4,451,272
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	6,029,972		6,029,972
International equity funds	5,178,145		5,178,145
Total mutual funds/ETFs	11,208,117	-	11,208,117
Total assets	$17,734,642	$ 8,531,566	$26,266,208

Fair value of the annuity payment liability of $4,334,810 and $4,363,079 as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively, was calculated as the net present value of expected annuity payments based on the following significant assumptions:

(1) The discount rate expected to reflect yields available on high-quality investments; and
(2) The mortality assumption based on expected annuitant longevity.

6. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During 2018 and 2017, DAV personnel assisted the Trust on a limited basis in administering its business operations, fundraising, and grant programs. For these personnel services, the Trust reimbursed DAV $191,092 and $189,749 in 2018 and 2017, respectively. As of December 31, 2018 and 2017, the Trust owed DAV $227,504 and $471,983, respectively. DAV provides the Trust with the use of facilities, equipment, and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2018 and 2017, the Trust distributed the following in support of DAV programs and services:

	2018	2017
DAV Employment Initiative	$ 1,300,000	$ 1,400,000
Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	309,100	303,637
DAV "Just B Kids" Scholarship	300,000	300,000
Assistance to disabled veterans and their families	250,542	447,641
Transportation Network	200,000	200,000
Mobile Service Office Program	50,000	
Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program	45,000	45,000
DAV 5K Program	37,876	36,250
National Service Officer Programs—other		5,000

In performing the duties of their positions, DAV's National Commander and National Adjutant serve on the Board of Directors of the Trust. In performing the duties of their positions as a Trust Director, some members also serve on the DAV National Service Foundation Board of Directors and the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation's Board of Directors.

In 2018 and 2017, the Trust granted $840,000 and $800,000, respectively, to the DAV National Service Foundation—Columbia Trust Fund for the DAV Transportation Network Vehicle Grant Program. In 2018 and 2017, the Trust also provided $1,600 and $760, respectively, to the DAV National Service Foundation for use in assisting disabled veterans and their dependents.

7. ANNUITY PAYMENT LIABILITY

The Trust enters into charitable gift annuity agreements with donors. In the statements of activities, contributions of charitable gift annuities of $233,109 and $296,259 for the years ended December 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively, are the result of the portion of gift annuity contributions that exceed the annuity payment liability estimated at the date of the contribution.

The Trust recognizes an annuity payment liability as the present value of the future cash flows expected to be paid to the donors and their beneficiaries using a discount rate of 5% as of December 31, 2018 and 2017.

In 2018 and 2017, the Trust used the mortality table IAR-2012 in determining the liability to reflect the most up-to-date expectations with regard to longevity for individual annuitant lives.

In 2018, the Charitable Gift Annuity Valuation Adjustment of $(216,360) consists of:

- Gain from deceased annuitants of $206,013, and
- Other actuarial adjustments of $(422,373), which are primarily related to discounting of the liability during the year ended December 31, 2018.

In 2017, the Charitable Gift Annuity Valuation Adjustment of $(12,276) consists of:

- Gain from deceased annuitants of $493,742, and
- Other actuarial adjustments of $(506,018), which are primarily related to discounting of the liability during the year ended December 31, 2017.

There are various state statutes and regulations that govern not-for-profit entities that enter into charitable gift annuity agreements with donors. As required by various state statutes and regulations, the Trust segregates the deposit of charitable gift annuity proceeds and reserves a portion for fulfillment of future annuity obligations. The required minimum balance of the reserve account is maintained and invested in accordance with applicable state statutes, the fair market value of which is $4,920,635 and $5,163,730 as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively.

In addition to this reserve account, the Trust is required by California statutes to maintain segregated reserves for future obligations to charitable gift annuity donors residing in California. The fair market value for the California reserve account is $833,423 and $770,748 as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively. The minimum required balance of the segregated accounts for California donors is calculated and invested in accordance with applicable California statutes and regulations.

The Trust also maintains the minimum amount of net assets without donor restrictions as required by any state for the acceptance of charitable gift annuities, which is $1,000,000. The total net assets without donor restrictions that are subject to state statutes or regulations (calculated as the reserve funds (investments), less the annuity payment liability) amounted to $1,419,248 and $1,571,399 as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively.

8. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2018, but before April 9, 2019, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, that require consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the financial statements.

* * * * * *

(Whereupon, President Marbes withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Dick. And please take my thanks back to Wisconsin for that beautiful cane. You have heard the motion, can I have a second?

MR. MIKE HURT: Second. Mic 3.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 3.

MR. HURT: Mike Hurt, Department of Wisconsin, Chapter 17.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. All in favor signify by saying aye; opposed, same sign. Carried. Thank you.

(Whereupon President Marbes withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: DAV has played a pivotal role in the implementation of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial which opened October 5, 2014, and since has become a prominent and profoundly important monument in Washington, D.C.

We are proud to be joined today by a well-known DAV leader who helped lead the charge to establish this memorial. He has been an endless presence and determined advocate for its use.

As many of you may have seen, this is an important year for this veteran. He celebrated his 50th "Alive Day" this year. As many DAV Magazine readers might already know, he was reunited with his—he was reunited with the medic who helped save his life. Let's take a look at how that went.

(Whereupon, a video of Dennis Joyner's reunion was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Without further delay let's give a warm welcome to Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Foundation President Dennis Joyner. (Applause)

(Whereupon, DVLMF President and Past National Commander Joyner advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Dennis Joyner, a combat-disabled veteran of the Vietnam War was appointed board president for the Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Foundation in 2015.

Prior to his appointment, he served on the board as secretary from 2008 to 2015. A life member of DAV since 1970, Joyner served as the organization's national commander from 1983 to 1984.

In 1983, President Regan named Mr. Joyner the nation's Handicapped American of the Year and he was also honored as DAV's National Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year. He served as president of the DAV Vietnam Veterans National Memorial Corporation from 1986 to 1998.

DVLMF PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DENNIS JOYNER: Thank you. Before I get into my report I'd like to kind of ad lib just a little bit with what you just, you saw. Fifty years. I know there is a lot of my fellow Vietnam vets sitting out here that have been celebrating the past few years and will in the very near future 50 years for their day when they were wounded in Vietnam. And mine was June 26, just a short four or five weeks ago.

And about a month before that my wife said to me, she said, "Well, what would you like to do for that day?" And I said, "Well, it's not like it's a party, a celebration of life," but not—celebration didn't seem like the right word.

And I looked at her and I said, "Donna, you know what I really would like to do? I would like to spend the day with the two people that saved my life June 26, 50 years ago. And with my sister" who is the one that would send me roses, one for each day or each year for the number of years—and after 38 roses come into my office one day and everybody was excited except me, I'm kind of ducking; all the ladies wanted the roses. But I—and so she went to making me a spaghetti dinner. And I said, "Wouldn't that be great?"

And lo and behold, a short five to six weeks ago, on June 26, we got together at my house and spent the day. And I think of that and what a day. Fifty years ago these two guys were working so hard to save my life. My sister, representing my family because my parents and my brother are deceased, is the one that carries that, you know, imagine on in our family. And, as she said, June 26 is the Joyner Family Veterans Day.

And lo and behold 50 years later the three of us got together with, you know, along with my wife and daughter and had another spaghetti dinner. And Doc and my sergeant who was the first to me that day had that opportunity, you know, when he flew in from Virginia. We got to sit around, reminisce and just talk.

And one thing that I'm really proud to say, out of those 50 years, I've been a paid member of the DAV for 49 of them. I actually joined the DAV with a free life membership, as most of us Vietnam vets did, in the hospitals on our way home.

But 49 of those 50 years I've been a member of this great organization. And they were part of the day, meeting Doc and also me sharing the story of us getting together after all those years on a much more positive note.

Okay, the reason that I'm here today, you know, to give the report of the Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Foundation. Thank you, Commander Nixon, for your kind introduction. Adjutant Burgess, national officers and guests.

It has been nearly five years since our dream of a memorial to disabled American veterans became a reality. And I want to thank you and all of my brothers and sisters at DAV and DAV Auxiliary for the hard work put in to making it happen.

DAV was the leading donor, including hundreds of chapters and thousands of members. For those of you who helped support the memorial with donations at the individual, chapter and department levels, thank you. Appreciate that. (Applause)

I would also like to take a moment and introduce the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation Board of Directors: Vice President is Marc Burgess; Secretary-Treasurer Gene Murphy; and our Directors: National Commander Dennis Nixon; Jim Sursely; Dave Gorman; Roberto "Bobby" Barrera; and Ex-Officio member Art Wilson of Florida. The memorial and its upkeep would not be possible without these thoughtful veterans. Thank you, all.

The 2014 opening of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C., was the culmination of a very long but remarkably worthwhile voyage, spanning nearly 20 years from its inception to its dedication.

Since the dedication, the Foundation's efforts have focused primarily on the areas of promotion and outreach, structural enhancements, maintenance and public engagement.

Within the area of promotion and outreach, on October 5, 2018, DAV provided no-cost benefits counseling and claims assistance on-site at the memorial in recognition of the fourth anniversary of its dedication. With the aid of a mobile service office and two DAV national service officers, veterans were invited to learn more about veterans benefits for which they are entitled and receive on-the-spot assistance with filing disability compensation claims, as needed.

The Foundation has also continued sharing the memorial's message through YouVisit's virtual tour technology which allows visitors to take a tour of the memorial remotely.

In 2018, the walking tour, the photos, videos, virtual reality scenes and 360-degree shots captured the attention of nearly 1,200 unique visitors, bringing the total visitors to roughly 10,400 since the site's launch.

Through organized events, broadcasts and by word of mouth from many of you who share in my awe of the memorial, countless veterans and loved ones have witnessed the impact of its message first hand.

As part of our continued outreach efforts to provide healing to veterans, VEToga began hosting yoga classes—and I have to tell you I didn't lead them—for the veterans one Sunday per month at the memorial.

VEToga's mission is to provide yoga, meditation and healing arts to military members, veterans, their families and communities. They accomplish this by holding free monthly yoga classes, events and veteran-specific 200-hour teacher trainings throughout the year.

Although the classes are geared toward veterans and their families, the classes are open to the public, which provides a beautiful and unique backdrop for the veteran and the civilian community to come together.

Now, I would like to share a few highlights of volunteer engagement at the memorial. Last year more than 200 volunteers provided 300 hours toward wall washing or general trash removal from the memorial.

These volunteer efforts were led by DAV Chapter 10 in Fairfax, Virginia. (Applause) In 2018 alone, the chapter volunteered on seven separate occasions with over 80 volunteers who put in nearly 90 combined volunteer hours.

In gratitude of all of their hard work they were presented with a Volunteer Service Award from the National Mall and Memorial Parks division of the National Park Service.

As a small token of our appreciation, and on behalf of veterans from across the nation, I would like to invite Tom Wendell, commander of Chapter 10, to the stage for a special award presentation in recognition of the countless hours they spend at the memorial each month ensuring that it is well-maintained. Tom.

(Whereupon, Commander Wendell advanced to the podium to receive the award, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER TOM WENDELL: Commander Nixon, Adjutant Burgess, on behalf of the members of Chapter 10 we are honored to be entrusted to clean our memorial. And in reference to that, we don't do it by ourselves. We have a lot of other volunteers that help us. So anyone in the audience that has

come out and volunteered to help clean the memorial, especially those in District 6, please stand to be recognized.

(Whereupon, the volunteers stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER WENDELL: And, Commander, we are especially honored to have you at one of our cleanings this year. So thank you very much, Commander.

COMMANDER NIXON: My pleasure. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Commander Wendell withdrew from and President Joyner returned to the podium.)

DVLMF PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JOYNER: Thank you so much to Tom (Applause) and all of Chapter 10 for your continued dedication to the memorial and your fellow veterans.

Just as it took the extraordinary generosity of many people and organizations to build the memorial, it will now take the help of others to assist as we transform our mission from construction and dedication to one of education and outreach.

It's on all of us to promote the memorial and do what we can to make the public aware of its existence, its significance and all that it represents and honors.

In order to help us spread the word we have included a new brochure about the memorial in your convention bags. Please take a few seconds to review it, take it back home with you and share it with others in your local communities and your chapter.

I would like to express my personal thanks, as well as the appreciation of every member of the Board of Directors, past and present, to DAV national organization, state departments, chapters, the Auxiliary and all of DAV's outstanding members for their support.

You, DAV's members, are the reason and the means by which this became a reality. I believe you deserve a huge round of applause. (Applause)

I hope you will join me in recognizing the progress that has occurred, including the countless hours that have been dedicated to such a significant symbol of veterans' sacrifice.

We will continue to work alongside National Park Service staff, volunteers and supporters in improving the site as needed and providing a means for both veterans and their loved ones to access its meaningful message throughout the country.

Thank you, Commander. This concludes my report. (Applause)

(Whereupon, DVLMF President and Past National Commander Joyner withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Dennis. May I have a motion to accept the report?

MR. FRANK WAYNE: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. WAYNE: Frank Wayne, Chapter 17, Hammond, Indiana.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you.

MR. WAYNE: I second it.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. All in favor say aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, DVLMF President and Past National Commander Joyner withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now, will you please welcome John Donovan of Arkansas, newly elected president of the Commanders and Adjutants Association for 2019–2020. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Donovan advanced to the podium.)

MR. JOHN DONOVAN: National Commander Nixon, National Adjutant Burgess, national officers, delegates and guests, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. DONOVAN: I am proud to have been elected as the president of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association for 2019-2020.

We pledge to continue our support of the national organization through our sponsorship of the State Commanders and Adjutants Orientation, the Mid-Winter Conference and the Winter Sports Clinic. We look forward to another very productive year in the DAV.

I would now like to read into record our officers and committee members for the coming year: John Donovan, president; Brian Wilner, vice president; Rita Alberegg, secretary; David Tannenbaum, treasurer;

Kirk Johnson, executive committee; William Robinson, executive committee; Bridgette Marker, executive committee; Burl Jimmerson, executive committee; Pamela Beal, executive committee; Michael Elmore, executive committee;

Cynthia Madison, past president; Floyd Watson, judge advocate; John King, chaplain; Penny Larson, sergeant-at-arms; John Patterson, resolutions committee; Natche Miller, resolutions committee;

Nancy Espinosa, audit committee; Paul Artizone, audit committee; Lisa Gregory, audit committee; Deborah Olson, audit committee;

Mary Ann Keckler, special projects; Danny Oliver, special projects; Frank Chicola, special projects; Paul Herman, special projects, Elaine Mitchell, constitution and bylaws; Jeff Belay, constitution and bylaws; and Wanda Janus, constitution and bylaws.

Would National Commander Nixon and National Adjutant Burgess please join me to receive a presentation?

(Whereupon, the Commander and Adjutant Burgess joined Mr. Donovan at the podium.)

MR. DONOVAN: On behalf of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association I would like to present you with two donations for the National Service Foundation. The first is a presentation of $3,000 for the National Service Foundation.

COMMANDER NIXON: Wow. Thank you. Thank you.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, John. (Applause)

MR. DONOVAN: And an additional check for $200 in honor of our past presidents Danny Oliver and Cynthia Madison. (Applause)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thanks, again.

MR. DONOVAN: All right. Thank you.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you. Congratulations.

MR. DONOVAN: I appreciate it. Thank you very much, Commander.

(Whereupon, Mr. Donovan presented Commander Nixon and Adjutant Burgess with the checks, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which Mr. Donovan withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, John. Now, do we have any Special Forces people in the audience? If so, sound out. Shout out. (Cheer) Whoop, just one? (Laughter) Whoa. Well, I've really got a job for you. Anyway. (Laughter)

At this time I would like anyone who wants to support the National Service Foundation but hasn't done so yet at the booth, please make your way to the back of the room. I'd ask that you do so as quietly as possible. Pretend it's a recon mission. And if you're not quiet, I'm going to get that one Special Forces guy over there (Laughter) to sit you down. The show must go on.

If you have already donated at the booth, please bypass the table in the back and take your place in line.

(Whereupon, members left their seats to prepare to make donations to the National Service Foundation.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Incorporated in 1986, the National Service Foundation has played a unique role in safeguarding the long-term financial stability needed to support DAV services at the local, state and national levels. Using resources from the Foundation, DAV is able to continue caring for the veterans of today and tomorrow.

Although one of the Foundation's core missions is to support DAV's daily work to meet the most significant and immediate needs of veterans, increasing public awareness about the Foundation's mission is an extremely important component of what the Foundation does.

When they are able to open the hearts and minds of the American people, they better understand the needs of ill and injured veterans and their families which, in return, enables all of us to do our part to ensure veterans are properly cared for in the long term.

This includes providing free professional assistance with disability claims and benefits, no-cost transportation to and from medical appointments and other vital services imperative to the quality of life of veterans and their families.

With "service before self" in mind, it is only fitting and an honor to introduce another one of my personal heroes, the president of DAV's National Service Foundation and past national adjutant of DAV, Arthur H. Wilson. (Applause)

(Whereupon, National Service Foundation President Wilson advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: A native of Massachusetts, Art Wilson enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in September 1962. He served as a runway construction specialist in Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand and Taiwan from 1964 to 1966.

Immediately after his discharge, Art's DAV career began as a National Service Officer apprentice in Atlanta. In 1973 he served as president of the National Guild of Attorneys-in-Fact before becoming the supervisor of DAV's National Appeals Office at the VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals in Washington, D.C., in 1974.

He was appointed as DAV's National Adjutant and CEO in 1994, a position he held until his retirement in June 2013. Following his retirement, he was elected president of DAV's National Service Foundation and serves as an ex-officio member of the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation Board.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT ARTHUR H. WILSON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Commander Dennis for that very kind introduction. And Adjutant Burgess, national officers, delegates, guests and our friends. It's so great to see all of you this week and I'm thrilled that so many of you are here.

I want to take this moment by introducing to you the DAV National Service Foundation's Board of Directors: Vice President Marc Burgess; Secretary-Treasurer Alan Bowers; and our Directors are the National Commander Dennis Nixon, Joseph Johnston, Glenn Hohman, Lisa Kirk; and ex-officio member, the DAV Board Chair, Delphine Metcalf-Foster.

It's always a great to be here and it's a pleasure for me to present our report on the remarkable services the National Service Foundation is able to help support because we know they all result in the highest quality of life for disabled veterans and their families.

Too many need timely access to health care for service-connected conditions, secure stable employment and educational opportunities. Despite the many benefits and programs that exist for veterans, it can be a challenge to maneuver the system. By providing support for DAV's core mission of service through the Foundation we help them every step of the way.

We have held firm in that mission over the past year and I am extremely thankful to everyone who, once again, helped us raise nearly $1.8 million in donations and bequests for the Foundation and the Columbia Trust in 2018.

And for added impact, our national organization matches each dollar that you, your chapter, or your department donates to the Foundation's Columbia Trust Fund, up to a maximum of $3 million per year, effectively doubling the value of your gifts.

Your amazing generosity has allowed the Foundation to remain strong in 2018 with net assets of nearly $130 million at year-end.

Veterans are the best served through the wise stewardship of each dollar entrusted to the Foundation. The Foundation's unwavering commitment to this model is clearly demonstrated through the $5.6 million that was expended toward direct programs of service for veterans and their families in 2018. This represents a remarkable 96% of total expenditures.

Throughout 2018 the Foundation expended almost $4.1 million to help the national organization provide services to disabled veterans and their families. Most importantly, this support added or aided our national service program which provides veterans with no-cost professional services throughout the nation.

Another way the Foundation is able to provide support is through the Columbia Trust, a restricted fund that assists departments and chapters in providing direct services to veterans and their families at the state and local level.

Impressively, in 2018, the Trust awarded grants totaling nearly $1.5 million to chapters and departments throughout the nation who, through these grants, were able to provide veterans with transportation, claims assistance and combat homelessness in their communities.

As evidenced by the Foundation's 2018 annual report, which, by the way, is available online or by request from the national headquarters, we had another terrific year.

Noted within the pages of that report are some very special individuals who have been extraordinarily generous in their support to the Foundation. In recognition of that generosity we have created a special place for them. It's called the National Honor Roll of Exceptional Lifetime Donors.

The Ernestine Schumann-Heink Chapter Number 2 from the Department of Missouri has earned a very special place on this prestigious page. The chapter's unwavering loyalty is reflected through its annual contributions since 1979. The chapter has contributed a combined lifetime total of more than $637,000. (Applause)

Disabled veterans also have free advocacy and representation at the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, resulting from your support. Our program is the envy of the veterans bar.

Since its inception in 2008, nearly 10,000 appeals have been filed for DAV claimants. The first firm to participate in this program was the Washington-based Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett and Dunner.

In addition to contributing thousands of hours of direct services to veterans, Finnegan has contributed millions—and that's right, millions and millions—of dollars to the DAV National Service Foundation.

Having just made another contribution yesterday of $100,000 to the Foundation, the firm's giving now stands at nearly $2.2 million. (Applause) Finnegan remains the largest contributor in the history of the National Service Foundation. Words cannot express our gratitude for the firm's unwavering and substantial commitment to the mission of the National Service Foundation.

Distinguished support for our veterans deserves special recognition. This year four chapters or departments have earned a place among others or a higher position on the Foundation's Grand Memorial Honor Roll of Distinguished Donors located at National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

They are the Department of Virginia who earned a third star for lifetime contributions in excess of $50,000; (Applause) Colonel Samuel D. Foster Chapter 76, Department of Pennsylvania, who earned their first star for lifetime contributions of $10,000; (Applause)

The Ralph S. Tagg Junior Chapter 14, Department of Maryland, who also earned their first star for lifetime contributions of $10,000; (Applause) and the William E. Tate Chapter 1, Department of Georgia, for lifetime contributions of $5,000. (Applause)

So we say to you and others who support the Foundation, we offer our most sincere appreciation and gratitude. We simply could not accomplish so much without you.

I'd like now to take a moment and proudly recognize the National Service Director Jim Marszalek and his elite corps of national service officers whose daily work is the backbone of DAV's mission. Jim, you and your staff should be extremely proud of the impact that you have had on the lives of this nation's disabled veterans and their families.

And one way we see that impact is reflected through the gifts made in honor of the national service officers for the work that our NSOs have done for disabled veterans.

The Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award recognizes the NSO office in each division that has the largest combined total of contributions made in its name.

I would like to ask Jim Marszalek now to help me honor these outstanding offices and our national service officers. (Applause)

(Whereupon, National Service Director James Marszalek advanced to assist President Wilson.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Here we go. Division 1, the National Service Office in Wilmington, Delaware, with a total of $11,550. Accepting on their behalf is supervisory NSO Gerald Loudon. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 1 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 2 is the National Service Office in Boise, Idaho, with a total of $39,157. And here to represent that Division, two-time winner, is Supervisor NSO Korby Rhodes. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 2 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 3, the National Service Office in Chicago, Illinois, with a total of $13,498. Assistant Supervisory NSO Bennie Fugate is here to accept on their behalf. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 3 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 4, the National Service Office in Saint Louis, Missouri with a total of $86,517. Representing our Division 4 winners from Saint Louis is Andrew Edwards. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 4 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 5, the National Service Office in Seattle, Washington, with a total of $12,930. And accepting their award is Supervisory NSO John Baxley. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 5 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 6, the National Service Office in Cleveland, Ohio, with a total of $23,769. With us today from Division 6 to accept the award is Area Supervisor NSO Steve Strodtbeck. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 6 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Please join me again in thanking the nationwide corps of national service officers for their incredible work. (Applause)

Okay, I now want to call on you, your chapters and departments, to be part of the cause. This is a way to donate in honor of or commemorate our friends, our brothers and sisters and show our commitment to the nation's finest. The thermometer is now up, awaiting your generous donations.

To kick off this time of giving, I want to acknowledge first some contributions from the Moral Rearmament League of $3,000; the law firm of Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett and Dunner, $100,000; the law firm of Chisholm, Chisholm and Kilpatrick LTD with $75,000 to the Charitable Service Trust; Quad-Cities Chapter 2, Department of Iowa, $1,000 for the DAV TEE Tournament; and $1,000 from Larry and Joanne McGovern in honor of Past National Commander Jim Sursely.

Mr. and Mrs. McGovern could not be here today but I would like to invite our Convention Chairman and Past National Commander Jim Sursely to the stage to read the poem written by their 8-year old grandson Ridge titled "Soldier."

(Whereupon, Convention Chairman and Past National Commander Sursely advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JAMES SURSELY: Good morning, everyone and thank you, Art. Let me just give you kind of a brief setup as to how all this took place. Larry McGovern is a personal friend of mine but first and foremost he is a former Navy corpsman who worked at Chelsea Naval and dealt with wounded individuals coming home, especially Marines, I'm sure at that point in time, from the Vietnam War.

And Larry is one of those true patriots of the United States of America and just a firm believer in giving back to his community and giving back to any veterans organization that's willing to reach out and serve our fellow man.

So Larry's patriotism has kind of spilled over not only into the contribution that he has made today but also into the inspiration that he has given to his sons and daughters and his grandchildren. So his grandson, a young man 9 or 10 years old by the name of Ridge wrote a poem entitled, "Soldier." And I think that's what inspired him to make the donation on behalf of Jim Sursely.

So it's titled "Soldier:"

"Thoughtful, hard-working, fighter, a believer who feels proud of our nation, who needs a lot of love, who fears of not going home again, who loves our nation, who thinks of others and who believes they can do it. Veterans, you are fighters."

By a young man named Ridge. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Convention Chairman and Past National Commander Sursely withdrew from and President Wilson returned to the podium.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Jim and thank you, Ridge. Okay, it's now your turn to speak and to show the nation what you and your chapter are willing to do to support the National Service Foundation for the cause that brought us here today.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Art. This donation of a thousand dollars for the National Service Foundation from Chapter 1 in Sioux Falls, Department of South Dakota in honor of our NSOs Owen Richards and Dean Voist. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Chapter 1 of South Dakota in honor of Roger Andall, Vietnam veteran, 14th Infantry, from Gene Murphy, $200 for the National Service Foundation; and from the Department of South Dakota $500 for the National Service Foundation in honor of the NSO Owen Richards and Dean Voist. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Great.

MR. RICHARD PATTERSON: Rick Patterson, Chapter 45, Alabama, I want to make a personal $100 contribution to the Foundation in memory of Henry J. Servant, killed in Vietnam in March 1968. (Applause)

MS. LORI (INDISTINGUISHABLE): Lori (Indistinguishable), Minnesota Chapter 31, Lakeland, representing the Foundation of the Department of Minnesota with $15,000 for the National Service Trust. (Applause)

MR. SCOTT BURN: Scott Burn, State Commander of Minnesota, gives $15,000 from the Department of Minnesota to the Columbia Trust. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. THOMAS AYELA: Thomas Ayela, Commander of Florida, (Applause) yes and I am standing up. (Laughter) The Department would like to donate $5,000 to Columbia Trust, $100 to National Foundation in honor of Past Department Commander Mary Ann Keckler. (Applause)

MS. RACHEL FREDERICKS: Good morning. Rachel Fredericks, Commander of the Department of New York. On behalf of our department we would like to donate $1,000 to the National Service Foundation; additionally, $5,000 to the Charitable Service Trust. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. SCOTT STEVENSON: Scott Stevenson, Saratoga, New York, Chapter 158, we raised $1,000 from PJ's barbecue for the Just B Kids program. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. LISA GREGORY: Lisa Gregory, Commander for the Department of Virginia, on behalf of the department I have a $10,000 donation for the Foundation, a $25,000 donation to the Disaster Relief Fund and on behalf of Chapter 7 in Fredericksburg, Virginia, $2,500 to the Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. MICHAEL KERR: Good morning. Michael Kerr, commander, Department of California, I have two checks today for the Columbia Trust. The first in the amount of $5,000 is from the DAV California Rehabilitation Foundation; and the second one on behalf of our department, $10,000. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. KEITH NEWELL: Keith Newell, Chapter 51, Lebanon, Missouri, I have been asked today by Kimberly Tathem to present in the amount of $2,000 for the National Service Foundation in memory of her late husband Glen Tathem, my mentor and a great member of the DAV. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. WES BIDNER: Commander. Good morning, folks. I'm Wes Bidner from the Department of Illinois. We have $5,000 for the National Service Foundation. We have $5,000 for the DAV TEE Tournament. And we also have also $5,000 for the DAV Winter Clinic. Thank you. (Applause) Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you. Hi, Al.

MR. ALFRED REYNOLDS: Good morning. I'm Al Reynolds representing Macon County Chapter 17, Department of Illinois. We have a donation of $5,000 to the National Service Foundation, a donation of $5,000 for the DAV Disaster Relief.

We have $5,000 for Winter Sports Clinic. We have $5,000 for the National TEE Tournament. And also, from Unit 17 of the Department of Illinois, we have a check for $1,000 for the National TEE Tournament. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. BENITO GONZALES: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. GONZALES: I'm Benito Gonzales from Chapter 7, Disabled American Veterans in Colorado. And our chapter is donating $5,000 to the Columbia Trust and $5,000 to the National Service Foundation in recognition of our NSOs in Denver. Thank you very much. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. GERALD CALDWELL: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. CALDWELL: I'm Gerald Caldwell, commander, DAV Chapter 2, Kansas City, Missouri. I donate $20,000 to the National Service Foundation in honor of Andy Edwards, Saint Louis, Missouri. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. PAUL DUBEY: Good morning, Comrades.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. DUBEY: I'm Paul Dubey representing the Charles Monsante Chapter 46 of Athol, Massachusetts. We have a donation for the National Service Foundation in memory of our benefactor Paul Packadin for the sum of $5,000. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. BOB CLAYTON: Good morning, I'm Bob Clayton, commander of Chapter 11, Springfield, Missouri. I'd like to make a $5,000 donation to the Winter Sports Clinic. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MS. DEB OLSEN: Good morning, Deb Olsen, commander, Department of Massachusetts. Department of Massachusetts makes a donation for $1,000 to the National Service Foundation and an additional $1,000 for the Charitable Service Foundation. I make a personal donation in honor and

memory of my brother, Staff Sergeant Francis Thompson, August 23, 2017, in the amount of $100. And we march along. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. MARK MILLS: Good morning, everyone. My name is Mark Mills, representing Department of Maryland. And I would like to make a $1,000 donation to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. JOHN PARKER: Good morning. John Parker, immediate past commander of the Department of Ohio, takes this honor to present four checks: a $1,500 donation to the Columbia Trust; $1,500 donation to the National Service Foundation, both from the Department of Ohio; also, a matching $1,500 donation to the Columbia Trust and a matching $1,500 donation to the National Service Foundation, both from the Department of Ohio in memory of Brian Johnston, eldest son of Past National Commander Joe Johnston. (Applause)

MR. MIKE STITH: Mike Stith, Chapter 35 of Ohio with a personal donation of $1,000 to the National Service Foundation in honor of Steve and Jake and all the NSOs and staff of the Cleveland region NSO office. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. LONNIE HOWARD: Good morning. This is Lonnie Howard, commander of Missouri with $25,000 in honor of our NSOs, Saint Louis, Missouri. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a contingent of Texas Juniors advanced to the stage with a ceremonial check, at which time a photograph was taken.)

MRS. MAXINE NIXON: Good morning. Maxine Nixon with Texas, I'm the chairman for junior activities there and they put a lot of heart and soul and work into trying to bring a check up here to donate to you. So in that regard we thought we needed a Texas-sized check to do that. So from the Texas Junior Auxiliary we have $5,000 for the Winter Sports Clinic. (Applause)

MR. RICHARD BRUNELLE JR.: Richard Brunelle, Junior, State of Maine, we'd like to make a donation on behalf of John McPherson Chapter 1 of $500 to the National Service Foundation and on behalf of the State of Maine $750 to the National Service Foundation and $750 to the Columbia Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MS. CAROLYN SMALL: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MS. SMALL: I'm Carolyn Small from the Department of Georgia. (Cheers) We are donating $1,000 to the Columbia Trust and $1,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. ANDY PATTERSON: Good morning. Andy Patterson, New Hampshire. We're donating a thousand dollars to the National Service Foundation in honor of who we feel is the greatest NSO up there in Manchester, Jesse Welsh; and we're donating $1,000 to the Charitable Service Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. BILL JACKSON: Good morning, I'm Bill Jackson, past commander of Chapter 20, Department of Texas. On behalf of the chapter and in memory of our lost members who have gone to their heavenly reward we donate $1,000 to the National Service Foundation and $1,000 to the National TEE Tournament. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: On behalf of Chapter 7, Puerto Rico, we make a donation of $100 to the National Relief Fund and $200 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. ERNIE BOUVAIS: Good morning, all. My name is Ernie Bouvais. I'm the chapter treasurer and adjutant. By my side here is Richard Schatz our past chapter commander. We are donating $500 to the Columbia Trust and $500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. DONOVAN: Good morning, John Donovan, department adjutant, Department of Arkansas, we are donating $2,500 to the Columbia Trust. (Applause)

MS. VICKIE BROWN: Good morning. I'm Vickie Brown from the Department of Oklahoma and we are giving a thousand dollars to the National Service Trust in honor of the Muskogee office. We also are giving $5,274 from the Juniors of Oklahoma to the TEE Tournament. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Good morning.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning, DAV. A departed brother that just passed away not too long ago was Mark Wischmann. We are donating $200 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. NOLAN MARTIN: Good morning. Nolan Martin, commander, Summit County Chapter 35, the great State of Ohio, would like to donate $1,000 to the National Service Foundation and $1,000 to the DAV Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you.

MR. JOHN POLK: Good morning, John Polk from Wisconsin. I'm pleased to present—Chapter 44 of Wisconsin has asked me to present a check for $500 for the Columbia Trust and another $500 for the National Service Foundation. And my Chapter, West Alice Chapter Number 19 is donating a thousand dollars to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. QUINCY (INDISTINGUISHABLE): I'm Quincy (Indistinguishable) with D and D Whitman Chapter 51, South Carolina. And we're donating $500 to the National Service Foundation in honor and memory of all our veterans. (Applause)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you.

MR. GLENN HOHMAN: Good morning. I'm Glenn Hohman. On behalf of the Department of Arizona we would like to donate $3,500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ANDREW MARSHALL: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER MARSHALL: Chapter adjutant John C. McCarthy 4, Tampa, Florida, $5,000 in honor of former National Service Officer John C. McCarthy and Andy Marshall department adjutant, $5,000, also for the National Service Foundation from the Department of Florida. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. JOHN CAUSEY: John Causey, senior vice commander, Chapter 1, William E. Tate from Georgia donates $2,000 to the Charitable Service Trust. (Applause)

MR. TOM WENDELL: Good morning. Tom Wendell, commander, Arlington-Fairfax Virginia Chapter 10. I'd like to donate $1,500 in memory of a true friend and mentor, John Mackie. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. WILLARD CUNNINGHAM: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. CUNNINGHAM: I'm Willard Cunningham, the commander, Department of South Carolina. We're donating a thousand dollars for the National Service Foundation, a thousand dollars for the Columbia Trust and $400 to Just B Kids. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. DENNIS HESSING: On behalf of myself, Dennis Hessing and my wife, Michelle Westfall Hessing, I'd like to donate a personal check of $500 to the, in memory of our fathers, (Indistinguishable) and Kenneth M. Westfall on behalf of the Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. Thank you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Saint Louis Chapter 1 from the great "Show Me" State of Missouri donates $15,000 in honor of the paramount regional office, Saint Louis Regional Office, NSOs and DSOs. (Applause)

MR. CHARLES HICKS: Good morning, Charles Hicks, Los Angeles Chapter 5, California, for the Foundation $500 and Jesse Brown Scholarship $100. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. CORINNE HANSON: Good morning. Corinne Hanson, senior vice commander, Department of Kansas, we'd like to donate $500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'd like to make a $100 contribution to the National Service Trust from the William C. Melia Chapter 1, Scranton, Pennsylvania, the second-oldest chapter in the nation, in memory of the services of our NSOs in the Philadelphia office.

I would also like to make a personal contribution of $1,000 to the National Service Trust in memory of my brother, First Lieutenant Elmer Cudworth, KIA, U.S. Army Air Force, 19, April 1943. (Applause)

MS. LINDA BUTLER: Good morning. Linda Butler, commander, Charlotte Fay Chapter 28, Riverside, California, my senior vice commander Mario Quintana, and we would like to donate $500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. ED GARRETT: Ed Garrett, Department of Vermont, $500 to the National Trust and $500 to the Columbia Trust and Bennington Chapter 4, $25 to the National Service Foundation and $25 to the Colorado Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. MIKE HURT: Good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. HURT: All right. My name is Mike Hurt. I'm the department commander for the State of Wisconsin. We are going to donate $2,000 to the National Service Trust Fund and there will be—my wife and I had a good talk and we are going to donate $200 to the Charitable Trust Fund in honor of Nicole Frye and Dwayne Kelley. They were two just outstanding individuals, two soldiers who gave up their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Commander Nixon's grandchildren advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: These are two of my granddaughters. (Applause) They get their looks from their Grams not from their Pepaw. (Laughter) They have a donation of $150 to the Charitable Service Trust in

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh the back.

COMMANDER NIXON: Oh, Casey wrote something. (Laughter) In memory of our great-uncle Sam Rhodes. (Applause) How cute. Thank you, girls. You do that.

(Whereupon, more of Commander Nixon's grandchildren advanced to the podium.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: I can't read it. (Laughter) In honor of our Pepaw Dennis Nixon.

COMMANDER NIXON: Bryson Davis, Kilee, Braxton, Makenna and Bristol Miller, the rest of or three more of my grandkids.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Fifty dollars. (Applause)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: You're killing me, Nixon.

MR. RUSSELL GRIFFIN: I'm Russell Griffin from Texas. (Applause) I'm donating $200 in memory of my brothers that didn't make it back from Vietnam. Semper fi. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. LABELLE: Good morning. I'm Al Labelle, Wisconsin. I will make a personal donation of $200 to the DAV Charitable Service Trust in the memory of Vincent Sabatinelli who died in (Indistinguishable) Province, Vietnam on July 25, 1969. (Applause)

MR. JOHN RABER: I'm John Raber, junior vice commander of the State of Florida. I'm here—Chapter 18 donates $13,000 to Just B Kids. I'm also here on behalf of Wally Tyson who is donating personally $100 to the National Service Foundation and to the Disabled Veterans Life Memorial, $100. (Applause)

MS. BONNIE (INDISTINGUISHABLE): Good morning. I'm Bonnie (Indistinguishable), immediate past commander for the Department of Colorado and we have a donation of $5,000 for the—

COMMANDER NIXON: Hmmm.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes. It's not out of my pocket—for the national convention. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Well, thank you all. It can get emotional up here sometimes. Thank you, Dennis. Thank you, Commander and thank you all. That concludes my report. (Applause)

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation

Financial Statements as of and for the
Years Ended December 31, 2018 and 2017, and
Independent Auditors' Report

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation (the "Foundation"), which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Foundation's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Foundation as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 2 to the financial statements, in 2018, the Foundation adopted Accounting Standards Update No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities.* Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

April 9, 2019

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018	2017
ASSETS		
CASH	$ 2,723,245	$ 2,683,069
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	60,756	203
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	3,580	5,730
INVENTORY	14,506	8,320
PREPAID EXPENSES	19,761	5,197
INVESTMENTS	125,747,511	136,013,172
TOTAL	$128,569,359	$138,715,691
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Due to Disabled American Veterans	$ 97,915	$ 134,752
Other liabilities	68,731	29,387
Total liabilities	166,646	164,139
NET ASSETS:		
Without donor restrictions:		
Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund	65,727,984	70,513,109
The Columbia Trust	1,614,899	2,076,091
Total net assets without donor restrictions	67,342,883	72,589,200
With donor restrictions:		
The Columbia Trust		3,660
Purpose restricted for mission	60,828,136	65,729,198
Purpose restricted for DAV Legislative Fund	231,694	229,494
Total net assets with donor restrictions	61,059,830	65,962,352
Total net assets	128,402,713	138,551,552
TOTAL	$128,569,359	$138,715,691

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018					2017				
		With Donor Restrictions					With Donor Restrictions			
	Without Donor Restrictions	Purpose Restricted Mission	Purpose Restricted Columbia Trust	Purpose Restricted DAV Legislative Fund	Total	Without Donor Restrictions	Purpose Restricted Mission	Purpose Restricted Columbia Trust	Purpose Restricted DAV Legislative Fund	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUES:										
Support—contributions and bequests	$ 823,338	$ 2,725	$ 964,900	$ 2,200	$ 1,793,163	$ 952,332	$	$ 1,104,008	$ 2,000	$ 2,058,340
Revenues—net investment return	(3,245,871)	(2,929,452)	37,654		(6,137,669)	9,030,936	8,435,885	10,628		17,477,449
Net assets released from restrictions	2,980,549	(1,974,335)	(1,006,214)			1,110,976		(1,110,976)		-
Total public support and revenue	558,016	(4,901,062)	(3,660)	2,200	(4,344,506)	11,094,244	8,435,885	3,660	2,000	19,535,789
EXPENSES:										
Program expenses:										
Grants and expenses in accordance with The Columbia Trust	1,510,233				1,510,233	1,158,537				1,158,537
Appropriations to DAV National Headquarters and other organizations	4,080,571				4,080,571	506,551				506,551
Total program expenses	5,590,804	-	-	-	5,590,804	1,665,088	-	-	-	1,665,088
Management and general expenses	134,866				134,866	117,733				117,733
Fundraising expenses	78,663				78,663	80,488				80,488
Total expenses	5,804,333	-	-	-	5,804,333	1,863,309	-	-	-	1,863,309
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(5,246,317)	(4,901,062)	(3,660)	2,200	(10,148,839)	9,230,935	8,435,885	3,660	2,000	17,672,480
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	72,589,200	65,729,198	3,660	229,494	138,551,552	63,358,265	57,293,313		227,494	120,879,072
NET ASSETS—End of year	$67,342,883	$60,828,136	$ -	$231,694	$128,402,713	$72,589,200	$65,729,198	$ 3,660	$229,494	$138,551,552

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018				2017			
	Program	Management and General	Fundraising	Total	Program	Management and General	Fundraising	Total
EXPENSES:								
Allocations to charitable programs	$5,543,313	$ -	$ -	$5,543,313	$1,613,814	$ -	$ -	$1,613,814
Grant proposal processing	42,827			42,827	47,561			47,561
Administrative charges		42,827	15,852	58,679		47,561	21,317	68,878
Travel		14,209		14,209		15,224		15,224
Postage and shipping	12	4,306	25,744	30,062	20	4,287	26,087	30,394
Printing, stationery, and supplies	209	2,384	25,344	27,937	304	2,825	22,852	25,981
Legal fees			6,840	6,840		125	6,840	6,965
Professional fees		28,450		28,450		27,500		27,500
Insurance		3,896		3,896		3,920		3,920
Registration fees		20,321	4,883	25,204		15	3,392	3,407
Awards		10,373		10,373		10,935		10,935
Banking and credit card fees	4,443	5,050		9,493	3,389	5,166		8,555
Miscellaneous		3,050		3,050		175		175
TOTAL	$5,590,804	$134,866	$78,663	$5,804,333	$1,665,088	$117,733	$80,488	$1,863,309

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018	2017
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	$(10,148,839)	$ 17,672,480
Contributions restricted for DAV Legislative Fund	(2,200)	(2,000)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Net gain on sale and change in depreciation (appreciation) of investment securities	9,395,336	(14,613,109)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Interest and dividends receivable	(60,553)	(139)
Accounts receivable	2,150	(5,267)
Inventory	(6,186)	(760)
Prepaid expenses	(14,564)	(1,273)
Due to Disabled American Veterans	(36,837)	13,975
Other liabilities	39,344	(131,752)
Net cash (used in) provided by operating activities	(832,349)	2,932,155
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchases of investment securities	(62,569,083)	(18,910,417)
Proceeds from sale of investment securities	63,439,408	16,012,628
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	870,325	(2,897,789)
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITY:		
Contributions of donor restricted assets	2,200	2,000
NET INCREASE IN CASH	40,176	36,366
CASH—Beginning of year	2,683,069	2,646,703
CASH—End of year	$ 2,723,245	$ 2,683,069

See notes to financial statements.

1. ORGANIZATION

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation (the "Foundation") is a financial auxiliary of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). The purpose of the Foundation, as set forth in Article 3 of the Articles of Incorporation, is as follows:

"To receive and maintain a fund or funds of personal or real property, or both; to solicit and obtain contributions from the public; and, subject to the restrictions set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, to use and apply the whole or any part of the income and principal of said fund exclusively for the promotion of social welfare (including incidental nonpartisan legislative activity in furtherance of such purpose) within the meaning of Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, primarily for the assistance, aid, maintenance, care, support, and rehabilitation of disabled veterans and their dependents, either directly or by contributions to the DAV, a Congressionally chartered organization, or any chapter or department thereof."

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements—The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

New Accounting Standards—In August 2018, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2018-13, *Fair Value Measurement (Topic 820): Disclosure Framework—Changes to the Disclosure Requirements for Fair Value Measurement*. The amendments in this update modify the disclosure requirements on fair value measurements in Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurement*, based on the concepts in the *Concepts Statement*, including the consideration of costs and benefits. The effective date of ASU No. 2018-13 is for all entities for fiscal years, and interim periods within those fiscal years, beginning after December 15, 2019. Early adoption is permitted. Management is in the process of evaluating its impact on the financial statements.

In March 2017, the FASB issued ASU No. 2017-08, *Receivables—Nonrefundable Fees and Other Costs (Subtopic 310-20): Premium Amortization on Purchased Callable Debt Securities*. ASU No. 2017-08 amends guidance on the amortization period of premiums on certain purchased callable debt securities. The amendments shorten the amortization period of premiums on certain purchased callable debt securities to the earliest call date. The amendments should be applied on a modified retrospective basis through a cumulative-effect adjustment to beginning retained earnings. The effective date of ASU No. 2017-08 is for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it is not expected to have a material impact on the Foundation's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations.

In June 2016, the FASB issued ASU No. 2016-13, *Financial Instruments—Credit Losses*, which is included in ASC Topic 326, *Measurement of Credit Losses on Financial Instruments*. The new standard revises the accounting requirements related to the measurement of credit losses and will require organizations to measure all expected credit losses for financial assets based on historical experience, current conditions, and reasonable and supportable forecasts about collectability. Assets must be presented in the financial statements at the net amount expected to be collected. This standard will be effective for the annual financial statements beginning January 1, 2021. A modified retrospective approach is to be used for certain parts of this standard, while a prospective approach is to be used for other parts. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In May 2014, the FASB issued ASU 2014-09, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. ASU No. 2014-09 requires an entity to recognize revenue in a way that depicts the transfer of promised goods or services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods and services. ASU No. 2014-09 is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018, and is to be applied retrospectively; early adoption is permitted. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it is not expected to have a material impact on the Foundation's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations.

Newly Adopted Accounting Principles—The Foundation implemented ASU No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statement of Not-for-Profit Entities*, in the current year, applying the changes retrospectively. The new standards change the following aspects of the financial statements:

- The temporarily restricted and permanently restricted net asset classes have been combined into a single net asset class called net assets with donor restrictions.
- The unrestricted net assets class has been renamed net assets without donor restrictions.
- The financial statements include a disclosure about liquidity and availability of resources (Note 4).

The changes have the following effect on the net assets at January 1, 2017:

	As Originally Presented	After Adoption of ASU No. 2016-14
Net asset class:		
Unrestricted	$ 63,358,265	$ -
Temporarily restricted	57,293,313	
Permanently restricted	227,494	
Without donor restrictions		63,358,265
With donor restrictions		57,520,807
Total net assets	$120,879,072	$120,879,072

The changes have the following effect on net assets for the year ended December 31, 2017:

Statement of Financial Position	As Originally Presented	After Adoption of ASU No. 2016-14
Net asset class:		
Unrestricted	$ 72,589,200	$ -
Temporarily restricted	65,732,858	
Permanently restricted	229,494	
Without donor restrictions		72,589,200
With donor restrictions		65,962,352
Total net assets	$138,551,552	$138,551,552

The Foundation implemented ASU No. 2018-08, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Clarifying the Scope and the Accounting Guidance for Contributions Received and Contributions Made*, in the current year, applying the changes using a modified prospective approach. This update clarifies and improves current guidance about whether a transfer of assets is a contribution or an exchange transaction. The Foundation has adopted the guidance in the ASU as of December 31, 2018; however, adoption did not materially impact the Foundation's financial statements.

The Foundation implemented ASU No. 2016-01, *Financial Instruments—Overall (Subtopic 825-10)—Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities*, on January 1, 2018, applying the changes using a modified retrospective transition approach. ASU No. 2016-01 revises the accounting related to the classification and measurement of investments in equity securities and the presentation of certain fair value changes for financials liabilities measured at fair value. Adoption did not materially impact the Foundation's financial statements.

Cash—The Foundation considers all liquid instruments purchased with a maturity date of three months or less to be cash equivalents that are stated at cost, which approximates fair value. The earnings credit received on the Foundation's checking accounts were $49,833 and $15,624 in 2018 and 2017, respectively. The Foundation maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. The Foundation has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Inventories—Inventories are carried at the lower of cost or net realizable value, generally determined on the first-in, first-out basis. Inventory consists of solicitation materials and other items.

Investments—Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of the Foundation's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar or model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments of the Foundation. The Foundation's policy is to report cash and cash equivalents, which include money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

Contributions—Contributions received are recorded as support with or without donor restrictions, depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the donation.

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions—All contributions and bequests without donor restrictions to the Foundation are designated by the board of directors (the "Board") for investment in a Board-designated endowment fund, known as the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, as a reserve for future needs.

Investment income derived from these invested amounts is included in net assets without donor restrictions and used for current operations of the Foundation or appropriated by the Foundation for use by DAV.

For 2017, appropriations to the Columbia Trust of $600,000 is excluded from the statement of activities due to the transaction being an internal appropriation.

For 2018 and 2017, the Board has designated $1,614,899 and $2,076,091, respectively, as total net assets without donor restrictions for the Columbia Trust and are not included in the Board-designated endowment fund. The Columbia Trust recorded a decrease in net assets without donor restrictions of $461,192 in 2018 and an increase of $600,000 in 2017. No appreciation (depreciation) of investments is designated to the Columbia Trust's net assets from the general fund without donor restrictions. As of December 31, 2018 and 2017, the Columbia Trust held $231,040 and $227,383, respectively, in money market funds.

Net Assets with Donor Restrictions—Funds considered with donor restriction for mission are restricted by their purpose to being invested prudently and used in fulfilling the Foundation's mission. As of December 31, 2018 and 2017, the net assets with donor restrictions of $60,828,136 and $65,729,198, respectively, are included within the investments balance in the statements of financial position.

Funds contributed to the Columbia Trust are matched 100% by DAV, up to a maximum of $3,000,000 per year. In 2018 and 2017, the Columbia Trust received $62,450 and $65,508, respectively, in contributions, which were matched by DAV. In 2018 and 2017, the Columbia Trust received $840,000 and $800,000, respectively, from the DAV Charitable Service Trust to be used for the DAV Transportation Network Vehicle Grant Program.

Contributions for the DAV Legislative Program are considered contributions with donor restriction. Investment income of $6,997 and $6,403 in 2018 and 2017, respectively, from the DAV Legislative Fund was transferred to DAV for use by DAV's Legislative Program. The net assets with donor restrictions of $231,694 and $229,494 as of December 31, 2018 and December 31, 2017, respectively, are included within the investments balance in the statements of financial position.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more program or supporting services of the organization. Those expenses include grant proposal processing and administrative charges, postage, printing, supplies, insurance, and advertising. All expenses are allocated based on estimates of time and effort toward each program or supporting service. Allocation estimates are reviewed annually based on the specific expense and adjusted accordingly.

Income Taxes—As a not-for-profit service organization, the Foundation has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income taxes as a Section 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to the Foundation are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Use of Estimates—The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

3. ENDOWMENT FUNDS

The following table represents the composition of the Foundation's endowment net assets by type of fund for the years ended December 31, 2018 and 2017:

	Without Donor Restrictions	
	2018	**2017**
Board designated Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund	$65,727,984	$70,513,109

The Foundation's Board-designated endowment fund included in net assets without donor restrictions, also known as the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, for the years ended December 31, 2018 and 2017, had the following activity:

	2018	**2017**
Net assets—beginning of year	$70,513,109	$61,882,174
Public support—contributions and bequests	823,338	952,332
Revenues—net investment return	(3,245,871)	9,030,936
Total public support and revenue	(2,422,533)	9,983,268
Expenses:		
Program:		
Appropriations to DAV National Headquarters and other organizations	2,106,236	506,551
Internal appropriation to the Columbia Trust		600,000
Grant proposal processing	42,827	47,561
Total program expenses	2,149,063	1,154,112
Management and general	134,866	117,733
Fundraising	78,663	80,488
Total expenses	2,362,592	1,352,333
Total change in Board-designated endowment fund	(4,785,125)	8,630,935
Net assets—end of year	$65,727,984	$70,513,109

4. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The Foundation's working capital and cash flows are attributable to the contributions received throughout the year. As of December 31, 2018 and 2017, the Foundation's financial assets (total assets, less inventory and prepaid expenses) totaled $128,535,092 and $138,702,174, respectively. The financial assets, with the exception of the donor-restricted by purpose for DAV Legislative Fund investment of $231,694 and $229,494 as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively, are available to fund general expenditures within one year following the statement of financial position date. Donor-restricted funds of$60,828,136 and $65,729,198 for 2018 and 2017, respectively, have been included because they are restricted for programs considered general expenditures by the organization. In 2018, the Foundation implemented an investment spending policy that would allow for withdrawals from the long-term investment portfolio, from both general assets without donor restrictions and with donor restriction purpose restricted for its mission.

The Foundation has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its program, fundraising, management, and general expenses become due. In addition, as part of its liquidity management, the Foundation invests cash in excess of daily requirements in various short-term and long-term investments. The short-term investments are invested for capital preservation and liquidity for cash flow requirements in money market funds. The Foundation's long-term investments, such as marketable fixed-income and equity securities, index and actively managed mutual funds, and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), are invested with the intent of providing a safe return on investments for future use.

5. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC Topic 820 provides a framework for measuring fair value. The framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market, but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The Foundation did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant (Level 3) to the overall fair value measurement during 2018 or 2017. The Foundation's policy is to recognize transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers during 2018 or 2017.

Asset Valuation Techniques—Valuation techniques used maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs. The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets recorded at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at December 31, 2018 and 2017.
Cash equivalents, composed of money market funds, are categorized as Level 1, and are valued at cost, which approximates fair value. The money market funds represent the Foundation's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

Common stock securities and ETFs held are categorized as Level 1. They are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

Corporate bonds are categorized as Level 2, and are valued using third-party pricing services. These services may use, for example, model-based pricing methods that utilize observable market data as inputs. Broker-dealer bids or quotes of securities with similar characteristics may also be used.

Shares of registered investment companies (mutual funds) are categorized as Level 1. They are valued at quoted market prices that represent the net asset value of shares held at year-end.

The major categories of financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2018 and 2017, are as follows:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
2018	**Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)**	**Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)**	**Total**
Asset category:			
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 1,776,495	$ -	$ 1,776,495
Common stocks	8,768,705		8,768,705
Corporate bonds		12,824,933	12,824,933
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	31,949,065		31,949,065
Domestic equity funds	45,250,278		45,250,278
International equity funds	22,405,441		22,405,441
Real estate equity funds	2,772,594		2,772,594
Total mutual funds/ETFs	102,377,378	-	102,377,378
Total assets	$112,922,578	$12,824,933	$125,747,511

2017	Fair Value Measurements Using: Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Asset category:			
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 992,857	$ -	$ 992,857
Common stocks	8,974,215		8,974,215
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	43,891,612		43,891,612
Domestic equity funds	53,022,215		53,022,215
International equity funds	26,184,998		26,184,998
Real estate equity funds	2,947,275		2,947,275
Total mutual funds/ETFs	126,046,100	-	126,046,100
Total assets	$136,013,172	$ -	$136,013,172

The Foundation has adopted an investment policy for the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund and investments with donor restrictions. The primary goals of the investment portfolio are safeguarding of the assets; maximizing return on the interest, dividends, and appreciation of capital; and avoiding undue interest rate risk in the fixed-income portion of the portfolio. The portfolio performance objective is to exceed a custom benchmark of 60% Russell 3000/40% Barclays Intermediate Government Credit over a five-year period and a full market cycle.

The Foundation relies on a total return strategy in which investment returns are achieved through both capital appreciation and current yield (interest and dividends). The Foundation targets a diversified asset allocation that places a greater emphasis on equity-based investment to achieve its long-term return objective within prudent risk constraints.

6. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets are released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions are as follow:

	2018	2017
Purpose restrictions accomplished:		
Purpose restriction—mission	$1,974,335	$ -
The Columbia Trust	1,006,214	1,110,976
Net assets released from restrictions	$2,980,549	$1,110,976

7. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During 2018 and 2017, DAV personnel assisted the Foundation on a limited basis in administering its business operations and fundraising program. For these services, the Foundation reimbursed DAV $98,817 and $110,260 in 2018 and 2017, respectively. At December 31, 2018 and 2017, the Foundation owed DAV $97,915 and $134,752, respectively. DAV provides the Foundation with the use of facilities, equipment, and occasional magazine space at no charge.

As discussed in Note 2, DAV contributed $62,450 and $65,508 to the Columbia Trust in 2018 and 2017, respectively. The Columbia Trust also received $174,991 from DAV in 2017 for funds designated to the Columbia Trust for the DAV Transportation Network Vehicle Grant Program.

In 2018 and 2017, the DAV Charitable Service Trust made contributions of $840,000 and $800,000, respectively, to the Columbia Trust for the DAV Transportation Network Vehicle Grant Program. In 2018 and 2017 the DAV Charitable Service Trust made contributions of $1,600 and $760, respectively, to the National Service Foundation to be used in assisting disabled veterans and their dependents.

In 2018 and 2017, the Foundation appropriated the following in support of DAV programs and services:

	2018	2017
National Service Program Support	$4,073,574	$ -
National Service Office Structured and Continuing Training Program		250,000
National Service Office Scanners and Webcams		123,387
National Service Office Furniture and Equipment Fund		60,000
National Service Office Copier Fund		41,761
National Service Office Reference Manuals		25,000

In performing the duties of their positions, DAV's National Commander and National Adjutant serve on the Foundation's Board. In performing the duties of their positions as a Foundation Director, some members also serve on the DAV Charitable Service Trust's Board and the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation's Board.

8. GRANTS AND EXPENSES OF THE COLUMBIA TRUST

At December 31, 2018 and 2017, the grants and expenses of the Columbia Trust are as follows:

	2018	2017
Grants to DAV chapters and departments in accordance with The Columbia Trust:		
Hospital Service Coordinator Program	$ 513,218	$ 337,361
Transportation Network Vehicle Grant Program	885,909	725,502
Other grants to service programs	63,615	44,400
Miscellaneous expenses	4,664	3,713
Grant proposal processing	42,827	47,561
Total	$1,510,233	$1,158,537

In 2018, net assets with donor restrictions of $1,006,214 and net assets without donor restrictions of $504,019 were used. In 2017, net assets with donor restrictions of $1,110,976 and net assets without donor restrictions of $47,561 were used.

9. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2018 but before April 9, 2019, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, that require consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the financial statements.

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(Whereupon, National Service Foundation President Wilson withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Art, for your outstanding report and continued leadership. May I have a motion to accept the report from President Wilson for the National Service Foundation?

MR. WAYNE: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. WAYNE: Frank Wayne, Chapter 17, Indiana.

COMMANDER NIXON: I have a motion and a second. Those in favor say aye; opposed, same sign. Carried.

(Whereupon, National Service Foundation President Wilson withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Marc, do you have any announcements?

(Whereupon, Adjutant Wilson advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. The Nominating Committee will be meeting at 11 a.m. here in just 10 minutes in Saint John's Room 31 so anyone wanting to present themselves to the Nominating Committee be there as well as the members of that Committee.

This afternoon's final business session will begin promptly at 1:30. We will start off with the important business of nominations and elections of officers so please be on time.

You can pick up your Line Officer Dinner tickets immediately after this business session or immediately after this afternoon's business session all the way up until 6 p.m.

Furthermore, our partners at Walgreens will be hosting a snack break after our final business session at three o'clock at the Gatlin Pre-Function Corridor so be sure to stop by and take advantage.

Again, we are giving away three $50 gift cards to the DAV store for convention attendees. You must be present to win. And if I call your name and you are in the hall, please see Membership Director Doug Wells up here at the stage as soon as we adjourn.

And the lucky winners are: David Norman, Georgia, Newton-Rockdale Number 55; Joseph Gray, South Carolina, Woodrow Wilson Number 4; and Jimmie Velez, Puerto Rico, Sgt. A. Bermudez Number 11. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Marc. Chaplain Dover, will you lead us in prayer.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Ladies and gentlemen, let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we praise you for the gift of unity that the spirit creates in our relationships. You place others perfectly in our lives and inspire us to work together with the gifts that we have been blessed with.

None of us can further your plans on our own but together we can complement each other's strengths and cancel out our weaknesses. As a team, a unified body focused on the mission of this great organization, we can do great things in your honor as we were purposed to do. Amen.

(Response of "Amen." Whereupon, the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, sir. The Convention stands in recess until 1:30 this afternoon.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 10:51 a.m. on Tuesday, August 6, 2019.)

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FINAL BUSINESS SESSION

August 6, 2019

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The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 98th National Convention convened in the Gatlin Ballroom B/C on the First Level of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Orlando, Florida, Tuesday afternoon, August 6, 2019, and was called to order at 1:28 p.m., by National Commander Dennis R. Nixon.

COMMANDER DENNIS R. NIXON: Would the Convention please come to order. As a reminder, I would like to ask everyone to please silence your cell phone and portable devices.

Now if you would, please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. (Three raps of the gavel) Almost forgot. Hand salute.

(Whereupon, Commander Nixon led the Pledge of Allegiance.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Two. And now I will ask Chaplain Dover to lead us in prayer.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium)

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL P. DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Ladies and gentlemen, let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we thank you for bringing us together this day. Inspire us to worthy deeds and sound decisions and direct us toward the attainment of our goal.

We pray that you would bless and protect all our people. Guide us on the path to unity and harmony that we may serve our mission with distinction. Amen.

(Response of “Amen.”)

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, sir.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Chaplain. (One rap of the gavel.) As a reminder, in order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention you must be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at the microphone will be recognized. Upon being recognized, the delegate must state their name, chapter number and the state they represent.

Also, I want to remind everyone that registration of delegates is now closed. Therefore, I will call upon Chairman Bridgette Marker for the final report of the Credentials Committee.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BRIDGETTE MARKER: Thanks, Commander. I think it’s good afternoon. Comrade Commander and delegates, this is the final report of the Credentials Committee and reflects the total registration as of 10:00 a.m., August 6, 2019.

There are 1,116 delegates and 74 alternates registered, representing 46 departments and 390 chapters. There are 5 national line officers, 21 National Executive Committee members, 3 past national commanders registered for a total of 29 national officers. The vote total count is 8,300. At this time I would like to extend my thanks to the Committee members and advisors.

Commander, that completes the final report of the Credentials Committee. I move for its adoption.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. You have heard the motion. Do I have a second?

MR. DAVID SARTORI: Microphone 3.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 3.

Mr. SARTORI: David Sartori, Department of Wisconsin, Chapter 19, I move for a second or I register a second.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now I’m going to call on Dan Stack, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, for his report.

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DANIEL P. STACK: Thank you, Commander. Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Nominations of National Officers was called to order for its first business session on August 3, 2019, by Committee advisors Joseph Johnston and Al Church.

The first order of business was the election of a convention committee chairman and secretary. Dan Stack was elected as chairperson and Al Reynolds was elected as secretary.

The Committee on Nominations of National Officers met on Saturday, August 3 at 4:15 p.m. and the Committee met again today at 11 a.m. The Nominating Committee recommends for nomination the following individuals for national office:

For the office of National Commander, Stephen "Butch" Whitehead from Minnesota; (Applause) for the office of National Senior Vice Commander Donald Day from New York; (Applause) for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander, Andrew Marshall from Florida; (Applause)

For the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander, Joe Parsetich from Montana; (Applause) for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander, Nancy Espinosa from Utah; (Applause) and for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander, Daniel Contreras from California; (Applause)

For the office of National Chaplain, Michael Dover from Georgia; (Applause) and for the office of National Judge Advocate, Michael Dobmeier, North Dakota. (Applause)

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Nominations for National Officers. On behalf of the Committee I move for the adoption of this report.

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Dan. Thank you for all the hard work that the Nominating Committee puts into its deliberations. You have heard the motion.

MR. BRIAN MABRY: Mic 3.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 3. (Laughter)

MR. MABRY: Brian Mabry.

COMMANDER NIXON: Did you want to second that?

MR. MABRY: Connecticut, Chapter Number 2, I move with a second.

COMMANDER NIXON: Okay. (Laughter) All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER NIXON: You have heard the report of the Committee on Nominations of National Officers and they have nominated Stephen "Butch" Whitehead for National Commander. (Applause) Here to second the nomination is Greg Remus. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Remus advanced to the podium.)

MR. GREG REMUS: Stephen "Butch" Whitehead was born in Trimont, Minnesota, and now resides in Rosemount, Minnesota with his wife. He is a life member of Chapter 10 in Mankato, Minnesota.

Stephen is a very proud U.S. Army National Guard retiree who enlisted in 1991 at the age of 17 years. He was wounded while deployed to Scania, Iraq, on February 22, 2007. He suffered a concussion during a mortar attack on his base. He retired from the Minnesota Army National Guard this year as a command sergeant major after serving more than 27 years.

Stephen joined DAV and was appointed adjutant of the Department of Minnesota in 2012. He continues to serve as the executive director for the Department of Minnesota. Stephen has served in various leadership capacities at the chapter level, as well as on various veterans committees within the state.

He has been a leader from the get-go, working to ensure veterans have access to programs and services that benefit their physical and mental well-being. He is chiefly concerned with the welfare of his fellow veteran and has even, just this past—excuse me—just this past Memorial Day, traveled to Kuwait to serve meals to troops.

Fellow veterans, families and friends, I can tell you beyond any shadow of a doubt that Stephen Whitehead has been a fighter for this great country, for the way of life we hold sacred, and for the veterans and their families for the past 28 years.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe now it is time to let Stephen fight for you and ensure that the promises made by our country to its disabled veterans are kept. It is with great honor that I second the nomination for Stephen "Butch" Whitehead to be national commander of our great organization.

Mr. Chairman, delegates and guests, thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Remus withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: The Chair will now call for any further nominations for the office of national commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations?

Hearing none and if there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Stephen "Butch" Whitehead elected as national commander and instruct the National Adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for his election. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: I, Marc Burgess, National Adjutant of DAV, hereby cast one unanimous ballot for Stephen "Butch" Whitehead, for the office of national commander. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: The Nominating Committee has nominated Donald Day for the office of national senior vice commander. Are there further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Donald Day elected as national senior vice commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Andrew Marshall for the office of national first junior vice commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Andrew Marshall elected as national first junior vice commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Joe Parsetich for the office of national second junior vice commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Joseph Parsetich elected national second junior vice commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Nancy Espinosa for the office of national third junior vice commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Nancy Espinosa elected national third junior vice commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Dan Contreras for the office of national fourth junior vice commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations I will close the nominations and declare Dan Contreras elected as national fourth junior vice commander.

(Whereupon, Mr. Contreras stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: The Nominating Committee has nominated Mike Dobmeier for the office of national judge advocate. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Mike Dobmeier elected as national judge advocate. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Mike Dover for the office of national chaplain. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Mike Dover elected as national chaplain. (Applause)

And I will now ask the National Adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for these offices.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: I, Marc Burgess, National Adjutant of DAV, cast one unanimous ballot for Donald Day as national senior vice commander; Andrew Marshall for national first junior vice commander;

Joseph Parsetich for national second junior vice commander; Nancy Espinsoa for national third junior vice commander; Daniel Contreras for national fourth junior vice commander; Michael Dobmeier for national judge advocate; and Michael Dover for national chaplain. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: I would now like to ask that the newly elected officers and their spouses be escorted to the stage, please.

(Whereupon, the newly elected officers and their spouses advanced to the stage to be seated.)

COMMANDER NIXON: It is now my great pleasure to call on National Commander-Elect Stephen "Butch" Whitehead for remarks, please. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Commander-Elect Whitehead advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER-ELECT STEPHEN "BUTCH" WHITEHEAD: Good afternoon and thank you so much. Dennis, it has truly been an honor coming through the ranks with you. I am thrilled to follow in your footsteps, having learned so much from you. I also feel privileged to call you a friend and mentor. Thank you for your leadership and advocacy over these past years. (Applause)

As I stand here and look out through this room I want to be clear about one thing today. Today isn't about me. Today and the next year is all about our members and our fellow veterans all across our nation. (Applause)

I am here to make sure all of our voices are heard and to fight as hard as I can to protect our benefits and to fight for legislation that positions all veterans in the best possible situation.

As this great organization is set to turn 100 years old, I couldn't be prouder to be in a position to jump-start DAV's success for another century. (Applause) Thank you.

Before I go any further, I want to take an opportunity to thank all my friends and mentors from the North Star State who have helped me get where I am today. All of us in this room know that nobody does it alone. And I couldn't thank them all enough for all they have done.

I've had the honor of meeting great DAV leaders, people like former Director of Voluntary Services Jerry Steelman, who taught me so much about our national programs and how and why DAV operates the way it does. He is truly missed.

Leaders like Past Department of Minnesota Commander Dean Ascheman. Dean was a tremendous mentor to me while I learned the ropes of being a department adjutant. He showed me what it took to be a leader in this organization.

I met Past National Commander Lyle Pearson at my very first chapter meeting and I remember him telling me how great it was to see younger veterans getting involved with the DAV. (Applause) He told me it would be the younger veterans who will keep this organization strong. That continues to hold true as I speak to all of you here today. He is missed.

Last, but not least, Past Department Commander Greg Remus. Greg, thank you so much for being here today and for the kind words. I couldn't have gotten here without you. (Applause)

These individuals taught me so much about the DAV and I will do all I can over the next year to make them proud of the State of Minnesota.

And, no, I didn't forget all the wonderful members of my chapter, DAV Chapter 10 of Mankato, Minnesota. Thank you. (Applause)

In 2007, I returned from what was nearly a two-year long deployment to Iraq. Upon my return, I realized something all too familiar to those of us in this room today—I wasn't the same person.

I came to the realization that many things I truly enjoyed before my deployment had drastically changed. I'm not sure if it was the injuries I sustained during the mortar attack, the time away from home, or the time I spent with some greatest men and women I have ever met while deployed, but something had certainly changed.

On several occasions my best friend and wife, Kim and I would have heart-to-heart conversations about our path forward. I was working for some really good companies; companies that did a really good job at supporting their employees; but I still wasn't happy.

I owe Kim a huge debt of gratitude as she was the one who pointed out that I would literally jump toward my phone when I saw an incoming call from a fellow soldier. To me it was business as usual; a soldier needed me and I was going to be there for them.

However, Kim saw something else. She saw an opportunity, a new calling, a new purpose for me. It was her who suggested and encouraged me to try and find a place that allowed me to surround myself with soldiers and their families. Kim, it wasn't the first time you changed my life but I owe all this to you. (Applause)

Taking care of my fellow soldiers, veterans and their families, was now what drove me. I was lucky enough to work as a coordinator with Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, a comprehensive program that creates awareness for the purpose of connecting service members and their families with community support, training, services and resources.

Throughout my time with Beyond the Yellow Ribbon I was able to learn a lot about the veterans service organizations in our community, but one stood head and shoulders above them all. That's right, DAV. (Applause)

DAV was the place for me. My ideals and beliefs aligned perfectly with the DAV's mission and I wanted to be a part of it. In 2012 a great opportunity came my way and I started working with the DAV Department of Minnesota. Seeing first-hand how DAV was there each and every day helping veterans had a huge impact on me.

DAV gives us the unique opportunity to empower and improve the lives of our fellow veterans. It helps us to ensure promises are kept. We know our services are substantive and vital.

Just this past Memorial Day, I had the honor to travel to Kuwait and visit with hundreds of deployed soldiers. As great a trip as it was, it also serves as a reminder just how important the DAV and our services are.

When these service members return home they will need guidance and they need to know that the DAV is there and able to help. They need to know that we will fight for their benefits, help them find their next career, or simply assist with any needs they may have.

DAV has lasted nearly 100 years based on this premise and it will last 100 more if we stay true to our core principles.

I feel blessed to include my DAV family as a source of strength and inspiration. Over my time with the DAV I was given the opportunity to learn and to lead.

Despite being a robust national organization, DAV truly makes its impact on the grassroots fashion at the local community level. It could be talking to your neighbor, new neighbor, talking to someone at the grocery store, or at church. My point is, each and every one of you in this room has a critically important role to fulfill to help ensure our success for another 100 years.

Finally, I ask each of you to take on a mentoring role. Just like the young soldiers I saw in Kuwait, we're going to see a lot of young men and women leaving the military services. We need to reach out to them. We need to bring them into our organization and make them part of our community.

We shouldn't expect them to understand the benefits available to them or the importance of our organization. Be ready to teach them, to reach out to them, to show them the impact we make in veterans' or their families' lives and give them a chance to serve.

I look forward to working with all of you this year. It's an honor and a privilege to serve as your national commander. And I pledge to work tirelessly to ensure your voices are heard as we continue our nearly 100-year mission of service to the men and women who have served.

Thank you so much and let's get this started. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Commander-Elect Whitehead saluted the membership, then Commander Nixon placed the commander's cap on Commander-Elect Whitehead, at which time an official photograph was taken, then the Commander-Elect returned to his seat and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ain't he purdy? (Laughter) Thank you. National Senior Vice Commander-Elect Donald Day, do you want to say something? (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander-Elect advanced to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT DONALD DAY: Thank you, Commander. First of all, did everyone get a Statue of Liberty? (Laughter) You have no idea how long it took me to keep that pose. (Laughter)

The Statue of Liberty is a symbol of freedom in this country. A lot of people from all over the world saw this when they came into New York Harbor. And it serves as a symbol of freedom now.

I'd like to tell you what I think is the most important thing in the DAV. And it actually is you. DAV is a membership organization. Without members we don't have legislature; we don't have claim work; we don't have employment; and we don't have an organization.

So keep in mind that everything you do is extremely important. Remember, we are working for veterans. Keep your eye on the prize and don't forget why we are here. We are here to help our fellow veterans. And we are the best at it. So continue doing what you do. And God bless you and looking forward to a year as your senior vice commander. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander-Elect withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Newly elected National First Junior Vice Commander Andy, do you want to talk to us? (Applause)

(Whereupon, the First Junior Vice Commander-Elect advanced to the podium.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT ANDREW MARSHALL: Good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT MARSHALL: You know when I stood at this podium four years ago and was elected as national fourth junior vice commander, it's amazing the confidence that I had that an organization as the DAV would elect me as a national officer. It was overwhelming. And it's been such a great experience since then.

I need to thank, first of all, the lady that allows me to do this, gives me confidence to do this, and when I am out in the community or anywhere and I have a DAV shirt on or if I'm driving the Department of Florida vehicle she always reminds me, "You are a professional and everybody sees you representing the DAV today so make sure you do what you are supposed to do." Thank you, Susan. (Applause)

And I'd like to thank my home chapter, John C. McCarthy, Chapter Number 4, Tampa, Florida, (Applause) and the best department in the country, the Department of Florida. (Applause) Thank you.

And thank you all for being here and giving up your free root beer float today. (Laughter) And tomorrow, although it's not a national holiday, it's one that is very close to my heart, it is Purple Heart Day. So my fellow Purple Heart recipients, please stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the Purple Heart recipients stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT MARSHALL: So from the bottom of my heart, thank you for electing me as national first junior vice commander. And it's such a pleasure to be an officer of the best veterans' organization in the world. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the First Junior Vice Commander-Elect withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: See, Andy, that just goes to prove that in front of every successful man is a woman dragging him kicking and screaming everywhere he needs to be. (Laughter)

The newly elected National Second Junior Vice Commander Joseph Parsetich. Joe, you have something to say? (Applause) Congratulations.

(Whereupon, the Second Junior Vice Commander-Elect advanced to the podium.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT JOSEPH PARSETICH: And thank all of you. There are so many people to thank that have a special spot in my heart that have done so much: my district, District 14 and all those who worked tirelessly; part of New York, my surrogate daughter and son; and just so many people.

The first and most important one that I want to thank, though, is the Lord for giving me the ability and the resources to be able to do this. (Applause) You know, but he has given me the biggest gift around next to my savior and that is that of my wife because without her support it wouldn't happen. Meg, stand up. Stand up.

(Whereupon, Mrs. Parsetich stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT PARSETICH: Thank you. But then it goes out to all of you for entrusting me to be your voice and your image every place I go. I love you all. God bless. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Second Junior Vice Commander-Elect withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Joe. National third junior vice commander-elect, Ms. Nancy Espinosa. (Applause) Congratulations.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice Commander-Elect advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT NANCY ESPINOSA: Thank you. Good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT ESPINOSA: Thank you, Commander Nixon, for the privilege of working with you. I've enjoyed this year and it has been a pleasure. Thank you. Butch, I'm looking forward to working with you. It's going to be a great year and congratulations.

I want to say—(Applause) thank you. I want to thank my family who is here and the Department of Utah. I'd also like to thank District 17. (Applause) And thank everyone for their continuing support. I appreciate it and I am honored. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice Commander-Elect withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: National fourth junior vice commander-elect, Mr. Daniel Contreras. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Fourth Junior Vice Commander-Elect advanced to the podium.)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT DANIEL CONTRERAS: Thank you, Commander Nixon. What can I say? This has really been a dream come true to even be considered for this role. And now the journey begins.

Let me start by thanking the Department of California—Applause) California, you have embraced me from Day One when I began my DAV journey as a DAV service officer in 2000. You groomed me to be part of the leadership and eventually supported me to lead the department as state commander.

You gave me an opportunity to help mold and grow the organization as a department adjutant for the last decade. You are the best. Thank you. Thank you, California. (Applause)

I also need to thank my wife, Theresa, my partner. (Applause) She has been my partner in life and in my goals. You have helped me accomplish the things that I have dreamt about in this organization and in my life, in general. You have been so supportive of me and I am glad you are here with me during this momentous occasion. So thank you, Theresa, for all your love and support. You are my best friend. (Applause)

Our DAV is a well-oiled machine, and it's very clear that our organization's leadership has the right approach in how to keep DAV growing and how to promote what we do for our veterans. So it will be an honor to be someone who can help promote our cause.

Commander-Elect Whitehead, I look forward to your mentorship as well as all the officers on the line. I will be tapping into you for your guidance. And I promise you all the support and the time that you need from me to help you carry forward the DAV message.

Once again, thank you to all the members of this great organization here today for having faith in me and giving me and allowing me this unique opportunity to serve you. Thank you so much. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Fourth Junior Vice Commander-Elect withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now, one of the men that took me under his wing and made sure that I didn't fall too far off the path, Judge Advocate-Elect Michael Dobmeier. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate-Elect advanced to the podium.)

JUDGE ADVOCATE-ELECT MICHAEL E. DOBMEIER: Thank you, my friend. Art Wilson told me about 25 years ago, "You've got to keep doing it until you get it right." And I wasn't sure what he meant by that but it's working out. (Laughter)

I'd like to thank my wife, Sandy, who has not only been by my side for a long time, she's been a DAV Auxiliary leader in her own right. (Applause)

Commander Dennis and Marc and the wonderful 14th District and each and every one of you, I thank you for your continued trust. I believe in you. And it looks like you believe in me, too, so that's good. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate-Elect withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Now this guy. I've been trying to get him to come out of his shell for the last four years and you just can't—you just can't hardly get him to say anything when you see him in the hall. (Laughter) National Chaplain-Elect Michael Dover. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Chaplain-Elect advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN-ELECT MICHAEL P. DOVER: Commander, I see some of my humor is rubbing off on you. (Laughter) Well, Commander, thank you for an excellent year and allowing me to serve under your leadership.

And to the newly elected line officers, thank you very much. I look forward to a great year working with you.

And this is a very unique moment for me—not that it's unique but I want my lovely wife to please stand. Latrell, would you please stand?

(Whereupon, Mrs. Dover stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

CHAPLAIN-ELECT DOVER: My strength and my love is right there. And for those of you who are going through cancer yourself or have gone through cancer or cancer is in remission, just remember your chaplain has your six. Be encouraged. And you are not alone in this matter.

At this time let us pray. Right? No? (Laughter) I tried, guys. I tried. (Laughter) Thank you so much for the love that my wife and I have felt this past year. And as I said in your NEC meetings when you have been doing this for enough years you keep it short, sweet, to the point. Any questions? (Laughter) Nope. Commander. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Chaplain-Elect withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Okay, at this time I will entertain a motion to discharge the Credentials Committee. May I have a motion? Okay, we'll keep them. (Laughter)

MR. FRANK WAYNE: Mic 2.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 2.

MR. WAYNE: Frank Wayne, Chapter 17, Hammond, Indiana, I so move.

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you. I need a second, please.

MS. DEBORAH OLSEN: Mic 1.

COMMANDER NIXON: Mic 1.

MS. OLSEN: Department of Massachusetts, Deborah Olsen, commander.

COMMANDER NIXON: All those in favor—I have a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

National Adjutant Burgess, would you please read the list of the newly elected National Executive Committee persons.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: The following members have been elected to the National Executive Committee for the two-year term 2019 to 2021: NEC First District Helen Bennett of Massachusetts; (Applause) NEC Third District Ernest Boisvert of Rhode Island; (Applause)

NEC Fifth District Michael Iacavazzi of Pennsylvania; (Applause) NEC Seventh District Jack Johnson of Florida; (Applause) NEC Ninth District Thomas Walls of South Carolina; (Applause) NEC Eleventh District Will Davis of Ohio; (Applause)

NEC Thirteenth District Terry Sanders of Indiana; (Applause) NEC Fifteenth District David Thornburg of Iowa; (Applause) NEC Seventeenth District Timothy Talley of New Mexico; (Applause) NEC Nineteenth District Saranna Hack of Alaska; (Applause) and NEC Twenty-First District John Donovan of Arkansas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Marc. Well, that just about concludes today's agenda. But before I ask Marc for his announcements, there has been several people—some of you are new to the organization, relatively new. And a lot of you are, this is your first convention.

And I've been asked a couple of times who is that nice looking young lady sitting next to Marc. (Laughter) She is a very vital—she has a very vital role. She is the administrative assistant to the Washington National Executive Director of the Washington Office, I'm sorry. Her name is Sally Miller. (Applause) She told me not to do that. (Laughter) I don't mind very well. Marc, do you have any announcements? (Laughter)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: As a reminder to all National Executive Committee members, including those newly elected, the Committee will meet immediately following adjournment of the convention, in just a few minutes, in the Gatlin D. A swearing-in ceremony will be held at that time. NEC Alternates should also attend this swearing-in ceremony.

The Board of Directors will meet immediately following the NEC meeting.

The presentation of the national officers will begin at 6:30 this evening here in Gatlin B and C followed by dinner. You cannot enter without a ticket so please be sure you bring yours for your dinner.

Come and enjoy an evening filled with ceremony, food, friends, music, entertainment and your newly elected national officers. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, sir. Now, Chaplain Dover, you can pray over us. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Ladies and gentlemen, let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we thank you for those who have led us so well. Let us go forth into the world in peace and dedicate to your service. Let us hold fast to that which is good, render to no person evil for evil, strengthen the faint-hearted, support the weak, help the needy and the afflicted, and honor all people.

Let us love and serve one another. And may your blessing be upon us and remain with us for always. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER NIXON: Thank you, Chaplain.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Thanks, again. Please remain standing. Retire the Colors.

(Whereupon, the Colors were retired by the MacDill Air Force Base Honor Guard followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in thanking the MacDill Air Force Base Honor Guard for their great service. (Applause) Also, ladies and gentlemen, the 98th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans is now adjourned. We'll see you next year in Dallas. (Applause)

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned on August 6, 2019, at 2:15 p.m.)

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel
Orlando, Florida

August 3, 2019

First Business Session

- - -

The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Panzacola F2-4 Ballroom on Level 1 of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Saturday afternoon, August 3, 2019, and was called to order at 2:07 p.m., by National Adjutant Patricia S. Kemper.

ADJUTANT PATRICIA S. KEMPER: I am going to call this meeting to order. National Sergeant-at-Arms please present National Commander Ellen Timmerman to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Chaplain was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Judge Advocate and Past National Commander Paula Raymond is escorted forward, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Fourth Junior Vice Commander Ann Marie Hurley escorted forward. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Fourth Junior Vice Commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Third Junior Vice Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh is escorted forward, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice Commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Second Junior Vice Commander Darlene Spence is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Second Junior Vice Commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National First Junior Vice Commander Lynn Helms Prosser is escorted forward, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the First Junior Vice Commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Senior Vice Commander Diane Franz is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that Immediate Past National Commander Craig Johniken is escorted to his seat, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Immediate Past National Commander was escorted to his seat.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: And National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that our National Convention Chairman Jean Sursely is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Convention Committee Chairman was escorted to the platform.)

National Sergeant-at-Arms, please present and post the State Department Colors of Florida.

(Whereupon, the Colors for the state were presented and posted.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, present the National Colors.

(Whereupon, the National Colors were presented.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, post the National Colors.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS MARILYN HOGUE: Post the Colors.

(Whereupon, the National Colors were posted.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please dismiss the Color Bearers.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Dismissed.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: We will now have a prayer by National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: As is only fitting, I found something today that I thought was perfect for today. It's called "The Other Serenity Prayer." And I will offer a regular prayer after.

"Please grant me the serenity to stop beating myself up for not doing things perfectly, the courage to forgive myself because I always try my best, and the wisdom to know that I am a good person with a kind heart."

Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for bringing all of us safely together today. We thank you for the chance to be together to do the work of this organization but also to share the friendships that we have, old and new.

We ask your special blessing upon these meetings. Help us to work together with our mission as our focus. Help us to be kind and understanding. And help us to forgive any issues that may have come in the past.

Help us always to be courteous as we discuss the issues today. And guide our words and our actions as we go forward.

Today we ask a special blessing upon Richard Stanfield, Rhonda Bauer's father. Last evening he had a stroke and we ask that you will provide him healing. The family notes he is doing better but he needs our prayers to fully heal.

We also ask a special blessing upon Dan Reed. We ask that you will heal him and care for him.

We ask that you will guide all of our words and actions. Help us to work for the good of our organization. Bless the leaders of our nation. Bless the leaders of our organization at all levels, and keep us safe until returning to our families at home. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the Chaplain withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: We will be led in the Pledge of Allegiance by National Americanism Chairman Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh.

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN JULIE WEISSMAN-STEINBAUGH: Please stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart and repeat with me.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice Commander and Americanism Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: We will now have one of our young members, Kryslin Mazza from New York sing the National Anthem.

(Whereupon, Ms. Mazza advanced to the microphone and sang the National Anthem, after which she withdrew amid a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Believe it or not, I'm speechless. (Laughter) Thank you, Kryslin. Please be seated.

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary state that the supreme legislative powers of this organization shall be vested in the Annual National Convention composed of the National Officers and representatives of the state departments and units.

In accordance with these directives I, Patricia S. Kemper, National Auxiliary Adjutant, declare the 97th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary be convened at Orlando, Florida.

Consideration and disposition of business brought before this Convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force. To all present, take due notice thereof and govern yourselves accordingly.

It is now my honor and privilege to introduce a woman who has led our organization with dignity and pride. I will introduce to you and present to you our National Commander Ellen Timmerman. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, the Commander advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER ELLEN TIMMERMAN: Thank you. It has been great representing you this year. And I want to welcome you all to our 2019 National Convention. You guys are my family and I am so happy to see all of you here.

Please turn off your cell phones or at least make them silent. Everybody grab a cell phone. We all have them.

Okay, at this time I am going to ask Jean Sursely, our National Convention Chairman, to come forward and give her greetings. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Convention Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JEAN SURSELY: Good afternoon. I'm going to ask you all to be gentle. I'm not a professional. I'd like to welcome you all to Florida. I want to say good afternoon

to Commander Timmerman, Auxiliary National Adjutant Pat Kemper, Auxiliary national line officers, Auxiliary members and guests.

My name is Jean Sursely and I, along with all my fellow Florida Auxiliary members, want to welcome you to the Sunshine State. I'd like to mention, of course, my home unit Central Florida 16. Just put your hands up. Nobody has to stand up, just put up your hands. We've got a few guys here.

(Whereupon, the members raised their hands and were recognized with a round of applause.)

CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SURSELY: There you go. Okay. How about all of our Floridians? Who is here from Florida?

(Whereupon, the members raised their hands and were recognized with a round of applause.)

CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SURSELY: There we are. Thank you. Thank you all. Well, all of us welcome you to the State of Florida. And I'd like to mention, of course, my home unit Central Florida 16 who happily and wholeheartedly, 100%, supports one of our unit members of the national line, Senior Vice Commander Diane Franz. (Applause)

We are excited to be able to share with you a few things that make our great state so different, amusing and interesting.

I'm not going to be real serious here today but just tell you a few things about Florida that seems to be always in conversation.

Florida is unique as far as states go because we are a peninsula. We're surrounded by water on three sides. On the west side of Florida we have the Gulf of Mexico.

On the east side of Florida we have the Atlantic Ocean. Down in the Florida Keys, where the two come together, we have the Straits of Florida. And they separate the two bodies of water.

If a hurricane should come to Florida—and it's not going to but if it did, just head north. It's the only way out. (Laughter) Everybody just head north. (Laughter)

The highest point here in Florida is up in the Panhandle at 345 feet above sea level. You never get altitude sickness when you visit Florida; sea sick, heat sick, but you never get—I'm so nervous. I'm so nervous. I'm sorry.

Florida contains over 65,000 square miles of land and 8,436 miles of ocean shoreline. Our beaches are beautiful and so is the ocean that surrounds us.

The southernmost point of the continental United States is located in Key West. There is a Mile Marker Zero down there. And almost every tourist that has ever visited Key West has gone to that mile marker and had their picture taken in front of it.

We get about 300 sunny days a year. That is where we got our nickname, The Sunshine State. The average high temp right now in Central Florida in August is 92 degrees.

The northern—a full day of rain in Florida is actually a rare thing for us. Right now—(Laughter) I know. I know. You're making me a liar.

But it is happening because there is a tropical depression swirling out there in the ocean somewhere. And I would say you all have to consider yourself pretty lucky to be able to experience one of our rare days. You're very lucky. (Laughter)

Our thunderstorms usually come quickly and our lightning is usually an incredible show. It almost always comes in the afternoon. It's really predictable.

It storms like crazy but an hour later we actually have sun and that's it for the day; we know we are safe. The only thing that hangs around is our humidity.

Our humidity is an interesting thing for women. We spend good money to do our hair and you probably get about 30 minutes in 100% humidity and you don't look like yourself any more. You don't know who that woman is looking back at you. (Laughter)

I mean people might think we're vain because we're always checking our hair but that humidity will usually do it to you. It just is a funny thing about Florida.

Our veteran population, we have 208—in 2018 we had 1.4 million veterans down here enjoying our weather. There are 21 military bases from all branches located here in Florida. And we have an average of a thousand people moving here daily.

Florida also has an unusual phenomenon that begins right from November-December; it's called "snow birds." (Laughter) They arrive in the winter. People from the northern states migrate to Florida for the winter and head back usually around Easter. These lucky people have the best of both worlds.

Our weather is inviting, although we admit it is just a wee bit hot and humid in the summer. Our winters are mild. The cold snaps don't last long. And for the most part, shorts, T-shirts and sandals make up most of our wardrobes.

But there are a few golden rules or truths we do live by down here. Never forget mosquito repellent. Our mosquitoes are highly trained. (Laughter) They wait for you. Don't think you're going to sneak out. You better carry some mosquito repellent in your bag or you're going to be carried away.

And the shade, shade is in high demand. People in Florida will park two miles from the front of a store if they can get their car under a tree. (Laughter) That's—we will fight for a parking space in the shade.

And our cars, our cars get so hot you will stick to your car seats. You either wear long shorts, you put a towel in your car, long pants, but you must exit slowly or you will leave all the skin from the back of your legs on your car seat. (Laughter) This is stuff we have to live. This is stuff we actually do.

And sweet tea, which is actually kind of funny was as I traveled north you can't get sweet tea. Sweet tea is a Florida thing. It's like—to native Floridians it's the only drink there is. It's the only thing we swallow.

And we laugh down here because we say, "Oh, my gosh, how could people live up in the north?" And the people in the north come down and go, "Oh, my god, how could you people live down here? It's so hot. It's so humid." (Laughter)

It's just funny because no matter where you are at there is always something. It's at this time of year we do our chores outside before 10 a.m. or after 6 in the evening.

We plan indoor activities that don't make us sweat, like have lunch with our friends so we can talk about how hot it is, or go shopping with friends so we can talk about how hot it is. It is usually the conversation starter when two people meet at any point in time in the State of Florida.

I, personally, going back to the hair, I cut all my hair off. I don't have to worry about those things any more. No matter what I do, it's going to look exactly the same.

Have you seen our alligators? Has anybody seen the alligators here? Have you gone to the parks? Well, our alligators aren't really trained. Whether they are in your yard or they are in a theme park, they will eat you or your pet in a heartbeat. Sorry.

And they look slow but they can run faster than you on land and they can swim faster than you on water. As a child growing up here—I'm a native Floridian—we swam anywhere.

We jumped in canals. We jumped in any lake. And they started the protection in the '60s. They were only in theme parks as a child.

You can't swim anywhere now. We have gators. And if you look on the internet, people have gators in their homes. They climb fences. They are really interesting.

And long before Disney or Universal, all we had were gator parks. You could go and you would see people wrestle gators. We have—the Seminole Indians would wrestle gators down in the Miami area. We had lots of entertainment but it always was around an alligator.

In fall season in Florida it's just about as hot as summer, just a little less humid. We sweat our way through Thanksgiving and Halloween. And we hope our air conditioners won't give us trouble at our Christmas Eve parties. We decorate our palms with holiday lights. We pray for cold weather only on December 25 and we pray that it is gone by the 26th. We don't want it to stay.

Ninty-nine percent of the time on New Year's Day we are outside in shorts, T-shirt, barbecuing, just having a good old time. The sun will always be warm and bright.

I said this is the norm for us and this is why we live here and put up with the heat during the summer. As a native Floridian, having grown up here, being hot and sweaty is all I've ever known. Please, I'm just joking about Florida. I do love it here but these are just really what we live with.

Our state is beautiful to us. It's good to us and it provides us all that we need. And this Florida girl is no match for a cold front and freezing weather so I'm probably going to stay here and I'll talk about the heat while admiring all the snowy landscapes all of you northerners post on Facebook from afar. (Laughter) Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Convention Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you so much. That was—she did a good job. I don't know what she was worried about. (Applause) At this time I'd like to introduce our Past National Commanders. And if you are able, would you stand; if not, just raise your hand.

Miss Betty Hall; (Applause) Paula Raymond; (Applause) Linda Trulio; (Applause) Judy Steinhouse; (Applause); Donna Tanner; (Applause) Sandy Dobmeier; Susan Henry; (Applause) Patti Rapisand; (Applause) Susan Miller; (Applause) LeeAnn Karg; (Applause) Frances Costa; (Applause) and our one and only, Craig Johniken. (Applause)

(Whereupon, as their names were called each Past National Commander stood or raised her/his hand and acknowledged the audience.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: At this time I would like to ask our National Adjutant Pat Kemper to recognize our state delegates.

(Whereupon, the Adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: So as I call your name please stand up and give a nice wave if you are able to stand; otherwise, just stretch that arm high.

From Alabama, Linda Doss; (Applause) Arizona, Bill Sumler; (Applause) Arkansas, Rhonda Bauer; (Applause) California, Caroline Morris; (Applause) Colorado, Sharon Bilodeau; (Applause)

Delaware, Juliette Velez; (Applause) Florida, Amie Raber; (Applause) Georgia, Cheyra Causey; (Applause) Illinois, Bonnie Wilkins; (Applause) and from Indiana, Karla Schwartz; (Applause) Iowa, Melissa Pierce; (Applause) Kansas, Karen Brader; (Applause)

My home state of Kentucky, Lisa Kaminski; Applause) Louisiana, Tracy Perkins; Maine, Erin O'Brien; (Applause) Maryland, Margaret Mills; (Applause) Massachusetts, Nancy Hoey; (Applause)

Michigan, John Olinger; (Applause) Minnesota, Nancy Berndt; (Applause); Mississippi, Sylvia Zebrowski; (Applause)

Missouri, Mary Chaney; (Applause) Montana, Helen Parsetich—better known as "Meg"—Meg Parsetich; (Applause) Nevada, Ann Richardson; (Applause)

New Hampshire, Melanie Joyce; (Applause) New Jersey, Kathleen Walker; (Applause) New Mexico, Jackie Glass; (Applause) New York, Terri Grabowski; (Applause)

North Carolina, Theresa Brewer; (Applause) North Dakota, Judy Steinhouse (Applause) Ohio, Tammy Sigman; (Applause) Oklahoma, Jennifer Hammonds; (Applause) Oregon, Karen Haltiner; (Applause)

Pennsylvania, Renee Blow; (Applause) Rhode Island, Linda Folcarelli; (Applause) South Carolina, Bonnie Ellison; (Applause) South Dakota, Wanda Mix; (Applause) Tennessee, Tammy Burkhart; (Applause)

Texas, Evelyn Cupit; (Applause) Utah, June Schow; (Applause) Vermont, Doris Backus; (Applause) Virginia, Michele Goings; (Applause) Wisconsin, Elizabeth Honaker; (Applause) and Puerto Rico, Anna Lozano-Pagan. (Applause) Thank you all for representing your states. (Applause)

(Whereupon, as the representatives' names were called they waved to the membership, after which Adjutant Kemper returned to her seat and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: At this time I would now like to call on Past National Commander LeeAnn Karg to bring her greetings.

(Whereupon, the Past National Commander advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER LEEANN KARG: Good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: It's (sic) so glad to be here. National Commander Ellen Timmerman, here you go. National Adjutant Pat, Assistant Adjutant Bunny, national line officers, state commanders, members and guests.

I'm standing up here representing probably the most influential group of members that we have and that's your past national commanders. These people have been through the ranks.

We've worked hard for our units and we're here now to turn around and help you and be a support whenever we can. So please don't be afraid to use us if you need to. We'd love to share our experience with all and any of you.

But first I have something for Ellen. Please.

(Whereupon, the Commander joined Past National Commander Karg at the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: Ellen, we have a gift for you from the past national commanders. And we'd like you to open this for us, please.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you. It's heavy. (Laughter)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: Tell me about it. (Laughter) I've been carrying it around in my bag all day.

(Whereupon, the Commander opened the gift presented.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: It's wonderful. Thank you. (Applause) All of you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: We're so proud of you and we're very, very happy with the wonderful year that you have had this time. And we hope you will join our ranks soon because we will be waiting for you.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I'm ready, guys. (Laughter) Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: Thank you.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Past National Commander withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: At this time, if you are a first-time attendee at our national convention would you, please stand.

(Whereupon, first-time attendees stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Wow. Now please remain standing. We have a ribbon we would like to give to you showing that this is your first time here.

(Whereupon, all first-time attendees were handed ribbons, after which they sat down.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I would also at this time like to recognize the DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year Kathy Dunham. She is from Texas. (Applause) Where is she?

(Response of "She is over here.")

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Oh, there she is.

(Whereupon, Ms. Dunham advanced to the podium amid a round of applause.)

MS. KATHY DUNHAM: I'm very honored to be chosen to represent all of you. And I am very humbled and I hope I do you proud. (Applause)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: You do. You do.

(Whereupon, Ms. Dunham returned to her seat and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I hope you were there to hear her speech this morning and to hear all of the things that she accomplishes in Texas. And the way she represents us is amazing.

At this time I would like to excuse the Nominating Committee.

(Whereupon, members of the Nominating Committee withdrew from the ballroom.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Okay, anyone making or seconding a motion must go to the microphone and state their name, unit and state department or they may not be recognized since our reporter has to hear this information in his headphones.

Will the Credentials Chairman Marie Holloway please come forward to give the preliminary report for the Credentials Committee?

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARIE HOLLOWAY: Madam Commander, national officers, delegates and guests, the Credentials report is as follows.

Total units registered, 140; total departments registered, 38; national officers registered, 7; past national commanders registered, 10; total guests registered, 216; total delegates, 305; total alternates, 44; total registered, 582; total vote count of 1,080.

I move that we accept the Credentials report.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We have a motion to accept the preliminary report of the Credentials Committee. Is there a second?

(Whereupon, someone called out "I second" from the floor.)

MS. DEBBERA MCLAUGHLIN: Debbie McLaughlin, Unit 18, Florida, I second it.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; any opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: The first order of business is to adopt the National Convention Rules. Printed copies of the Convention Rules have been furnished to all registered delegates. The Chair will now entertain a motion to adopt these rules. I need a motion.

MS. VICTORIA SALAZAR: Victoria Salazar, Grant Fort Baird Unit 1, I make a motion that we accept the Convention Rules.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I will—I entertain a second, please, to this motion.

MS. KAREN ECCLES: Karen Eccles, Unit 90, I second the motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; any opposed. The motion carried.

May I have a motion to accept the agenda subject to change? (Laughter) I can't believe this. Usually you guys are all jumping up. (Laughter)

MS. RENEE BLOW: Renee Blow, District 5, Pennsylvania, accept the motion for the change or the whatever, nomination. (Laugher)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: May I have a second, please.

MS. PATTY DAVIS: Patty Davis, Unit 19, Wisconsin, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; any opposed. The motion carried.

I will now call on the Finance Committee Chairman Delores Roussey for the National Finance Committee report and the budget review.

(Whereupon, the Finance Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DELORES ROUSSEY: National Commander Ellen Timmerman, national officers, past national commanders, delegates, family and friends, good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROUSSEY: The National Finance Committee meeting was held in April 3, 2019 at nine o'clock. at the DAV National Headquarters in Cold Spring, Kentucky.

The voting members on the Committee present were Ellen Timmerman, national commander; Elizabeth Eldridge District 1 NEC; Carolyn Harris, District 8 NEC; and myself, Delores Roussey, District 7 NEC. Committee member Regina Fortner, District 10 NEC, was unable to attend.

Those present without a vote were National Senior Vice Commander Diane Franz, National Adjutant Pat Kemper and National Assistant Adjutant Bunny Clos.

The purpose of the meeting was to set up and adopt a budget for the 2020 year.

At this time I would like to thank the Committee and the staff for all of their help. The budget was included in your registration packets. And at this time I move for adoption of the budget.

(Whereupon, the Finance Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion for the adoption of the budget. May I have a second?

MS. ELIZABETH ELDRIDGE: Liz Eldridge, Unit 35, Massachusetts, I second that motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; any opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the Finance Committee Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Now I call on the Senior Vice Commander to please take the chair. (Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander advanced to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER DIANE J. FRANZ: I will now present our National Commander Ellen Timmerman for the purpose of reading her report.

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you. For me this has been a busy year with the Auxiliary as well as personally. In August and September I was involved in weekly committee meetings for our 50-year class reunion, a commitment I had made and enjoyed completing.

During these meetings a friend, a classmate, asked to speak to me about what he had gone through after his life after Vietnam. He just needed to talk. Don't be afraid to sit and listen.

He wanted to let me know how bad it was for him and his brother when they returned home. And while he made it through and was still involved in group sessions his brother committed suicide.

Tim and I spent a great deal of time traveling to the VA hospital in Albuquerque during the year because of his broken ankle. That's a 400-mile round trip each time.

The National Disabled Veterans TEE Tournament was held in Iowa City in September and this was the first sponsorship project of the Auxiliary's Caregiver's Initiative program. I was very excited to meet so many caregivers in one place and to have the opportunity to hear their stories and to enjoy some one-on-one conversations with them.

The event afforded these unsung heroes time to enjoy a few days of respite and outings knowing their veterans were being cared for and experience something they enjoyed.

I witnessed the forging of new friendship among the caregivers. And I joined along with some of the planned excursions of shopping, lunch outings and even a theater program of "Mama Mia."

In the evening I spent time talking to the veterans and was very proud of the organization for launching this caregiver program because it made a significant impact on these families.

We passed out items to the veterans and I will admit being more and more than a little shocked about hearing from our DAV members that they didn't even know we had an auxiliary.

So we need to make them aware that we are here. And the part that the Auxiliary members told me this we still need to get the word out.

September 21 and 22 I attended my class reunion and watched as we had some Native American blessing done for all of our veterans. Some of my classmates still look almost the same as they did in school. And the rest of us, well, we just got old. (Laughter) I was told we were "maturing gracefully."

On our way to Lexington, Kentucky, for the DAVA National Fall Conference in last September Tim and I met a disabled veteran and his wife at the airport. Again, they didn't know about the DAV and

only asked about the organization when they saw the logo on my shirt. So let me remind all of you how important it is to wear Auxiliary shirts to let people know we are here.

We took a canvas painting class at the conference, which was interesting, a lot of fun and no two paintings turned out the same.

The conference had recorded attendance—had a record attendance and our national program chairmen's presentations were excellent and very informative.

Needless to say, the conference was packed with important information and the attendees had an abundance of information to take back and share with their units.

A special thanks to the DAV Commander Dennis Nixon and DAV National Adjutant Marc Burgess for making the trip to Lexington and speaking to us.

October and November were pretty quiet months. We did attend the annual Blue Star Mother's Dinner at the Elks Lodge on Veterans Day.

November through January the Education Scholarship Committee, with the help of national headquarters worked on getting an updated scholarship application ready to be released. It was three months of a lot of emails and a lot of hours put in by National Adjutant Pat Kemper.

In December we attended the New Mexico holiday luncheon at the DAV state department. Our son and his family took us to Disneyland and Universal Studios for Christmas holiday.

We were standing in line for a ride at Disneyland and a man asked us about the DAV. As coincidence goes, he was a veteran from my home state of New Mexico. And we were able to tell him where our NSOs were located. All because we were wearing our DAV shirts.

In January I attended Florida's mid-winter Hawaiian-themed conference, complete with Hawaiian dancers and great entertainment. It was a great conference and, as always, a lot of fun. Of course, it was great to see everyone again and return home with some really good fundraising ideas.

In February on my way to attend the C and A mid-winter conference in D.C. I met a DAV member in the airport who was also on her way to the conference. She took a picture to send to her sister with bragging rights that she met the national Auxiliary commander. We got some strange looks from the other people in the airport.

It's always interesting to attend the C and A and learn from the seminars. It was an honor to be invited to sit beside DAV leaders as the National Commander Dennis Nixon delivered his profound announcement to the Veteran Affairs Senate Committee.

March and April I attended the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, Colorado. It is so impressive and heartwarming to watch the participants accomplish something they didn't think they could.

On the morning of my departure, as I waited in the hotel for my ride to the airport, I heard one of the veterans ask another, "How many times did you go down the mountain yesterday? I went 10 times." He was so proud of what he had done, and like the rest of the participants, it was an exciting and rewarding time for all of them.

From there I flew to Cincinnati for the national finance committee. What a great group to work with. And everything went really well. We also found a great place to eat tacos thanks to Bunny. And it was so great we ate them both nights for our supper.

By the time the Scholarship Committee had received 62 applications to review and it required a lot of reading considering and consideration on the points we were giving.

I also made a trip to Rio Rancho, New Mexico, in April to install officers of the new unit. When this unit existed before, it was the unit that I joined the DAV Auxiliary. And it was so great to see them become active again.

I also attended the local veterans collaborative meeting to start working on a Stand Down to be held in this fall. There is so much involved in planning this event.

I attended DAV National Commander Nixon's testimonial in San Antonio and then my own later that month. It was—I was very honored to have so many come such a distance for my testimonial. Let's face it, the southwestern states are not the easiest to travel to, in or out of.

During the month of May I attended the Mississippi and Arkansas state conventions. In Mississippi everybody worked together to make the commander's testimonial dinner a success, which was held in conjunction with the convention.

We all put food in bowls, cut buns, arranged the tables. It was great to work as a group and we enjoyed ourselves. In Arkansas I learned how to call the hogs their way. I don't remember my great-uncle showing me how to call the hogs that way.

In June New Mexico had their state convention with National Senior Vice Commander Diane Franz as the national representative. My daughter was elected to the office of state commander and I was proud to be asked to perform the ceremony of installation.

It's exciting to see the younger generation of state officers taking active roles. Even though there are a couple of us from the older generation, including myself as judge advocate, I say we're the "oldies but goodies."

The day after the state convention I was asked to swear in the officers of one of our state's units and was very happy to do so.

My last convention of this year was the Pennsylvania state convention. Everything went really well and they finished their business in just two days. Since we finished early, State Adjutant Laurie Stopyra took me to the Hershey factory. And, of course, I had to buy some candy.

I was very lucky at the banquet and I also won their 50/50. (Laughter) I made good use of my winnings and purchased the visors for a young girls' softball team when I got home.

Let me explain the last part of this statement. It took me 32 hours to get home from Pennsylvania. I made it as far as Denver, had a long layover to start with, then learned an additional two-hour layovers due to having no pilot.

The substitute pilot had to travel 75 miles by taxi, adding another hour and a half to the delay. After boarding the plane and waiting we soon de-boarded since it wouldn't start. (Laughter)

By midnight the flight had been canceled. There were no room vouchers available and I learned it would be—they told us it would be two days before we would get another flight.

After some airline miscommunication lost then found my luggage, no available hotel rooms and settling—I sat into a well-lit area for the night. I did manage to get a flight the next day.

The one thing that made a great ending to this was when I went through TSA the young man who checked me through saw my DAV Auxiliary shirt and said the DAV had done so much for his buddies and he really appreciated what we do.

He told me all of his family had served and he had served in the Air Force in Afghanistan. He again thanked me for what we do and I thanked him for his service.

There were two other conventions I was scheduled to attend but because of flight connection and extremely long layovers I was unable to do them, which was very disappointing.

In late June I had the pleasure of attending the C and A conference in Cincinnati. It was interesting to hear the DAV leadership speak and to hear from different department directors.

As part of a four-day event we were also treated to dinner, a dinner riverboat cruise on the Ohio River and a fun event at the German restaurant.

In my travels I met many wonderful and amazing members who are exemplifying the organization's true mission of service to our nation's ill and injured veterans and their families.

I want to thank all of you for the honor and the privilege of serving as your DAV Auxiliary National Commander this past year.

God bless each and every one of you for all you do and for everything you do for our veterans. Keep up the good work. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, the Commander withdrew from and the Senior Vice Commander returned to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER FRANZ: I will now entertain a motion to accept the national commander's report as read.

MS. RENEE BLOW: Renee Blow, Pennsylvania District 5.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER FRANZ: May I have a second, please. He didn't hear you. Could you repeat your name and state.

MS. BLOW: Renee Blow. Renee Blow.

(Whereupon, the microphone wasn't working.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER FRANZ: That's still not working. Renee Blow from Pennsylvania, District 5. Can I have a second, please?

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Debbie McLaughlin, Unit 18, Florida, second.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER FRANZ: We have a motion by Rene Blow, seconded by Debbie McLaughlin. All in favor; any opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: At this time I'm going to call our National Junior Activities Chairman Icilda Marley to come forward. I saw her in here.

(Whereupon, the Junior Activities Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ICILDA V. MARLEY: Good evening, everyone. Madam Commander—look, I'm quiet, y'all. Madam Commander, line officers and guests.

May I have the junior members stand so you can be recognized; all the junior members please stand.

(Whereupon, junior members stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Okay, would the junior members please come forward. You're going to introduce yourself. You're going to tell us where you are from and what unit. Just line up to the microphone, please. You can come up.

(Whereupon, the junior members lined up and advanced to the microphone one at a time to introduce themselves.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Thomas is shy. Thomas, where are you from?

THOMAS: Michigan.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Michigan Unit –

(Response of "18.")

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Unit 18, Michigan, Thomas. Congratulations. We are proud of you for your service. (Applause)

(INDISTINGUISHABLE): Hello, everybody. My name is (Indistinguishable). I'm from Puerto Rico Unit 22. (Applause)

MISS JANA PALMER: Good afternoon. My name is Jana Palmer. I'm from California Unit 123, District 16. (Applause)

MASTER JOSHUA PEARSON: I'm Joshua Pearson. I'm from Colorado and I'm from Unit 7, District 17. (Applause)

MASTER ANDREW: My name is Andrew and I'm 15 and I'm from District 17. (Applause)

MISS HAVEN WOODBURY: Haven Woodbury.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Haven, where are you from?

MISS WOODBURY: (Indistinguishable)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Where?

MISS WOODBURY: (Indistinguishable)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: What unit? Unit 88. (Applause) Next. What is your name?

MASTER JAY DRAPER: My name is Jay Draper and I'm from Texas Unit 17.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Thank you. (Applause)

MASTER ATTIKUS WOODFORK: My name is Attikus Woodfork. I'm from Texas Unit 17, District 20. (Applause)

MASTER NOAH: My name is Noah and I'm from –

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: They can't hear you. What's your name?

MASTER NOAH: My name is Noah.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Noah, where are you from?

MASTER NOAH: I'm from Maryland.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Unit what?

MASTER NOAH: Thirty-three.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Thank you, Noah. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: My name is (Indistinguishable). I'm from Florida and Unit 118. (Applause)

MISS MORGAN: My name is Morgan. I'm from Wisconsin and my unit is 19.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: Thank you. (Applause)

MISS CLAIRE SURSELY: My name is Claire Sursely. I'm from Florida Unit 16, District 7. (Applause)

MISS BREANNA: My name is Breanna. I'm from Florida and I'm from Unit 16. (Applause)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARLEY: All of our juniors, thank you very much for your service. (Applause) Their service, the patriotism and community service is to be commended. It will take them into their adult life.

Right now juniors we want to give you a gift so if you all can go to the National Headquarters Office for your gift. Thank you for your service. After the meeting. (Laughter and applause) Am I done?

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: You're done.

(Whereupon, the Junior Activities Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: At this time I'm going to call on National Adjutant Pat Kemper for announcements.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper advanced to the microphone.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: The Memorial Service will be tomorrow morning at 7:30. Business attire is appropriate. I ask all NECs to show up for the Memorial Service. If there are some of you who would like to volunteer to pass out programs, they are asking for volunteers.

National chairmen are to pick up their respective committee folders tomorrow morning in the Auxiliary office which is Suwannee 13.

Convention Committee meetings convene tomorrow morning. If you are serving on a committee, check the program schedule for the rooms and times.

And please you have committed to serving on these committees so please show up. We won't have any substitutions.

The chairmen will have or the advisors will have a list of the attendees who were selected or elected at your district meetings so there are no substitutes so please show up. It's a good learning experience if you have never served on a committee before.

There will be no Auxiliary business session tomorrow so I urge you to please take advantage of the seminars offered by DAV. I plan to attend a couple of those myself.

The Forget-Me-Not Luncheon is Monday at 12:30 p.m. And the tickets must be shown as you enter the room.

Registration badges, as a reminder, you must wear these to all events. So for the Commander's Reception this evening and the dinner event on Tuesday you must wear your badge or they will not let you in.

If you have not registered for the dinner yet, please do so. It's near the registration area so they can assign you to a table.

Okay, if you were in the joint opening this morning you heard Adjutant Burgess mention that Gary Sinise will be doing a book signing Monday from 11 to 1 in the Gatlin foyer which is on this level but on the other side of the escalators.

Also, those little fans that were in your convention bags, we are selling those for $2 each. And the cooling towels that you picked up, we are selling those for $7 each if you would like to take some little trinkets back home.

So I believe that is all we have. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We will now have our closing prayer from our national chaplain. (Three gavel raps)

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for our juniors. We give thanks for their joy and their selfless service that they give so far at such a young age. We ask that you will bless them and help them grow to be leaders of our organization in the future.

We give thanks for our national commander and her many travels and her selfless sacrifice for this year that she has done on behalf of our organization.

We also give thanks for the service that happens each and every day wherever we go.

We give thanks for all of our members and their dedication, commitment and selfless service throughout the United States each and every day.

We give thanks that we all grew this year. We grew as an organization. We grew in membership. And we changed to accommodate the new future.

And we give thanks for the great success of programs like our TEE Tournament and our caregivers programs.

We ask that you will continue to bless us and keep us. Bless our families that are at home. Bless our troops in harm's way. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: The Convention stands in recess and will reconvene at nine o'clock. Monday morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 3:15 p.m., on Saturday, August 3, 2019.)

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel
Orlando, Florida

August 5, 2019

Second Business Session

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The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Panzacola F2-4 ballroom on the First Level of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Monday morning, August 5, 2019, and was called to order at 9:01 a.m., by National Commander Ellen Timmerman.

COMMANDER ELLEN TIMMERMAN: Everyone take your seats. We are about to begin. Please make sure your cell phones are either on vibrate or shut off.

At this time we're going to ask our National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus to give us our opening prayer. (Three gavel raps.)

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, We give thanks for the privilege that we have shared this wonderful time together. We give thanks for the camaraderie and support that we have for each other.

We ask a special blessing on Rhonda Bower's dad. We know that—we are thankful that our prayers have been answered and he is already out of the hospital and doing well.

We also ask a special prayer on Minnie Shaver, which is Judy Davis' mother. We know that she is in the hospital and we ask you bless her.

We ask a special blessing upon Linda Archer, that you will heal her and that she will recover quickly. And we ask a special blessing upon Billie Freeman as she goes through the terrible loss that she has suffered. We ask that you will be with each of them. Comfort them and heal them in whatever way they need.

We ask a special blessing upon the families that were affected by the tragedies in Ohio and Texas. Bless each of them. Give them comfort and peace as they go through their losses.

We give thanks for the chance to be together today. Bless this meeting. Bless each of us. Help us to be open. Help us to have serenity to accept the things that we have to accept to move forward in our organization. And help give us peace to change the things we need to in our organization.

Bless us. Keep us. And bless our families at home and our troops in harm's way. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen" after which the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We will now have the Pledge of Allegiance led by Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh.

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN JULIE WEISSMAN-STEINBAUGH: Please stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join me in the pledge.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice Commander and Americanism Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by one gavel rap.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Will the Credentials Chairman please come forward to give an updated report of the Credentials Committee, Marie Holloway?

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARIE HOLLOWAY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HOLLOWAY: National commander, national officers, delegates and guests. The Credentials report is as follows:

Total Units registered, 144; total departments registered, 38; national officers registered, 7; past national commanders registered, 10; total guests registered, 225; total delegates, 317; total alternates, 46; total registered, 605; total vote count, 1,097.

I move that we accept the Credentials report.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We have a motion to accept the preliminary report of the Credentials chairman. Is there a second?

MS. KATHY DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, 22, Texas.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second to accept the Credentials report. All those in favor signify by saying aye; is any opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Committee Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: The Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman will come forward for the first reading of the proposed Constitution and Bylaw amendments. This is only a reading. Please hold all questions and comments for the second reading. Past National Commander Judy Steinhouse. (Phone ringing) Somebody's phone is not shut off.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JUDITH STEINHOUSE: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Sit back and relax. (Laughter) Proposed Constitution and Bylaw Amendments 2019.

National Constitution:

Page N-2, Article III, Eligibility for Membership, insert new Section 2:

"Section 2: Any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America, who has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service, and who is not otherwise eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans, is eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary."

Rationale: This point was overlooked during the membership eligibility expansion in 2010.

Note: This is a Constitutional amendment. If approved, units will be balloted for ratification. If approved, the sections will be renumbered accordingly.

Proposed Bylaws Amendments:

Page N-15, Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 2, National Vice Commanders, First paragraph. Delete the words "National Auxiliary Education Scholarship Fund" and substitute "National Auxiliary Education Program." The sentence will now read:

"The National Senior Vice Commander shall be responsible for the Mae Holmes Program and shall serve on the National Auxiliary Education Program Committee and preside in the absence of the National Commander."

Rationale: The proposed amendment serves to comply with IRS Regulations and recognizes that the educational needs of disabled veterans and their families include more than the current scholarship fund, and allows DAV Auxiliary to support other education-driven programs.

Broadening the scope also takes into consideration the opportunity for public education initiatives and other outreach opportunities for the organization. Moreover, recipients of the various grants, including scholarship recipients, will no longer be limited to full-paid life members of the DAV Auxiliary.

Therefore, we recommend renaming the Education Scholarship Fund to National Auxiliary Education Program to be more inclusive of the educational programs it supports and public outreach it provides for disabled veterans and their families.

Page N-17, Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 4, fourth paragraph. Delete "/Support Fund" and substitute "Program." The sentence will now read:

"The National Auxiliary Service Program shall be administered through the Auxiliary National Headquarters under the direction of the National Adjutant."

Rationale: This amendment allows the revamping of the organization's existing Service/Support Program in an effort to broaden its outreach in keeping with its chartered purpose.

The goal of the Service Program will include creation and support of programs that aid, assist and help improve the lives of disabled veterans and their immediate families; to award funds to grantees and/or programs focused on providing assistance and support to disabled veterans and their immediate

family members; and to collaborate with DAV to fund common programs supporting the service needs of disabled veterans and their immediate family members.

Page N-23, Article V, National Committees and Chairmen, Section 2, National Auxiliary Education Scholarship Fund. Delete the title and the first three paragraphs and substitute the following:

"Section 2: National Auxiliary Education Program

"The National Auxiliary Education Program shall be administered through the Auxiliary National Headquarters.

"The National Auxiliary Education Program Committee shall be a revolving committee composed of the National Senior Vice Commander, the National Commander, and the Immediate Past National Commander.

"The Immediate Past National Commander shall serve as the Chairman of the National Auxiliary Education Program Committee.

"The National Auxiliary Education Program Committee Chairman shall direct the activities of the Committee and submit the committee's report to the National Convention."

Rationale: The proposed amendment serves to comply with IRS Regulations and recognizes that the educational needs of disabled veterans and their families include more than the current scholarship fund, and allows DAV Auxiliary to support other education-driven programs.

Broadening the scope also takes into consideration the opportunity for public education initiatives and other outreach opportunities for the organization. Moreover, recipients of the various grants, including scholarship recipients, will no longer be limited to full-paid life members of the DAV Auxiliary.

Therefore, we recommend renaming the Education Scholarship Fund to the National Auxiliary Education Program to be more inclusive of the educational programs it supports and public outreach it provides for disabled veterans and their families.

Page N-28, Article VII, Membership, Section 6, Membership Classification, A, Life Membership, Fourth Paragraph. Delete the entire paragraph and substitute the following:

"Effective January 1, 2020, life membership fee shall be $250 for ages 18 through 79. Age 80 and over shall be complimentary. Minimum down payment is $20. Birthdate must be indicated on the membership application."

Rationale: Due to proposed changes to the DAV membership system, the cost to the Auxiliary to maintain a tiered membership in that new system and the recommendation of the National Finance Committee that the Auxiliary could not afford the cost, the recommendation is to change our membership fee to a flat rate from age 18 to 79. Age 80 and over would still be complimentary. The recommendation is to keep our membership at $250 at this time. Existing membership amounts are not affected by this amendment.

Page N-30, Article VII, Membership, Section 6C, Junior Membership, Paragraph 3. Delete "Effective July 1, 2015" from the beginning of Paragraph 3.

Rationale: The effective dates are no longer applicable.

Page N-30, Article VII, Membership, Section 6C, Junior Membership, Paragraph 4. Delete "Effective July 1, 2015, a" from the beginning of Paragraph 4.

Rationale: The effective dates are no longer applicable.

Page N-36, Article VIII, Finances, Section 3, National Mandates, First Paragraph, Fifth line. Delete the words after "national mandates:" through the end of the sentence, and substitute the following:

"The Auxiliary National Programs ($12.50) and National Convention expenses ($12.50)."

Rationale: The proposed amendment moves away from DAV Auxiliary's long-held silo approach to management of its funds and programs that has presented significant limitations on the organization's financial flexibility.

Page N-36, Article VIII, Finances, Section 3, National Mandates, Second Paragraph, First Sentence, Lines 3 and 4:

Line 3: Insert "state" between the words "each" and "department"; Line 4: insert "National" between "for" and "Convention." The sentence would then read:

"Each membership year national headquarters shall withhold the sum of fifty dollars ($50.00) from each state department's per capita distribution for National Convention expenses."

Rationale: For clarification purposes.

Page S-2, Article II, State Convention, Section 3, Delegates, Second Paragraph, Line 4. Change "each ten (10) life members" to "each ten (10) Senior members."

Rationale: To clarify reference to senior life members, not junior life members.

Page S-5, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 1, State Commander, Paragraph 5, add new sentence at end of paragraph 5 as follows:

"The State Commander shall not make cash withdrawals from State Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from State Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Page S-6, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 2, State Senior Vice Commander, Paragraph 2, add new sentence at the end of paragraph 2 as follows:

"The State Senior Vice Commander shall not make cash withdrawals from State Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from State Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Page S-7, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 4, State Treasurer, add a new fourth paragraph as follows:

"The State Treasurer shall not make cash withdrawals from State Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from State Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Page S-10, Article V, Tenure of Office, add new Section 3 as follows:

"Section 3: Return of State Property. Upon election and installation or appointment of the successor to any such office all state property in his or her possession or control shall be surrendered to the newly installed officer."

Rationale: To have all records from any elected or appointed officer/chairperson or chairman turned over to the newly appointed/elected and installed officer/chairperson.

Page S-14, Article VI, State Committees and Chairmen, Section 6, State Audit Committee, Third paragraph, delete the last sentence and replace with the following:

"The Financial Report Form provided by National Headquarters shall be completed by the State Treasurer and given to the Audit Committee for verification and signature. The State Adjutant shall send the report to National Headquarters no later than September 30th."

Rationale: Clarification of who prepares the finance report, who verifies, signs, and mails it to National Headquarters.

Page U-3, Article VIII, Installation of Unit Officers, add new Section 3 as follows:

"Section 3: Upon election and installation, or appointment of the successor to any such office, all unit property in his or her possession or control shall be surrendered to the newly installed officer."

Rationale: To have all records from any elected or appointed officer/chairman turned over to the newly appointed/elected and installed officer/chairman.

Page U-5, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 1, Commander, add new paragraph following Commander's duties as follows:

"Unit Commanders shall not make cash withdrawals from Unit Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from Unit Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Page U-6, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 2, Senior Vice Commander and Junior Vice Commander, insert a new third Paragraph as follows:

"The Unit Senior Vice Commander shall not make cash withdrawals from Unit Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from Unit Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Page U-9, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 4, Treasurer, insert new paragraph at top of page:

"The Unit Treasurer shall not make cash withdrawals from Unit Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from Unit Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: You're welcome.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I now call on the Education Scholarship Chairman Craig Johniken for a report. For those wishing to make donations for our national programs, they will be accepted upon the completion of the Scholarship report.

(Whereupon, the Education Scholarship Convention Chairman and Past National Commander advanced to the podium)

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER WILLIAM "CRAIG" JOHNIKEN: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: This will be my last official speech so I'm going to make it short. (Laughter)

This year we had myself, Ellen and Diane on the Committee. We went through many applications and wound up spending almost $50,000 to students for prospects of going to college, which was a phenomenal amount. We got some really good applications.

I would say in the future that anybody that is looking to get somebody in this to go online and get the proper application, the updated application as to some of them didn't—some of them used the old application and that didn't work for us.

So—and then some of them realized that and then filled the correct one out and then sent them back in. So we had to wade through all that.

But, I will say that it's been a pleasure to be on this committee. We wound up, with working with Diane and Ellen it was a pleasure to work with them. They, everybody seemed to come to the same consensus. We went through the grading process and everything. Everybody that was in the top percentile got something towards a scholarship.

So we've changed a lot on this thing. It's pretty much opened up to people that are helping veterans and their families. We've had to do that. We've just gone through constitution and bylaws changes and everybody knows that.

However, we're looking forward to opening this up. Hopefully it will get our brand out there and we can start getting outside our organization.

But it will be Ellen's deal to handle next year and everybody support her and the decisions that this Committee makes. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Education Scholarship Convention Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you, Craig. For those planning to present donations make sure checks are signed and that the state and unit checks have two signatures.

Form a line in the center aisle and one-by-one you can present your donation. Announce your name, state and/or unit and the donation amount.

(Whereupon, the delegates lined up to begin presenting their donations)

MR. WILLIAM SUMLER: Bill Sumler, Commander Unit 20, Glendale, Arizona. I have a thousand dollar check for DAV Disaster Relief and a thousand dollar check for the Caregiver Program. (Applause)

MS. LORETTA NOSKO: Loretta Nosko, Department of Pennsylvania. The State of Pennsylvania has a hundred dollar check for the National Service Fund, a hundred dollar check for the Winter Sports Clinic and for Camp Corral. (Applause)

MS. ANITA INGRAM: Anita Ingram, Adjutant from Brooklyn Unit 28, New York, and I have a check for $200 for Camp Corral. (Applause)

MS. JUNE SCHOW: June Schow, State of Utah, Unit 4, (Indistinguishable). I have a donation for Camp Corral for $200 and a personal donation from Beth Maughan, past NEC for State of Utah and that's for Camp Corral for $50. (Applause)

MS. LOUISE EVANS: My name is Louise Evans, State of Florida, Unit 18, Manatee County. I have a check for $211 for the Caregivers initiative. (Applause)

MS. CATHY CHANEY: My name is Cathy Chaney. I am from Unit 2, Kansas City, Missouri. We have a check here for Winter Sports Clinic, the Education Scholarship Fund and the Service Support for $100 each. (Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Susan Henry, Past National Commander and I have a check for the Education Fund which I was the recipient of. (Applause)

MS. TAMMY SIGMAN: I'm Tammy Sigman, state commander for the Department of Ohio. And I have donations to the Scholarship Fund and the Service Support Fund in the amount of $300 each. (Applause)

MS. JENNIFER HAMMONS: Hi, I'm Jennifer Hammons, state commander the for Department of Oklahoma. I'm also with Unit 32. I have Miss Haven. She is with Unit 9. And the State of Oklahoma would like to present you with a check of $500 for the Caregivers Program. (Applause)

MS. NANCY HOEY: Good morning. My name is Nancy Hoey, state commander for the State of Massachusetts. And we have a hundred dollar check for the National Education Scholarship Program. (Applause)

THIRD SENIOR VICE COMMANDER JULIE WEISSMAN-STEINBAUGH: On behalf of my husband and myself I'd like to present a check for $2,500 for the General Fund. (Applause)

MS. LISA KAMINSKI: Lisa Kaminski, Department of Kentucky, I have a check for $50 for the Scholarship Fund and $50 for the Service Fund. (Applause)

MS. DORIS BACKUS: I am Doris Backus, State of Vermont Commander, Unit 3, Division 3, I have a check for Education Loan Fund for $125 and Service Support Fund for $125. (Applause)

MS. CAROLYN HARRIS: Carolyn Harris, Unit 70, Alabama, and NEC for the Eighth District. I'd like the Eighth District to stand up.

(Whereupon, the members of the Eighth District stood and were recognized with a round of applause)

MS. HARRIS: Okay. A personal donation but inspired by my Eighth District. (Laughter) One hundred dollars to the Caregivers Initiative. (Applause)

MS. CHEYRA CAUSEY: Cherya Causey, Department of Georgia Commander, I have a hundred dollar check for the National Education and Scholarship Fund, $50 for Hospitality and Veterans Riding Program, $50 for National Fall Conference Donation and Gifts and $50 for the National Department of Service Fund. (Applause)

MS. JANET PRATT: Good morning. I'm Janet Pratt, past state commander for the Department of Massachusetts. We have a check for the National Service Fund for $600. (Applause)

MS. KAREN STEVENSON: Karen Stevenson, senior vice, North Carolina and I have an IOU for $100 to the National Education Fund. (Applause)

MS. ANA LOZANO: Ana Lozano, Department of Puerto Rico Commander, $100 to the Education Fund. (Applause)

MS. MARIA TORRES: Good morning, Maria Torres, Unit 7, Puerto Rico, I have a personal check for $100 and a money order. The personal check is for Caregivers and the $100 money order, also from Unit 7, is for Camp Corral. (Applause)

MS. REGINA FORTNER: Regina Fortner, Michigan, District 10, Unit 130, and we have four checks, each for $50: one to the winter games, Camp Corral, Scholarship and to the TEE. (Applause)

MS. DIANA HOUSTON: Diana Houston from Knoxville, Tennessee, Unit 24 has a check for a hundred dollars for the Service Officers Fund. (Applause)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I would like to thank you personally for everything you have given and for the generous donations to support our programs. Thank you so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Now we will move into the awards phase of this session. So will the chairman of the Americanism Committee please step forward?

(Whereupon, the Americanism Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KATHY DUNHAM: We were really amazed by all of the hard work that everybody has done, all of the parades and all of the POW events. Just about everybody has been out to the veterans cemetery putting flags on. And it's just amazing what everybody has done.

But with that being said, the award for Group 1, 10 to 50 members, goes to Chester, South Carolina, Unit 19.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award, followed by a round of applause)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: In Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Claremore, Oklahoma, Unit 44.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award, followed by a round of applause)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Carroll Prosser Unit 30, South Carolina.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award, followed by a round of applause)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: And Group Number 4, 201 members or over, Jacksonville, Florida, Unit 1.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: For the Special Americanism awards: Group 1, 10 to 200 members: Glasgow, Kentucky, Unit 20.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: And Group 2, 201 members or over, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Unit 26. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: So the Committee submitted the following recommendations:

Number 1. Make sure Americanism and Special Americanism reports are separated and not stapled.

Number 2. They need a grid for easier grading system so when everything is being evaluated it makes everything go a lot quicker to know exactly what areas you are looking for.

Number 3. Better explanation for the point system. An example, when you are filling out the reports, some have a zero in the area and some left it blank. So it needs to have a uniform system for grading during the judging.

And, Number 4. Clearer distinction between Americanism versus Community Service. Some of the reports had a lot of community service detail and it was all about Americanism. So that's my report. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Americanism Convention Committee Chairman withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Thank you. Will the Community Service Chairman please step forward?

(Whereupon, the Community Service Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RORY PRODOEHL: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PRODOEHL: I'll just get right to it here. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, goes to Unit 11, Northern Hills, South Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PRODOEHL: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, goes to Unit 44, Claremore, Oklahoma. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PRODOEHL: Group 3, 101 to 200 members, goes to Unit 10, Mankato, Minnesota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PRODOEHL: Group 4, 201 members or over, goes to Unit 1, Fargo, North Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PRODOEHL: As far as recommendations go, for those of you for the future, please make sure you are using the correct form. We had several entries that used an older version of the form and so the point system did not apply to that particular form.

And then to remember that donations or amounts over a thousand dollars must be itemized. We had many units that just gave a narrative with the full dollar amount and not an itemization.

And then make sure your math adds up when you are filing out your form. Refrain from using written notes. And the overall presentation of the report is very important, as well.

Thank you very much.

All right and I'd also like to announce the Committee members, as well: from District 1, Nancy Hoey; please stand if you are here; District 3, Leanne Fornier; (Applause)

District 4, Juliette Velez; (Applause) District 5, Renee Blow; (Applause) District 6, Frances Moses-Knight; (Applause) District 7, Maria Holloway; (Applause)

District 8, Marlene Comeaux; (Applause) District 9, Athenia Myrick; (Applause) District 10, Anissa Olinger; (Applause) District 12, Julie Hert; (Applause) District 13, Lynn Swanson; (Applause)

District 15, Mary Chaney; (Applause) District 17, Sharon Bilodeau; (Applause) District 18, Beverly Miller; (Applause) District 20, Joyce Humes; (Applause) and District 21, Paulia King. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PRODOEHL: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Community Service Convention Committee Chairman withdrew from the podium and the Americanism Chairman returned to the podium)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: I am so sorry. I am remiss for not announcing who all of the Committee members were for Americanism.

From District 1 it was Dorothy Raymond, Massachusetts; (Applause) District 2 was Jameione Winston-Day from New York; (Applause) District 3, Erin O'Brien from Maine; (Applause)

District 4, Linda Applegate, New Jersey; (Applause) District 6, Francine Garry from Maryland; (Applause) District 7, Paulette Pierce from Florida; (Applause)

District 8, Diane Houston from Tennessee; (Applause) District 9, Theresa Brewer, North Carolina; (Applause) District 10, Kimberly Olinger, Michigan; (Applause)

District 11, Judith Uetterling from Ohio; (Applause) District 12, Mary Honaker, Wisconsin; (Applause) District 13, Terri Young, Indiana; (Applause) District 14, Linda Engesether, Minnesota; (Applause)

District 16, Leslie Svanevik, California; (Applause) District 17, Lacey Bankston, Colorado; (Applause) District 18, Daniel Meyer, Arizona; (Applause) District 19, Karen Haltiner, Oregon; (Applause) and District 21, Joyce Komprood, Arkansas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DUNHAM: Thank you. I'm sorry.

(Whereupon, the Americanism Convention Committee Chairman withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Next up, will the Junior Activities Committee Chairman please step forward.

(Whereupon, the Junior Activities Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JACKIE GLASS: Thank you. Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: Okay, so I'm going to go and first of all I'd just like to thank the Committee who was all on the Junior Activities, if they would all just quickly stand. I'm going to announce them first. Can everybody who was on the Committee please stand. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Committee members were recognized with a round of applause)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: Okay, thank you guys for all participating. So we have Cathy from Unit 1, Cathy Borbas; Unit 2—I'm sorry, districts, I'm sorry, Mary Sternecker—I hope I'm saying that right;

District 4, Martha Meyers; District 6, Sarah De Rodriguez; District 7, Vicki Johnston; District 8, Marilyn Edwards; District 9, Willard Cunningham the Third; District 10, Barbara McComb;

District 11, Darlene Hanneman—I hope; District 14, Breanna Kissel; District 15, Gracie Caldwell; District 16, Jeanie Price; District 17, myself; District 20, Gwendolyn Sewell; and District 21, Kim Vickers-Dunning. Thank you all very much. (Applause)

Okay, now the following units were judged for the best in their category for the National Junior Activities.

And for Group 1, 1 to 25 members, was Unit 56 West Virginia—just Virginia. (Applause) I'm so sorry. I'm having a hard time reading this. I apologize.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: On Group Number 2, 26 to 50, we have Unit 118—it would be so much easier to see the report—New York. Okay, New York, congratulations, guys. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: Group 3, 51 to 100, we have Unit 56, also Massachusetts. Is that (Indistinguishable)? How would you say that? Okay, (Indistinguishable), Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: I'm sorry, guys. I'm struggling to read this. Group 4, 101 and over, we have Unit 7, Lakewood, Colorado. (Applause) Close to home.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: Junior Activities Book, this is Unit 62, is that Buffalo, New York? Is that what that is supposed to be? I'm trying to read it. Buffalo, Missouri. Okay, Buffalo, Missouri. I'm sorry. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: Okay. National Junior Award 15 to 17, is Unit 35, Everett, Massachusetts—I believe it's Massachusetts, Jefferson Olson. I'm really struggling to read this. Sorry, you all. Jeffrey Olson.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: And then National Junior Award, 7 to 10, Unit 56, Virginia—thank you, Abigail (Indistinguishable), Virginia 56. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLASS: National Junior Award—although I said 56 and didn't put Virginia. Mason Mellon was the National Junior Award 11 to 14. (Applause) Congratulations. Really sorry, guys. This is—I'm struggling to read this.

So the Committee submitted the following recommendations. And I went ahead and wrote these down because I also struggled to read them before.

An explanation of activities should be related to veterans and their families. So when they write their explanation it should be related to that.

The second one was all letters should be legible and written or typed.

The third one was to ensure a current form is being used to have a date at the top of the form.

And any and all extra writings on the form such as "winner" should be removed before being presented to the committee. And that is our junior activities. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Junior Activities Convention Committee chairman withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: And I believe we still have one or two history books to be picked up over there, the junior history books, so if someone could pick those up, please.

We will now call on the individual who chaired the Legislative Committee.

(Whereupon, the Legislative Convention Committee Chairman advanced to a microphone.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CAROL PARKER-PARK: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: National Commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 97th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Legislative Convention Committee met at Saint John's 31 at 9 a.m. on August 4, 2019. Our advisor, Darlene Spence and I, Carol Parker-Park, served as committee chairmen. And Bennie Isaac was elected and appointed secretary.

I'd like all my fellow Committee members to stand as I call your names: Kayla Valila, District 1; District 3, Patricia Garrett; (Applause) District 4, Bennie Isaac; (Applause)

District 6, Michele Goings; (Applause) District 7, Amie Raber; (Applause) District 8, Shirley Mercer; (Applause) District 9, Shirley Hill; (Applause) District 11 was myself;

District 12, Evelyn Couture; (Applause) District 13, Noelle Sparks; (Applause) District 14, Wanda Mix; (Applause) District 15, Robin Ballhagen—I believe; I'm sorry—Ballhagen, all right. Thanks, Pat;

District 7 Charlie Glass; okay, sorry; (Applause) and District 18, Ann Richardson; (Applause) District 20, Francesca Keith; (Applause) and District 21, Larenda Donovan from Arkansas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Scott Vetterling, Unit 33, Greensville, Massachusetts.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Edward G. Gallion Memorial Unit 212, Goshen, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Carol E. Prosser Unit 30, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: Group 4, 201 members and over, Alamo, Unit 5, San Antonio, Texas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: The Committee submitted the following recommendations.

Make sure if a copy is sent in all pages are sent. We did have some that only the first page was offered.

Also, it would be nice to have fields that are optimal for units to complete so they may have—may include details of efforts they put forth, an example: bulk mailings, rallies and public platforms.

Another one was courtesy follow-up to any state submitting reports with inaccuracies such as check marks versus a total number count.

And then separate point value on contacts and follow-up for point values. They may have contacted but may have not followed up so the points should be split as to if you have contact and/or follow-up to make it more able to judge them.

So thank you very much. Have a blessed day. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Legislative Convention Committee Chairman withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: We now call on the chairman of the VAVS Convention Committee. And while they are coming up, we have someone from Virginia that needs to pick up a junior activities award.

(Whereupon, the VAVS Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KATHLEEN WENTHE: Sorry, takes me a second to get, you know, hop along up here. Good morning, y'all.

(Response of "Good morning.")

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: Wait, what time is it? It's not that late in the day, yet. Good morning, y'all.

(Response of "Good morning.")

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: There you go. That's better. All right. National commander, national adjutant, national officers, past state commanders, delegates, members and guests of this 97th National Auxiliary Convention, I'm glad to see you all here this morning.

The National VAVS Convention Committee met at the Saint John's Rooms 26 and 27 yesterday at 9 a.m. Our advisor was Melissa Pierce. Myself, Kathleen Wenthe, served as the committee chairman. And Lisa Kaminski served as the elected secretary.

Before we get started in who got what I'd like for as I call your name for the Committee members if you would or are able to stand, please stand and remain standing and just hold your applause until we get done. I can go through it real quick.

So I kind of tend to speak a little fast sometimes so I will try to slow down and I will try not to butcher those names like I told you all yesterday. Okay? All right, here we go. See, I'm going to cheat, get my good sheet here, though.

All right, District 1 from Massachusetts, Ms. Frances Costa; District 2, New York, Matilda Brooks; District 3, Vermont, Doris Backus; New Jersey, District 4, Gilda Jackson;

Virginia, District 6, Linda King; Florida, District 7, Helen Evans; myself, Louisiana, District 8; South Carolina, District 9, Karen Jacobs; Michigan, District 10, Regina Fortner—thought I was going to mess that up, didn't you; (Laughter)

District 11, Ohio, Tammy Sigman; Illinois, District 12, Vonda Summers; Kentucky, District 13, Lisa Kaminski; South Dakota, District 14, Nancy Worth; Kansas, District 15, Kerin Brader;

California, District 16, Mary Lou Caldwell; New Mexico, District 17, Victoria Salazar; Arizona, District 18, Catherine Price—I'll get that out;

Texas, District 20, Evelyn Cupit; Oklahoma, District 21, Linda Oliver. Please give them all a big round of applause for the hard work they put in yesterday. Thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: So the following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National VAVS Awards.

And we'll start with Group 1. That is 10 to 50 members. That's going to be Mayo, Southeast District or, excuse me, Unit 28, Rochester, Minnesota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: Y'all don't get too excited out there, now. (Laughter) We'll give her a second to get up here then we'll call the next one. The next one might be a little closer.

All right our next, Group 2, is going to be 51 to 100 members. It's going to be your Tri-County Unit 63, Cross City, Florida. Where are you at? Where's Florida? Come on. There we go. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: Group Number 3, 101 to 200 members, Milton Number 16, Unit 116, Mumford, Tennessee. Go, District 8. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: All right. And the last group is Group Number 4, 201 members and over and that is going to be Jacksonville Unit 1, Jacksonville, Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: All right, so while she's making her way I'll tell you what our recommendations were. And I'm kind of going to mimic some of the ones that has already been said but I'm going to go over them again.

List the heading correctly. Know what your unit is. You know what your unit name is. It is not—your unit name is not "DAV Auxiliary." We are all DAV Auxiliary. My Unit is Jeffrey Dale. Know what your unit name is. Okay? It's real easy. Look at your charter. It's on your charter. Okay?

Please print clearly so that we can read it. If you are not going to do it online and print it online then please print clearly so we can read it. That was a big issue. We had a hard time reading some of them.

If you do do the online, a lot of us—I do. I type everything in. I print it out and then make sure—make sure they are signed before you submit them. We had one that was printed out but it was never signed. So you've got to make sure they are signed.

Please make sure you use the updated form. As always, check, make sure it's the correct updated one that's online. And adjutants that are sending them out, please ensure that they are the correct ones going to your units.

We would also like to see a final total line where it is updated form, on the new updated form a final total. There is no line there. It just has a number sign. And we would like to see about getting a line so that they all understand that's where the line actually goes.

Please check your math. Two plus two equals four. Two plus two does not equal 10. (Laughter) We had a lot of the discrepancies from the front to the back where it is broke down. They are not adding up. Please use a calculator and just simple addition. Okay?

Please itemize everything. We need to know what you did. Please put it in detail. It's real simple. Okay? Just explain it. All right.

Know the difference between community service and VAVS. I will give you an example. If you have one of our veteran hospitals has a food pantry, where I come from food pantry means something totally different.

So if you list "food pantry," that you donated to the food pantry, please explain that that is through your VA hospital and not just through your community.

So those little explanations is what makes the difference on your reports. So please explain that well so that we all, as we are judging them, can understand it. Okay?

Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the VAVS Convention Committee Chairman withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: So now we call on the Convention Committee chairman for the Mae Holmes Committee.

(Whereupon, the Mae Holmes Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROSE WILLIAMS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS: National Commander Timmerman, National Adjutant Kemper, members and guests. We met yesterday at 9:05 in Saint John's 28-29.

Our advisor was Diane Franz. And right now I would like to thank her because we had lots and lots of questions and she was able to answer us. I, Rose Williams, District 12, was the chair. And Liz Eldridge served as my—our secretary.

I would like to announce the members and, as before, please wait until they all stand and then we can applaud them: District 1, Elizabeth Eldridge; District 2, Anita Ingram; District 3, Melanie Joyce;

District 4, Jacqueline Parrish—Parrish, okay; District 6, Jacque DuBose—is she in here? Did I say it right? Yay; District 7, Shirley Kirkland; District 8, Jeff Jungkans, okay; District 9, Kimano Harris; District 11, Shirley Plahovinsak, okay; District 12, myself; District 13, Linda Sue Bratcher; District 14, Janelle Edwards; District 17, June Schow; District 18, Marilyn Dolan; District 20, Ashley Johniken-Clark; District 21, Jennifer Hammons. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were read and were recognized with a round of applause.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS: Thank you to the Committee. I just want to say that we did have some first-timers and new people on the committees and that's a great thing because they look and they can ask questions.

And they found a lot of things that some of us who have been on the committees for a long time kind of just overlook. And they noticed everything so that was a great learning. (Applause)

Okay. All right, now for the winners. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, North Central Minnesota, Unit 7. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS: Okay. Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Edward G. Gallion Memorial Unit 212, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS: Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Millington Unit 116, Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS: Okay. Group 4, 201 or over, Carroll E. Prosser Unit 30, South Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS: And I will submit the recommendations now. Ensure copies of the VAVS and Community Service reports with the values over $1,000 are attached to the Mae Holmes report.

This is the very last sentence on the report. And it's a shame that we had to disqualify a lot of good units because you did not attach your reports.

Ensure the correct form is used and the header in full is complete. To reiterate: Your unit is not the DAVA. Your unit name.

Ensure the figures tally, that every one, that every figure on the report is the correct total that you have on your VAVS or VAVS or Community Service report.

Let's see. Detail donations individually. Don't—do not include just a total figure.

The Committee suggests the national chairmen provide samples of completed winning reports or samples of completed winning reports perhaps in fall conference books and on thumb drive which would give everyone a chance to look at what a completed winning report would look like.

Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Mae Holmes Convention Committee Secretary withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: And now I will call on our National Membership Chairman to present the National Membership Awards.

(Whereupon, the First Junior Vice Commander and National Membership Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LYNN HELMS PROSSER: Thank you. Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Okay. It's been an exciting year. So you all listen up. I would like to recognize National Commander Ellen, National Adjutant Pat, national officers, delegates and guests. Is everybody listening?

(Response of "Yes.")

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: My Committee is really big and nice. So everyone in here that signed up at least one member, every unit that made quota and every state department that made quota please stand up. You're on my Committee. Come on. (Applause) Everybody in here should be standing up. Everybody in here.

(Whereupon, the members stood.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Give you a little exercise, too. Get your blood to going. Wake you up a little bit.

Give yourself an applause because not only did you all make quota, but national headquarters also made quota. (Applause) My only recommendation is that next year you do the same thing. (Laughter)

It's been a great year. I appreciate everything that everyone done. You worked very hard. Our membership is the bloodline of our organization, which you already know. You've already heard that many times.

So, please, always remember, not only are you making a new member for the organization but you are also making a forever new friend. So keep that in mind.

At this time I want to call out the different groups for membership awards so if I call out your name you can come forward that represents your state, I guess.

Okay, Group Number 1, 10 to 50, 21-member increase Modesto 26, California. (Applause) Got somebody in here? How about the state commander? I know she's here. Somebody's here.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Thank you. Okay, Group 2, 51 to 100, 41-member increase, Victoria County Number 169, Texas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Group 3, 101 to 200, 114-member increase, CSM J. Rodriguez Number 16, Puerto Rico. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Group 4, 201 and over, 185-member increase, Manatee County 18, Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Okay, Group 5 which is a New Unit with the Most Members, they had 14 new members, Darlington County 72, South Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Group 6, with the Department with the largest percentage increase for quota is, with 123.30% increase, is State Department of Puerto Rico. (Applause) Is she still down there? She just left? Puerto Rico, come on back. (Laughter) There you go.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Okay, Group 7, the Department with the largest numerical increase over quota, with 606 members, the State Department of Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Okay, the next thing we're going to do, everybody that took part this year knew that we were doing the code with the 441 on your applications that you sent in.

And our last drawing for this year for our incentive is going to be the units, we're going to have two entries that we're going to draw. They're going to receive $300.

And at this time is there anybody in here that won one of the incentive prizes this year for membership? Have we got somebody in here that was—there we go, over here. Anybody else that won? Okay, we gave away a lot of prizes—stand up. We've got one down here, too. So thank you.

But, anyway, we're going to do this drawing. Like I said, we're going to draw two for $300. And I understand that your check will be in the mail after convention. (Laughter)

Okay, we had six units that qualified for this. And there is a total of 12 entries. So remember, the same person could win both of these prizes. Okay? Because your name went in one time for each 20 members that you got.

So let's—I think the first drawing I'm going to let is our commander who is not here. She's down there. I was going to let you draw the first one. Yes.

(Whereupon, Commander Timmerman came forward and drew a name.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Okay. And the first winner is Number 18, Manatee County, Florida. (Applause) Have we got somebody here from Manatee?

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: And I'm going to let our Senior Vice Commander Diane draw for the second one. So she better not draw her own name—or Florida. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice Commander drew the second name.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: Oh, you know what I said a while ago? Manatee County 18, Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROSSER: So they're $600 richer this morning. (Applause) So, thank you, again. And, like I said, I appreciate everything you all have done.

And, like I said, let's try to do it again next year. Out of this entire department there was 44 state departments that made quota this year, so let's move that up next year and have 100%. Okay? (Applause)

Thank you. God bless you. And I hope you enjoy the rest of the convention. Thank you, Pat.

(Whereupon, the First Junior Vice Commander and National Membership Committee Chairman withdrew from the podium as Commander Timmerman advanced to resume the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: At this time we're going to ask you all to caucus with your district on the bylaws. And we will have the second reading here shortly. You have 10 minutes.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed to caucus at 10:20 a.m., and the meeting reconvened at 10:33 a.m. August 5, 2019.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Okay, everybody please take your seats. Everyone, please take your seats. We need to start again.

(Whereupon, the delegates returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Okay, we have one more donation that they have made a request to make so would you please come forward and make it. Okay, while we are waiting for that we have three Forget-Me-Not Luncheon tickets left if anybody is interested in purchasing one.

MS. EVELYN CUPIT: Evelyn Cupit, commander for the State Department of Texas. We have a donation of $1,500 for the Caregiver Program. (Applause)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Wonderful. Thank you so much. Is Judy Steinhouse back yet? Okay, so we're not wasting time and we can move on quickly, we're going to ask our National Adjutant to go ahead and give us some of the announcements. And as soon as Judy returns we will go back to the changes in our constitution and bylaws.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: This is called making the best use of your time. Okay, just a reminder the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon is this afternoon at 12:30 in Panzacola G. Be sure to show your ticket at the door.

And at the luncheon national officers and NECs will not have reserved seating at the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon and are welcome to sit with your states. Past national commanders will have a reserved table near the front of the room.

And as a reminder, registration badges will be needed to enter Fun Night and the Introduction of National Officers and Dinner. And those without a badge will have to go through a verification process in order to be given entry into the event.

In our office we have cooling towels, the ones that you got as part of your registration. We are selling those for $7 each and those little fans for $2.

And we also have the beach towels for sale that we had passed out to the junior members. And those are $15. They're really nice towels and really good quality.

And very quickly, we have a birthday today: Carol Lee from Michigan. (Applause) Happy birthday, Carol. Also, did someone lose a pair of glasses? If you did, they are up here. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Okay, now we're going to ask the National Constitution and Bylaws Chairman to come forward and for the second reading, Past National Commander Judy Steinhouse.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Okay. Here we go. Proposed Constitution and Bylaw Amendments 2019.

National Constitution, Page N-2, Article III, Eligibility for Membership, insert new Section 2:

"Section 2: Any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America, who has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service and who is not otherwise eligible for membership in the" DAV—excuse me—"Disabled American Veterans, is eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary."

Rationale: This point was overlooked during the membership eligibility expansion in 2019—let's try this one more time. How about 2010. (Laughter) Works for everybody, right.

Note: This is a Constitutional amendment. If approved, units will be balloted for ratification. If approved, the sections will be renumbered accordingly.

Madam Commander, I make the motion for acceptance of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We have a motion for the acceptance of this amendment. May I have a second, please?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Susan Henry, Past National Commander, seconds.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; all those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Proposed Bylaws Amendments.

Page N-15, Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 2, National Vice Commanders, First paragraph, delete the words "National Auxiliary Education Scholarship Fund" and substitute "National Auxiliary Education Program." The sentence will now read:

"The National Senior Vice Commander shall be responsible for the Mae Holmes Program and shall serve on the National Auxiliary Education Program Committee and preside in the absence of the National Commander."

Rationale: The proposed amendment serves to comply with IRS regulations and recognizes that the educational needs of disabled veterans and their families include more than the current scholarship fund and allows DAV Auxiliary to support other education-driven programs.

Broadening the scope also takes into consideration the opportunity for public education initiatives and other outreach opportunities for the organization. Moreover, recipients of the various grants, including scholarship recipients, will no longer be limited to full-paid life members of the DAV Auxiliary.

Therefore, we recommend renaming the Education Scholarship Fund to National Auxiliary Education Program to be more inclusive of the educational programs it supports and public outreach it provides for disabled veterans' and their families.

Madam Commander, I move for the acceptance of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion for this amendment to our bylaws. I need a second.

MS. AMY BOWSER: Amy Bowser, Sixth District, Unit 48, I second.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? What state are you from, Amy?

MS. BOWSER: Virginia.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you.

MS. THERESA BREWER: Theresa Brewer, North Carolina, state commander, so when you say it's no longer they have to be a full-paid life member, do they have to be a member?

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: No, they do not.

MS. BREWER: So this is going to be open to anybody.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: It is open. It is now open. What we're going to require more on it will be what they do to help our disabled veterans. Go ahead. I'm going to let Pat explain this to you a little better. Okay?

MS. BREWER: Thank you.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: I apologize, Theresa. Could you just repeat your question?

MS. BREWER: My question is I understand previously they had to be a full-paid life member. And you are wanting to get rid of that stipulation. What I don't understand from how it is written or your rationale is do they have to be a DAVA member.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Okay, I will just step back a little bit. For many years you had to be a full-paid life member to be eligible. Back at the fall conference in 2018 the Scholarship Committee announced that you would no longer have to be a full-paid life member but a part, a member paying on a life membership. So that was announced then.

We since learned that due to our status with the IRS—we are 501(c)(4) which classifies us as a social welfare organization.

And with that and if you go back and look up 501(c)(4) eligibilities, it became apparent a few months ago that we're actually not in compliance with that requirement because we were being essentially self-serving. We only gave to our members.

MS. BREWER: All right.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: So this Committee spent many hours and I will say some were contentious hours going back and forth and back and forth coming up with the best solution and the best way to address this.

We sought legal counsel on it. So that resulted in this Bylaw amendment. So DAV Auxiliary members are eligible but that's not part of the criteria. And when this Committee judged this year, they had no way of knowing if any of those members or those individuals, those students, were members of the DAV Auxiliary.

MS. BREWER: Thank you. That was an excellent explanation.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: You're welcome.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any more discussion? Okay, I have a motion. I have a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-17, Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 4, fourth paragraph, delete "/ Support Fund" and substitute "Program." The sentence will now read:

"The National Auxiliary Service Program shall be administered through the Auxiliary National Headquarters under the direction of the National Adjutant."

Rationale: This amendment allows the revamping of the organization's existing Service/Support Program in an effort to broaden its outreach in keeping with its chartered purpose.

The goal of the Service Program will include creation and support of programs that aid, assist and help improve the lives of disabled veterans and their immediate family members; to award funds to grantees and/or programs focused on providing assistance and support to disabled veterans and their immediate family members; and to collaborate with DAV to fund common programs supporting the service needs of disabled veterans and their immediate family members.

Madam Commander, I make a motion to approve this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to approve this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. LORETTA NOSKO: Loretta Nosko, District 5, Department of Pennsylvania. I second the motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: What's your Unit?

ADJUTANT KEMPER: How are you registered?

MS. NOSKO: Seventy-three.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: How are you registered?

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: You don't have your badge.

MS. NOSKO: As a delegate.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: From?

MS. NOSKO: Pennsylvania.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: State department of Pennsylvania?

MS. NOSKO: No, Unit 73.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Okay. Do you have your badge with you?

MS. NOSKO: It's over there. Yes.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Okay. So you're registering Pennsylvania 73.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Unit 73, Pennsylvania is how she is registered. And please wear your badges. These are what shows us whether you are registered as a delegate or not.

I have a—excuse me. I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion?

MR. SUMLER: Madam Commander –

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Where are you from?

MR. SUMLER: Bill Sumler, Department of Arizona delegate. Does this, then, flow down to the unit level with member relief?

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I yield to Pat.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Bill, eventually it's going to flow down to the state departments and the Auxiliary units.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: That was easy. That was easy. (Laughter) Is there any further discussion? I have a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-23: Article V, National Committees and Chairmen, Section 2, National Auxiliary Education Scholarship Fund, delete the section title and the first three paragraphs and substitute the following:

"Section 2: National Auxiliary Education Program

"The National Auxiliary Education Program shall be administered through the Auxiliary National Headquarters.

"The National Auxiliary Education Program Committee shall be a revolving committee composed of the National Senior Vice Commander, the National Commander and the Immediate Past National Commander.

"The Immediate Past National Commander shall serve as the Chairman of the National Auxiliary Education Program Committee.

"The National Auxiliary Education Program Committee Chairman shall direct the activities of the Committee and submit the committee's report to the National Convention."

Rationale: The proposed amendment serves to comply with IRS regulations and recognizes that the educational needs of disabled veterans and their families include more than the current scholarship fund and allows DAV Auxiliary to support other education-driven programs.

Broadening the scope also takes into consideration the opportunity for public education initiatives and other outreach opportunities for the organization. Moreover, recipients of the various grants, including scholarship recipients, will no longer be limited to full-paid life members of the DAV Auxiliary.

Therefore, we recommend renaming the Education Scholarship Fund to National Auxiliary Education Program to be more inclusive of the educational programs it supports and public outreach it provides for disabled veterans and their families.

Madam Commander, I move for the acceptance of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. PATRICIA DAVIS: Patricia Davis, Unit 19, Wisconsin, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-28, Article VII, Membership, Section 6, Membership Classification, A, Life Membership, fourth paragraph, delete the entire paragraph and substitute the following:

"Effective January 1st, 2020, life membership fee shall be $250.00 for ages 18 through 79. Age 80 and over shall be complimentary. Minimum down payment is $20. Birth dates must be indicated on the membership application."

Rationale: Due to proposed changes to the DAV membership system, the cost to the Auxiliary to maintain a tiered membership in that new system and the recommendation of the National Finance Committee that the Auxiliary could not afford the cost, the recommendation is to change our membership fee to a flat rate from age 18 through 79. Age 80 and over would still be complimentary. The recommendation is to keep our membership at $250.00 at this time. Existing membership amounts are not affected by this amendment.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. JANET PRATT: Janet Pratt, Unit 29, District 1, Massachusetts, and I second this motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion? All those in favor of this amendment signify by saying aye; any opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-30, Article VII, Membership, Section 6C, Junior Membership, Paragraph 3, delete "Effective July 1st, 2015" from the beginning of Paragraph 3.

Rationale: The effective dates are no longer applicable.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion that we accept this amendment. May I have a second, please?

MS. DENISE PROFFITT: Denise Proffitt, Alliance 50, Ohio, seconds that.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-30, Article VII, Membership, Section 6C, Junior Memberships, Paragraph 4, delete "Effective July 1st, 2015, a" from the beginning of Paragraph 4.

The effective dates are no longer applicable is the rationale.

And Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. JACQUELINE PARRISH: Yes, my name is Jacqueline Parrish, Unit 42, New Jersey.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-36, Article VIII, Finances, Section 3, National Mandates, first paragraph, fifth line, delete the words after "national mandates:" through the end of the sentence and substitute the following:

"The Auxiliary National Programs ($12.50) and National Convention expenses ($12.50)."

Rationale: The proposed amendment moves away from DAV Auxiliary's long-held silo approach to management of its funds and programs that has presented significant limitations on the organization's financial flexibility.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. MARILYN HOGUE: Marilyn Hogue, District 17, Unit 21, Colorado, I second it.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-36, Article VIII, Finances, Section 3, National Mandates, second paragraph, first sentence, Lines 3 and 4:

Line 3: insert "state" between "each" and "department's"; Line 4: insert "National" between "for" and "Convention." The sentence would then read:

"Each membership year national headquarters shall withhold the sum of fifty dollars ($50.00) from each state department's per capita distribution for National Convention expenses."

Rationale: For clarification purposes only—or for clarification purposes.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second, please?

MR. JOHN OLINGER: John Olinger, District—excuse me, District 10, state delegate, Unit 2, may I make that motion for a second.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second to accept this amendment. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; any opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel) (Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: Madam Commander, Susan Henry, Past National Commander, I just realized that there is a typo on the previous amendment that we missed.

The word "the" should not be present at the beginning of that first, of that phrase. It should only read "Auxiliary National Programs $12.50 and National Convention expenses $12.50."

The word "the" was not part of the amendment. Can we handle this as a typo, only? Or do we need to revote? Housekeeping change? Thank you.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: With conference with the judge advocate, this would be a housekeeping change and we will just eliminate that word “the.”

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you, Susan.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Okay, excuse me, Page S-2, Article II, State Convention, Section 3, Delegates, second paragraph, Line 4, change “each ten (10) life members” to “each ten (10) Senior members.”

Rationale: To clarify reference to senior life members, not junior life members.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. MICHELE GOINGS: Michele Goings, State of Virginia, District 6, Unit 47, I second the amendment.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-5, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 1, State Commander, Paragraph 5, add new sentence at end of paragraph 5 as follows:

“The State Commander shall not make cash withdrawals from State Funds.”

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from State Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment. I forgot my duties.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. NANCY WORTH: Nancy Worth, Northern Hills Number 11, South Dakota, I second the motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-6, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 2, State Senior Vice Commander, Paragraph 2, add new sentence at the end of paragraph 2 as follows:

“The State Senior Vice Commander shall not make cash withdrawals from State Funds.”

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from State Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Debbie McLaughlin, Unit 18, Florida, District 7, seconds it.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-7, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 4, State Treasurer, add a new fourth paragraph as follows:

“The State Treasurer shall not make cash withdrawals from State Funds.”

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from State Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. MELANIE JOYCE: Melanie Joyce, State Department Commander for the Department of New Hampshire, Third District, I second the motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Did you—I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-10, Article V, Tenure of Office, add new Section 3 as follows:

"Section 3: Return of State Property. Upon election and installation, or appointment of the successor to any such office, all state property in his or her possession or control shall be surrendered to the newly installed officer."

Rationale: To have all records from any elected or appointed officer/chairman turned over to the newly appointed/elected and installed officer/chairman.

Madam Commander, I move for the approval of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to adopt this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. PATRICIA DAVIS: Patricia Davis, delegate, Unit 19, Wisconsin, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, someone spoke from the delegate floor away from a microphone.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Please come to the mic.

MS. CAROLYN HARRIS: Madam Commander, Carolyn Harris, Unit 70, Alabama, District 8. I would like to make an amendment to this new section to remove "the newly installed officer" and replace with "their successor."

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Do you—I have a motion to amend. I need to call for a second on that, please.

(Response of "Didn't hear her.")

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: They didn't hear you.

MS. HARRIS: Okay. I'd like to make an amendment to the new proposed section to remove "the newly installed officer" to replace with "their successor."

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I need a second to her proposed amendment.

MS. DOROTHY ROBINSON: Dorothy Robinson, Unit 116, Millington, Tennessee, I second that.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion on this?

MS. JOYCE HUTCHINSON: Joyce Hutchinson, Unit 63, Ohio. My only question, is it possible to put a time limit on the return of the property?

(Response of "Can't hear her.")

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: She is requesting, wants to know if we could put a time limit on the property that needs to be turned over. Please come. Just a minute.

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate advanced to the podium.)

JUDGE ADVOCATE PAULA RAYMOND: I would put the time limit in your state department standing rules.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Oh, okay.

JUDGE ADVOCATE RAYMOND: Because each state could have a different time limit. You know some might say a week; some might say two weeks. But that's where I'd put it.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Thank you.

JUDGE ADVOCATE RAYMOND: The same with units.

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Okay, we have, I have a motion and a second for the amendment that they change it from "the newly installed officer" to "their successor." And we've had the discussion.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: If they're putting "their successor" she should still be installed. And they're not including that in there.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: The chairmen are not necessarily installed. And adjutants are not required to be installed. So that's why we're saying, that's why she is requesting this be changed to "their successor." Is there any further discussion?

So now we are just going to vote on the amended, yes, the amendment, so all those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried.

Okay, now I have a motion and a second and I'm now calling for the vote on the amended amendment. All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-14, Article VI, State Committees and Chairmen, Section 6, State Audit Committee, third paragraph, delete the last sentence and replace with the following:

"The Financial Report Form provided by National Headquarters shall be completed by the State Treasurer and given to the Audit Committee for verification and signature. The State Adjutant shall send the report to National Headquarters no later than September 30th."

Rationale: Clarification of who prepares the finance report, who verifies, signs and mails it to National Headquarters.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. NANCY WORTH: Nancy Worth, Northern Hills Unit Number 11, South Dakota. I second the motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion?

MR. SUMLER: Bill Sumler, state delegate for Arizona. I have a problem with this and had a problem with the prior. When a treasurer has their audit at convention that happens, for us, at least, the beginning of June. Our financial year doesn't end until the end of June.

So they've audited through May, not June. How do we get them back from the corners of our state to sign a final one? We're now typing the name in and their number but it has—

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: It was changed to June 30th and that's the way it has—that's the way it has to be done. It has to be.

MR. SUMLER: We have to change our year-end. But if the convention is earlier we can't pull them all together.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Ours is earlier, too, but we do the same thing. A lot of them have our, you know, between April and June are when our conventions are held.

MR. SUMLER: Right. So how do they get together again after the end, the actual end of the year?

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I'm going to let—

MS. BREWER: Madam Commander, North Carolina Commander Theresa Brewer, I'd like to comment on that. In our state once our audit is complete there is no more business conducted. So this year our audit was June 12. That meant there was no business, no deposits, no checks, until July 1.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: That's how we've done it.

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate advanced to the podium)

JUDGE ADVOCATE RAYMOND: There are several states that do it that way. Once they close those books—

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Go ahead.

JUDGE ADVOCATE RAYMOND: There are several states that do it this way. Once they close their books and they conduct their audit, if it's like the end of May or the middle of June no checks are written. There is no financial business done for that particular unit or state department until July 1.

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any more discussion? You understand you just—this is an IRS and we must do this. That's all there is to it. All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Having fun yet? (Laughter) Page U-3, Article VIII, Installation of Unit Officers, add new Section 3 as follows:

"Section 3: Upon election and installation, or appointment of the successor to any such office, all unit property in his or her possession or control shall be surrendered to the newly installed officer."

Rationale: To have all records from any elected or appointed officer/chairman turned over to the newly appointed/elected and installed officer/chairman.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion for the adoption of this amendment. May I have a second, please?

MS. PATRICIA DAVIS: Patricia Davis, Unit 19, Wisconsin, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion? I knew this was coming. (Laughter)

MS. HARRIS: Carolyn Harris, Unit 70, Alabama, District 8. I propose an amendment to read, remove "the newly installed officer" and replace with "their successors."

MS. ROSE WILLIAMS: Rose Williams, Unit 30, Wisconsin, in the wording in that it says "upon election and installation or appointment of the successor to any such office all unit property in his or her possession or control shall be surrendered to the newly installed officer."

Why shouldn't it just end at "shall be surrendered"? You're already saying "upon election and installation or appointment of the successor to any such office." I don't think it needs to be reiterated after "shall be surrendered."

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Because adjutant are not installed.

MS. WILLIAMS: What?

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We have those that are not installed, like adjutants are not installed. And it would also include a chairman because a lot of time we have records. The chairmen have records that need to come forward, also.

I have a motion for the amendment to the amendment. I need a second, please.

MS. ROBINSON: Dorothy Robinson, Millington 116, Tennessee, I second that.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We will vote on the amendment to the amendment. All those—is there any discussion on the amendment? Okay, all those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried.

Now, we will vote on the amended amendment. Is there any more discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye.

MS. WILLIAMS: Rose Williams, Unit 30, Wisconsin. Again, it says "upon election and installation or appointment of the successor" so I don't understand—"to any such office."

So I still don't understand why we have to add "to their successor" at the end because you're saying "installation or appointment." And I understand the adjutant is appointed. I'm sorry, but I just don't think we need that wording in.

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate spoke from the dais)

JUDGE ADVOCATE RAYMOND: Well, for one thing, you are being consistent if you say "successor."

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: He can't hear you, Paula.

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate advanced to the podium)

JUDGE ADVOCATE RAYMOND: The commander has already called for a vote. There is no more discussion.

MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Judge Advocate withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page U-5, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 1, Commander, add new paragraph following Commander's duties as follows:

"Unit Commanders shall not make cash withdrawals from Unit Funds."

And we should add a period right there. For housekeeping purposes add a period to the end of that sentence. So "Unit Commander shall not make cash withdrawals from Unit Funds" period.

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from Unit Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: Susan Henry, Past National Commander, seconds.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page U-6, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 2, Senior Vice Commander and Junior Vice Commander, insert a new third Paragraph as follows:

"The Unit Senior Vice Commander shall not make cash withdrawals from Unit Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from Unit Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept this amendment. May I have a second?

MS. GILDA JACKSON: Gilda Jackson, Unit 42, District 4, I second the motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: What state are you from?

MS. JACKSON: New Jersey.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page U-9, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 4, Treasurer, insert new paragraph at top of page:

"The Unit Treasurer shall not make cash withdrawals from Unit Funds."

Rationale: To prevent cash withdrawals from Unit Funds by any officer on the bank signature card.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion. May I have a second?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SANDY DOBMEIER: Sandy Dobmeier, Unit Number 2, North Dakota, I second that motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. (One rap of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: I would like to introduce the members of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

I would like to have them stand and then please hold your applause until the end. This was a wonderful Committee to serve on. And I appreciate all the members and all the input that we had.

District Number 1, Janet Pratt; District Number 2, Helen Mazza; District Number 3, Sylvia Heath; District Number 4, Sarah Kashner; District Number 5, Loretta Nosko;

District Number 6, Amy Bowser; District Number 7, Delores Roussey; District Number 8, Susan Henry who was also the secretary of our Committee; District Number 9, Felicia Evans-Walls;

District Number 10, our birthday girl, Carol Lee; District Number 11, Denise Proffitt; District Number 12, Patricia Davis; District Number 13, Dorothy Fivecoate; District Number 14 was myself, Judy Steinhouse;

District Number 15, Linda Gerke; District Number 16, Catherine Crigger; District Number 17, Marilyn Hogue; District Number 18, Sharon Linton; District Number 19, Jerald Royse; District Number 20, Christopher Easley; and District Number 21, Vera Hendrickson.

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Commander.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: That was a chore. (Laughter) As I explained in my report, the TEE Tournament in Iowa was a very rewarding experience and afforded me the opportunity to visit with veteran caregivers on a personal level. I learned a lot during my time with them and cherish those memories.

In March I attended the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, Colorado. And while this was a vivid reminder of the challenges our veterans face and the victories they achieve, I realized this event is not structured to caregiver events and interaction.

When the Caregiver Initiative Program was first introduced and approved by the National Executive Committee, it was done so in conjunction with the VA adoptive sports events.

I would like the approval of the delegates at this convention to broaden our outreach to veteran caregivers by expanding the Caregiver Initiative Program to support other caregiver assistance opportunities.

Doing so would entail a committee to explore and develop a plan for furthering our caregiver advocacy. Some possible examples would be respite assistance, retreats, yoga and other self-care measures.

We all heard that caregivers are the unsung heroes. Let's be their heroes.

I'd like to entertain a motion to expand the caregiver program to support other caregiver assistance opportunities.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Madam Commander, Judy Steinhouse, Valley City Unit Number 24, State of North Dakota, I so move.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion. May I have a second?

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Debbie McLaughlin, Unit 18, Florida, District 7, seconds it.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Is there any discussion? All those in favor of the expansion of the caregiver program signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried. Thank you. (Applause) I'm very proud of you guys.

Okay, now we are about to recess. We will resume tomorrow morning at 9 a.m. But this is a reminder, we need to caucus right after this so please be sure you are in your districts. At this time I will call for a closing prayer from our National Chaplain. (Three raps of the gavel)

There will also be some door prizes right afterwards, too and then you can caucus, so please stay. The caucus is very important.

(Response of "What are we caucusing about?")

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: You will be caucusing about the slate of officers. We have made a change to do it at this time instead of during the Forget-Me-Not, after the Forget-Me-Not because so many have made the decision not to go to the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon. You will be given that by your representative.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain Nicodemus advanced to the podium)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the work that everyone has done today. We thank you for the healthy discussion and the camaraderie that led to a resolution of each issue.

We thank you for the blessings of working together and how we coordinate our efforts for the betterment of our veterans.

We pray for our caregivers, wherever they may be, that you will care for each and every one and help us to reach out and care for them, also.

We ask a special blessing upon our DAVA member that fell and injured her knee. We pray for her, that she will have complete healing and be able to continue to participate.

We also ask a prayer for senior vice commander from Unit 20, Glendale, Arizona, Diane Stone. We ask a blessing upon all of our members at home that need our prayers. Care for each and every one.

We pray for our troops in harm's way and the leaders of our nation. And we pray that you will be with us as we go forward. Wherever we may go this afternoon care for each and every one. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Having no further business, we now stand in recess until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting was recessed at 11:25 a.m., on Monday, August 5, 2019.)

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel
Orlando, Florida

August 6, 2019

Final Business Session

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The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Panzacola F2-4 Ballroom on the First Level of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Tuesday morning, August 6, 2019, and was called to order at 9:02 a.m., by National Commander Ellen Timmerman.

COMMANDER ELLEN TIMMERMAN: I want to remind you, please turn off your cell phones or silence them. We will now have the prayer from our National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus. (Three gavel raps.)

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: If you were a person that wanted a copy of the Memorial Service, it will be on the front desk after our meeting. Also, there are cards still upfront here for you to sign for Billie Freeman from our national office, where she lost her daughter. We have cards of sympathy if you'd wish to, like to add your name to those.

Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for the exciting evening that we shared last evening and the fun that we had with friends old and new.

We thank you for blessing us and keeping us. We ask a special prayer this morning for Judy Davis as her mother passed away last evening. Please be with her and comfort her.

We also ask a special blessing upon the District 3 NEC-elect from the DAV as his mother, at the age of 96, also passed away. We ask a special blessing upon the Department of Arizona and the family of Diane Stone as she passed away, also.

We ask a special blessing, also, upon Donna Adams as she changes her life for the future as she lost her husband, also. Be with her. Comfort her and guide her through this process.

We ask a special blessing upon Billie Freeman as she recovers from the loss of her daughter. Be with her. Comfort her and surround her with our love.

We also ask a special blessing upon Linda Archer. Please be with her and help her to recover fully so that she can return to full service.

Today we are making the most important decisions of our convention. We are shaping the decisions for the coming year. We ask that you will guide our words, our actions and our decisions so that they will provide a legacy of the future for our organization.

Be with our families at home, our troops in harm's way and the leaders of our nation. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the Chaplain withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: We will now have the Pledge of Allegiance from our Americanism Chairman Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh.

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER AND AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN JULIE WEISSMAN-STEINBAUGH: Please stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice Commander and Americanism Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by one gavel rap by Commander Timmerman.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Okay, the total donations we have received are as follows: the General Fund, $2,500; the Service Fund, $1,525; Camp Corral, $700; Winter Sports, $250; Scholarship, $1,225; Hospitalized Veterans Riding Program Project, $50; fall conference, $50; Disaster Relief, $1,000; Caregivers, $3,611, (Applause) for a grand total of $10,911. (Applause)

Will the Credentials Chairman please come forward to give us our final report? Maria Holloway.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARIA HOLLOWAY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HOLLOWAY: National commander, national officers, delegates and guests. This will be the final reading of the Credentials report.

Total units registered, 146; total departments registered, 38; national officers registered, 7; past national commanders registered, 10; total guests registered, 227; total delegates, 322; total alternates, 46; total registered, 612; total vote count, 1,126. I move that we accept the Credential report.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion to accept the Credentials report. May I have a second, please?

MS. VICTORIA SALAZAR: Victoria Salazar, Grant Fort Baird Unit 1, District 17, New Mexico, I second that.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I have a motion and a second to accept the Credentials report. All those in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed the same. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Committee Chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: The National Adjutant will now call the roll of the newly elected National Executive Committee members and alternates. As your name is called please come forward for the purpose of installation.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium and the newly elected National Executive Committee members and alternates advanced to the front of the room as the National Adjutant called their names.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: District 1, Sharon Dufault, Diane Sullivan; District 3, Donna Folcarelli, Karen Rediker; District 4 Alternate Jacqueline Parrish; District 5, Laurie Stopyra; District 7, Irene Stevens and Maria Holloway;

District 9, Clyrissa (Indistinguishable) Brown and Felicia Evans-Walls; District 11, Denise Proffitt, Judy Davis; District 13, Lynn Swanson, Terri Young;

District 15, Melissa Pierce, Robin Ballhagen; District 17, Victoria Salazar and June Schow; District 19, Gerald Royse, Senior; District 21, Rhonda Bower and Vera Hendrickson. Is Vera Hendrickson in the room?

(Response of "No.")

ADJUTANT KEMPER: She's not down from her room yet?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No. We're not staying here. She must be parking the car.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Okay. Let the record show Vera Hendrickson is not present at this time. Okay.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and Commander Timmerman returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: You are requested to remain silent during the ceremony of installation.

As newly elected National Executive Committee members and alternates are you willing to assume the oath of your office?

(Response of "I am.")

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Place your right hand over your heart, pronounce your name and repeat after me the oath of office.

"I, having been selected as a National Officer of this Auxiliary, do most solemnly pledge myself to faithfully and impartially perform in letter and spirit all duties of the office I am about to enter.

"I promise to obey the lawful orders of my superior officers and exact the obedience of others thereto to the best of my ability and means.

"When my successor has been duly selected and installed I promise to surrender all the property of the organization in my possession, all of which I now affirm."

You may lower your hands. (One gave rap.) Delegates, members and guests, I now present to you the National Executive Committee members and Alternates of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary. I trust you will aid them in the performance of their duties. With your help their term of office will be highly successful. About face.

(Whereupon, the newly elected NEC members turned to face the membership amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Would the newly installed National Executive Committee members and Alternates please return to your seats.

(Whereupon, the newly elected NEC members returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Will the chairman of the Nominating Committee please come forward to give the Committee's report.

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee Chairman advanced to the podium to give the report.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER THERESA GRABOWSKI: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GRABOWSKI: Good morning Commander Ellen Timmerman, National Adjutant Pat Kemper, line officers, PNCs, delegates, members and guests. Thank you for having the confidence of choosing me as your Nominating Committee chair.

I will read the list of members and please stand—so I should skip that, first, right? Okay, I will read the list of members and please stand as your name is called. And everyone, please hold your applause until I am finished reading the names.

District 1, Donna Tanner; District 2, Theresa Grabowski, me; District 3, Karen Rediker; District 4, Kathleen Walker; District 5, Laurie—okay, I'm going to say this wrong—Stopyra—sorry; I apologize if I slaughter these names;

District 6, Carol Simmons; District 7, Irene Stevens; District 8, Linda Bailey; District 9, Linda Jimmerson; District 10, Christina Alexander; District 11, Joyce Hutchinson;

District 12, Carla Reynolds; District 13, Karla Schwartz; am I going too fast; District 14, LeeAnn Karg; District 15, Velma Steinman; District 16, Caroline Morris;

District 17, Susan Miller; District 18, William Sumler—sorry; I apologize; District 19, Jenny Clark; District 20, Patrice Rapisand—sorry, I'm used to Patty; District 21, Ronda Bauer. Okay.

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GRABOWSKI: I want to thank them all because it was a really difficult decision in trying to do and we worked really hard to come up with the best candidates. So I just want to thank them all with their patience with me, also.

Okay, the Nominating Committee of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary held their first meeting on August 3, 2019. We are pleased to submit the following slate for your consideration to serve as the 2019–2020 officers.

Commander Diane Franz; (Applause) Senior Vice Commander Lynn Prosser; (Applause) First Junior Vice Commander Darlene Spence; (Applause) Second Junior Vice Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh; (Applause)

Third Junior Vice Commander Anne Marie Hurley; (Applause) Fourth Junior Vice Commander Linda Gerke; and Judge Advocate Paula Raymond. (Applause) Thank you guys. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee Chairman withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: When two or more candidates are nominated for any one office roll calls shall be continued until completed unless a candidate withdraws. The person receiving a majority of the roll call votes shall be elected.

I wish to thank the members of the Nominating Committee for their time and efforts. I am now discharging the Nominating Committee and all other Committees.

I now ask all the officers to please leave the podium to go to your respective Districts for the purpose of nomination and elections. NECs, please join your Districts as well.

(Whereupon, the officers and NECs withdrew to their respective districts.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I am appointing three tellers. Jackie Timmerman-Glass, Melissa Pierce and Ann Glende, would you please come forward.

(Whereupon, the tellers advanced to the table at the front of the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: You have heard the report on the nominations. Diane Franz has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Commander. I need a second for this nomination, please.

(Whereupon, someone spoke from the floor away from a microphone.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Please come to the mic.

MS. IRENE STEVENS: Irene Stevens, District 7, Unit 109, Florida, second this motion.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: They couldn't hear you. Could you speak a little louder?

MS. STEVENS: Irene Stevens, District 7, Unit 109, Titusville, Florida, I second this nomination.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Are there any other nominations? Hearing none I declare nominations closed.

All those in favor of Diane Franz for the office of National Commander please signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it and Diane Franz has been elected as the National Commander. (Standing Ovation)

Lynn Prosser has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Senior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the National Senior Vice Commander.

All those in favor of Lynn Prosser for the office of National Senior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it. Lynn Prosser has been elected to the office of National Senior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Darlene Spence has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander.

All those in favor of Darlene Spence for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it. Darlene Spence has been elected National First Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander.

All those in favor of Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh for the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it. Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh has been elected to the office of Second Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Ann Marie Hurley has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander.

All those in favor of Ann Marie Hurley for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it. Ann Marie Hurley has been elected to the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Linda Gerke has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander.

All those in favor of Linda Gerke for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it. Linda Gerke has been elected to the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Paula Raymond has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Judge Advocate. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Judge Advocate.

All those in favor Paula Raymond for the office of National Judge Advocate signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it. Paula Raymond has been elected to the office of National Judge Advocate. (Applause)

Okay, I'm dismissing my tellers.

(Whereupon, the tellers returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Will the current National Officers please return to your seats. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Officers returned to their stations.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: The election having been completed, I now ask the National Sergeant-at-Arms to come to the podium for the purpose of introducing those members who have served as Convention pages.

(Whereupon, the National Sergeant-at-Arms advanced to the podium.)

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Okay, may I please have all the pages please come up and stand in front and the juniors in front of them I think would be good so we can see them.

(Whereupon, the pages and juniors advanced to the front of the podium.)

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Okay, they want you on stage. Come on up here you guys. All you NECs, behind me. Okay, please come on up around here. And, also, the personal pages please come, too.

(Whereupon, the pages and juniors advanced to the stage.)

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Okay, well, when I call your name just kind of stand forward so—okay—so they can see who you are. Okay? Sound good?

Okay, Elizabeth Eldridge, District 1; yes, hold your hand up; that's good, too; (Applause) Karen Rediker, District 3; (Applause) Loretta Nosko, District 5; (Applause) Delores Roussey, District 7; (Applause)

JoAnn Atkinson, District 9; (Applause) Deborah Hall, District 11; (Applause) April Roush, District 13; (Applause) Velma Steinman, District 15; (Applause) Marilyn Hogue, District 17, that'd be me; (Applause) Jenny Clark, District 19; (Applause) Linda Oliver, District 21. (Applause)

And the juniors, let's see: Josh Peterson; (Applause) okay, now I know he's Unit 7, Colorado; some of the younger ones I don't know; Andrew Peterson, Unit 7, Colorado; (Applause)

Seychelles Rodriguez St. Firmin, (Applause) Virginia; okay and Jay Draper; (Applause) come here; there she is; (Applause) this is Attikus Woodfork and it's also his birthday; (Applause) happy birthday to you; (Applause)

(Whereupon, the members sang "Happy Birthday" to Attikus, followed by a round of applause.)

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Well, speaking of birthdays, our Andrew had a birthday here, too, just a couple of days ago. (Applause) Want to sing Happy Birthday to Andrew?

(Whereupon, the members sang "Happy Birthday" to Andrew, followed by a round of applause.)

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Now that I've embarrassed him enough. (Laughter) Janna Palmer, Unit 123; (Applause) Haven (Indistinguishable); (Applause) this is Haven; she is brand new; this is her first time; (Applause) she's from Oklahoma.

And, let's see, no, I don't believe they are here anymore but they did help out and I'd like to recognize them: Rylee Nicole Comeaux and, let's see, Morgyn Sobocinski. And I saw them the first day and I haven't seen them since but I just wanted to recognize them.

And the personal pages, I know Vicki Salazar was for Ellen Timmerman, would you please stand, Vicki; (Applause) Thomas Grubaugh from Michigan; (Applause) and, let's see, Mary—I had a Mary Lou Caldwell but I don't know who she was personal page for—for Julie, for Julie Weissman, okay; Mary Lou Caldwell, I'm not sure where you are. Please stand. There she is. (Applause)

Linda Jimmerson for Lynn Prosser, please stand. (Applause) Okay. Then Ava and, let's see, Kyla Auton for Pat Kemper. (Applause) They're out of town now. They left town.

(Whereupon, the pages and NECs advanced to the front or waved to the membership as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: All right, that concludes us. (Applause) Oh, I also, Jackie Timmerman-Glass was also Ellen's other page. She had two pages. (Applause) That was her daughter. Okay, thank you.

(Whereupon, the Sergeant-at-Arms withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Thank you all.

(Whereupon, the Sergeant-at-Arms, the pages and the NECs returned to their stations.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I would also like to acknowledge our color bearers at this time. For national our color bearers were Breanne and Clara Sursely. They're not here but I would like—would you please pass on our thanks to them. (Applause)

The state was Barbara Ritter and Lucy Godfrey. (Applause)

All pages are now dismissed.

Is there any further business to come before this Convention? Hearing none, I now declare the 97th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary hereby adjourned.

We will immediately go into the post-Convention National Executive Committee meeting which I will now call to order.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 9:37 a.m. on Tuesday, August 6, 2019.)

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

and

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel
Orlando, Florida

August 6, 2019

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The Installation of Officers and Post-Convention Executive Committee Meeting of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Panzacola F2-4 on the First Level of the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Tuesday morning, August 6, 2019, and was called to order at 9:37 a.m., by National Commander Ellen Timmerman.

COMMANDER ELLEN TIMMERMAN: We will immediately go into our National Executive Committee meeting which I will now call to order. Will the newly elected national officers retire to the back of the room.

(Whereupon, the national officers withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I ask all NECs and alternates to take their seats in the designated area in the front of the room: NECs to my right; alternates to my left.

(Whereupon, the NECs and alternates assumed their proper positions.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: At this point we're going to have a couple of announcements from our National Adjutant Pat Kemper.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT PATRICIA KEMPER: I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chris Easley. He has generously donated his equipment and time to live-stream this convention so those at home who could not be with us could watch it on Facebook. Thank you, Chris. (Applause)

I also would like to thank Karen Eccles from Illinois. She volunteered and stepped up to start taking photographs. So thank you, Karen, very much. You're a lifesaver. (Applause)

Also, a special thanks from my staff and I to Terri Grabowski of New York. She is always there saying, "Can I help you with anything?" "Can I help you with anything?"

For several days she came over and relieved some of the staff so they could go to lunch. And she manned a table in the office and passed out those cooling towels. (Applause)

I want to thank Marilyn Hogue, National Sergeant-at-Arms. She did a great job. It may look easy but it's not. Marilyn, I want to thank you for the job you did. It's not easy wrangling the kids and adults and getting everybody in their stations. You did a great job. Thank you. (Applause)

Also, Aura-Lee Nicodemus has mentioned that a member of the Auxiliary, national headquarters staff, lost her daughter just a couple of weeks ago. And we are a staff of four.

And now we are a staff of three. So please bear with us during this time. She is going to take some time off and we are going to do the best we can to keep that office functioning and responding to your needs.

And someone turned in a pair of glasses that were lost at Fun Night.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: And I would like to thank Pat Kemper for everything she has done for me for this year. It's been amazing. (Applause)

Pat and I would email back and forth a lot. And if I was frustrated about something I would vent to her. And if she was frustrated she would vent to me. Before we were through we would usually end up laughing. Now, when you couldn't get both of us to calm down, we counted on Bunny. (Laughter)

So I'm not kidding. We could not do anything without our national headquarters. And with these people—these people are absolutely the best. And they put in so much time for all of us. (Applause) And I consider them very good friends.

Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please see that the newly elected officers are escorted to the front of the podium, please. National Commander Diane Franz. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Commander was escorted into the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Senior Vice Commander Lynn Prosser. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Senior Vice Commander was escorted into the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: First Junior Vice Commander Darlene Spence. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National First Junior Vice Commander was escorted into the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Third Junior Vice Commander—oh, I'm sorry. Second Junior Vice Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Second Junior Vice Commander was escorted into the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Third Junior Vice Commander Ann Marie Hurley. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Third Junior Vice Commander was escorted into the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Fourth Junior Vice Commander Linda Gerke. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Fourth Junior Vice Commander was escorted into the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Judge Advocate Paula Raymond. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Judge Advocate was escorted into the room.)

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: The first order of business will be the installation of the newly elected National Officers. Diane Franz, have you selected your installing officer?

COMMANDER-ELECT DIANE J. FRANZ: Yes, I have, Donna Tanner.

COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: National Sergeant-at-Arms will you escort Donna Tanner to the platform.

(Whereupon, the Past National Commander and Installing Officer was escorted to the podium, at which time the Commander withdrew from the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND INSTALLING OFFICER DONNA TANNER: Thank you. It's an honor and a pleasure. You are requested to remain silent during the ceremony of installation.

Sergeant-at-Arms, please take your place to the right of the altar. We've called the roll call.

As a newly elected officer, are you willing to assume the oath of your office?

(Response of "I am.")

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND INSTALLING OFFICER TANNER: Members, please stand. You are already standing. Sorry. (Laughter) Place your right hand over your heart, pronounce your name and repeat after me the oath of your office.

"I, Donna Tanner, having been selected as a National Officer of this Auxiliary, do most solemnly pledge myself to faithfully and impartially perform in letter and in spirit all duties of the office I am about to enter.

"I promise to obey the lawful orders of my superior officers and exact the obedience of others thereto to the best of my ability and means.

"When my successor has been duly selected and installed I promise to surrender all the property of the organization in my possession, all of which I now affirm."

You may lower your hands. The audience may be seated.

Delegates, members and guests, I now present to you the National Officers of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

I trust you will aid them in the performance of their duties. With your help their term of office will be highly successful. Officers, about face.

(Whereupon, the newly installed officers turned to face the membership, followed by a round of applause.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND INSTALLING OFFICER TANNER: Can the Sergeant-at-Arms, is she still here? I don't know.

Well, we need the National Commander escorted to the podium and the other national officers may assume your positions at the podium. You have an escort? You guys want to come up and take Nana, Grandma? There we go. (Applause) Thank you.

(Whereupon, the National Commander was escorted to the podium and the other national officers assumed their stations.)

COMMANDER DIANE J. FRANZ: Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Installing Officer withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Those are our two full-paid junior members. (Applause) I would like to thank all of you for the confidence and support in electing me as your national commander.

I would be remiss not recognizing and gratefully thanking Lucille McCarthy for years of support and knowledge she has given to me. She was and is a mentor, friend and devoted advocate for all of us.

Thank you to the state departments that I had the privilege to attend your conventions. Your hospitality was overwhelming.

Thank you, Bunny, Pat, Ann and Billie for serving this great organization and the support you give this—let me back up—and support you give to all the members of the DAV Auxiliary. I personally thank you for all your help, not only this year but in the years past.

And I can't forget to thank all the members in both the Departments of Florida and the DAV and DAV Central Florida Unit 16 and Chapter 16. Would you please stand and be recognized, please. That's you.

(Whereupon, the delegates stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Their support during this journey has been tremendous. Thank you to my parents who gave me the understanding of what volunteering for a cause means.

Last, but not, but by all means least, my family, they have been my taxi drivers, dog sitters and sometimes computer helpers during the years. Thank you, Mark, Sharon, Owen and Wyatt for all you have done. (Applause)

We must strive to mentor all of our new members, both senior and juniors. Without them we cannot grow and flourish. They join us to help serve our goals to help our veterans and their families.

They are not just numbers on a list. They come with enthusiasm to promote and support our mission. Volunteering is something that is given from the heart, not "what do I get out of it."

Unity means staying together. It means helping and supporting each other in all circumstances. Staying united is the key to building strong relationships and a strong organization. We can live in peace and harmony only when it's unity that prevails.

Unity is strength. Unity means together standing together for our veterans and their families. We must stand united with the DAV in accomplishing that mission.

We all joined the Auxiliary to help uphold the promise made to our veterans and to serve our veterans and their families. In unity this can be done the way we get our pledge done.

Unity is important at every level and every step of our mission. Unity is strength. So this year your commander's mission and your mission are to strive to achieve unity in all aspects with the goals of the National DAV and within our local state departments, chapters and especially our units.

As your commander I pledge myself to devote all my efforts this year to uphold the promise to making a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families and promote unity of us all. Thank you. (Applause)

Now I didn't tell them this so they might be kind of shocked. I would like to have Mark, Sharon, Owen and Wyatt to come up and if they want to say anything. Come on up. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the commander's family advanced to the stage.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: My taxi driver, my dog sitter. (Laughter and applause) This is Mark.

MR. MARK FRANZ: So life is full of surprises, right? (Laughter) I think the only thing that really comes to mind for something to say is this. You know this is definitely something that she has given purpose to, something that she is dedicated to, something that, you know, she has passion around.

And after you know my father passed away this kind of filled that void that left for her. All of you kind of picked up and, you know, are her extended family in that sense.

So thank you for the support that you've given to her and throughout all the years that she has been part of this organization. So thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Now I would like to introduce each officer according to rank for brief remarks and family and friends introductions. Your Senior Vice Commander Lynn. (Applause)

(Whereupon, as the commander's family withdrew from the podium the commander stepped aside and the senior-vice commander stepped to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER LYNN HELMS PROSSER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER PROSSER: First I would like to say, I would like for my Ninth District—Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina—to please stand up and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the delegation from the Ninth District stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER PROSSER: They have supported me all the way through this adventure. And they are definitely my second family so I thank all of you.

And I want to thank all of you, too. It's been a wonderful journey so far traveling to all the different states. And it was really strange, you know, going.

You didn't know if you knew anybody when you'd get there and then you'd start seeing familiar faces. And when you left there it was almost like tears in your eyes because they became close family and you just hated to leave them.

So I just want you to know all the states that I've had the pleasure and the honor of going to the past three years, thank you so much for your hospitality. I really do appreciate it. And, like I say, I went away feeling wonderful and will always know that I have some precious friends in each state.

And I also want to thank the—well, I want to thank the whole entire national department, especially, you know, you've got Bunny sitting here. And Ann has been wonderful.

And we couldn't have done anything without this lady here. She has been absolutely wonderful. I want to thank, also and everybody knows I'm talking about, Pat, right? (Laughter)

I didn't say her name but, I tell you what, she is "Johnny-on-the-spot." She's always there and she's always got a smile on her face. She's always positive.

And she will get you through anything that you need to get through. When you think it's really hard, she makes it sound a lot easier so I thank her for that.

But I also want to thank—working with the line, everybody that's on the line right now. I know we'll have a great year working together. But I just want to say thank you to all of you.

And I will do my best to fulfill this position as senior vice commander, try to make you proud. And I'm here if anybody needs anything.

I think most of you probably have my card somewhere along the way. So I hope that you will feel free to call me. And I'm sure the rest of the line feels that way, too.

But thank all of you. God bless you. I hope you will enjoy the rest of the convention and especially tonight when we have the banquet. And have a safe trip home. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the senior vice commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Your First Junior Vice Darlene. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the first junior vice commander advanced to the podium.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER DARLENE SPENCE: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER SPENCE: I want you to know I am very proud and excited to be your first junior vice commander, very proud. (Applause)

I have had a wonderful year. And I have enjoyed all the states that I have visited. This was my first time visiting as a national guest. And I would just like to recognize those states that I went to.

You guys, your hospitality was just off the wall and I appreciate it. I'd like to thank North Dakota, Georgia, Colorado and Illinois. Thank you so much. (Applause)

I can't forget District 20 and the State of Texas. You guys are awesome and thank you so much. (Applause)

I guess I should say thank you to my husband back there. He escorted me up here. (Laughter) Thank you, Percy. (Applause)

Also, my unit, my unit has been there for me. They have supported me. They have done a lot. So Unit 17 out of Randolph area, thank you so much. (Applause)

And I can't forget national Pat and Bunny and Billie and Ann. Thank you so much. I know when I call they're probably saying, "Oh, not her again." (Laughter) But thank you guys so much. You've helped me a lot. (Applause)

And also, we have three past national commanders that are very active in Texas. And I'd just like to recognize Patti, Craig and Betty. I don't think—you know there is Betty back there. Thank you all so much. (Applause)

And I look forward to another successful year. And before I forget I'd like to thank all of you. You guys have shown me so much love and respect and congratulating me and pushing me. And I just appreciate it so thank you all so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the first junior vice commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Your Second Junior Vice, Julie. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the second junior vice commander advanced to the podium.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER JULIE WEISSMAN-STEINBAUGH: I'd like to begin by thanking my family: my husband, Michael Steinbaugh; (Applause) and my teenager, junior fully paid, Jessica Steinbaugh. (Applause)

I'd like to recognize District 16. Thank you all for your support. (Applause)

And, finally, I'd like to thank all of the membership. You guys truly are my extended family. And I'm looking forward to a fantastic year. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the second junior vice commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: And now, your Third National Junior Vice Ann Marie. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the third junior vice commander advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ANN MARIE HURLEY: First I want to thank District 1, Massachusetts. They do a great job under the direction of the State Commander Nancy Hoey. (Applause)

I want to thank all of the delegates for your support and your kindness during the convention.

I thoroughly enjoyed this past year going to different states and seeing all the great work being done for veterans. It's wonderful to visit them and learn so much about how they operate and what they do to help.

And seeing all the great work this past year, I can't wait for this year to start. I'm really excited about it.

And, again, as I ended last year, smiling down is my husband, Michael and my grandson Michael James. Thank you all. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the third junior vice commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: And, of course, our new Fourth National Junior Vice Linda. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the fourth junior vice commander advanced to the podium.)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER LINDA GERKE: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER GERKE: It is an honor to serve as your fourth junior vice. And I would like to thank you all for your support and your vote of confidence.

I will be your Community Service chairman for next year. And I will do the best I can to fulfill my position.

I want to especially thank my unit and my State Department of Missouri for all their support. And I hope to see all of you at the fall conference. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the fourth junior vice commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: And, of course, here comes the judge, Paula. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the judge advocate advanced to the podium.)

JUDGE ADVOCATE PAULA RAYMOND: At least my name is not Judy. (Laughter) Good morning.

("Response of "Good morning.")

JUDGE ADVOCATE RAYMOND: I want to thank all these ladies over here from the State of Illinois and from District 12. They've been behind me for many, many years. And they've started over again.

I also want to thank my daughter. Traveling with me is not easy. I know this. I am a worrier and a fussy fidget person and she really keeps me grounded. You know she just looks at me and says, "Really, Mum." (Laughter) So, but, I do thank her.

I want to thank all of you. And I especially want to thank Bunny. Bunny and I worked real hard on Standing Rules this year. And you know we come up with kind of a system and we worked out a couple of kinks. We got a couple more ideas.

So I really appreciated her help and her input. And Pat, too, but Bunny was the one. I mean we pretty much emailed back and forth there every day for a while.

The rest of the staff at national, if I have a question I call Ann and I will say, "Well, you know, this is your friendly person from Illinois bugging you again." And she always says, "Oh, you're not bugging me." She lies real good. (Laughter)

But seriously, it's been a pleasure to be your judge advocate this past year. I'm looking forward to it this year. And I'll see you all at fall conference. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the judge advocate withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Lynn wanted to come back up. She forgot something.

(Whereupon, the senior vice commander returned to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER PROSSER: Sorry. You know sometimes you think you're trying to do a good job and you're trying to remember everybody and I probably made one of the biggest mistakes I've ever made when I start thanking people.

And I have personally got to thank my chosen sister. Would Linda Jimmerson and her husband Burl—I know they are in the room, please stand up. Burl, where are you at? I know you are there, too.

(Whereupon, Mr. and Mrs. Jimmerson stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER PROSSER: I've got—Linda, I never even have to ask her. She is there. She knows what I need to do and she is there. And I love her. And I love Burl. And I appreciate everything they've done.

Most of you know that I lost my husband Carroll Prosser three-and-a-half years ago to leukemia. And his last meeting was in Washington, D.C. And he couldn't breathe.

He came on oxygen. He couldn't walk so he rode a scooter the whole entire week. But his thing was he was going to go see his friends for the last time. And he passed away in March.

And I want to thank them because they stood by me the whole time and made sure that I could get Carroll to everything he needed to be, where he needed to be and what he needed to do and made sure we got in our room every night and made sure we got up every day.

And they've been there for me since he passed away. And I love you all and I just want to say thank you and you will never know how much that I appreciate everything you all have done for me. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the senior vice commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: And now it's my honor to introduce Ellen Timmerman as the immediate past state—national commander for remarks and your family introductions.

(Whereupon, the past national commander returned to the podium.)

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ELLEN TIMMERMAN: Okay, first I'd like to introduce my family that's in here. Tim is in a meeting. but my daughter Jackie and her husband Charlie. (Applause)

It's been an honor and a privilege to serve as your commander this past year. I have had so much fun going up the line and meeting so many of you. And, believe me, you are my family. And I am grateful for everything you do. And I am grateful for everything you have done.

God bless each and every one of you. And when we leave here please go home safely. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Will the National Adjutant give the roll call of the National Executive Committee?

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: As I call your name, please announce your presence. National Commander, Diane Franz.

COMMANDER FRANZ: Here.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Senior Vice Commander Lynn Helms Prosser.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER PROSSER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National First Junior Vice Commander Darlene Spence.

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER SPENCE: Here.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Second Junior Vice Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER WEISSMAN-STEINBAUGH: Here.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Third Junior Vice Commander Ann Marie Hurley.

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER HURLEY: Here.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Fourth Junior Vice Commander Linda Gerke.

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER GERKE: Here.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Immediate Past National Commander Ellen Timmerman.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS MARILYN HOGUE: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: And I will call the NECs by district. Sharon Dufault, District 1.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Helen Mazza, District 2.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Donna Folcarelli, District 3.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Sarah Kashner, District 4.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Laurie Stopyra, District 5.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Maria Torres, District 6. Maria Torres, District 6.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Oh, okay. Maria, we will need you up here, if you don't mind. Irene Stevens, District 7.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Carolyn Harris, District 8.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Clyrissa (Indistinguishable) Brown, District 9.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Regina Fortner, District 10.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Denise Proffitt, District 11.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Patricia Davis, District 12.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Lynn Swanson, District 13.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Sandra Dobmeier, District 14.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Melissa Pearce, District 15.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Mary Lou Caldwell, District 16.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Victoria Salazar, District 17.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Sharon Linton, District 18.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Jerry Royse, District 19.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Charlene Parker, District 20.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Ronda Bower, District 21.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. And if you're wondering why I'm repeating "present," it's just so that our court reporter can document this for the record.
I will now read the alternates. Diane Sullivan, District 1.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Janice Bailey, District 2.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Absent.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is absent. Janice Bailey is not in the room? Okay. Karen Rediker, District 3.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Jacqueline Parrish, District 4.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Carol Simmons, District 6.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Maria Holloway, District 7.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Donald Harris, District 8.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: He is present. Felicia Evans-Walls, District 9.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Christina Alexander, District 10.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Judy Davis, District 11.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Absent.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is absent. Rose Williams, District 12.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Terri Young, District 13.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Judy Steinhouse, District 14.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Robin Ballhagen, District 15.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Alma Fowlkes, District 16.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. June Schow, District 17.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Carolyn Walker, District 18.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Absent.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Carolyn Walker is absent. Sharon Thornton, District 20.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: Present. Vera Hendrickson, District 21.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. Those present without a vote are National Judge Advocate Paula Raymond.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: She is present. National Adjutant Pat Kemper. Present. National Assistant Adjutant Bunny Clos.
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS HOGUE: Present.
ADJUTANT KEMPER: And for the people on the West Wing who didn't hear, she is present. (Laughter)
(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and Commander Franz returned to the podium.)
COMMANDER FRANZ: Thank you, Pat. At this first National Executive Committee meeting for the year of 2019–2020 we must nominate and elect two members from the even-numbered districts to the National Finance Committee. Do I hear any nominations for the first position?
(Response of "Odd, not even.")
COMMANDER FRANZ: Odd. Odd. Oops. (Laughter)
DISTRICT 7 NEC SANDRA DOBMEIER: Sandy Dobmeier, District 14, I nominate Clyrissa Brown from District 9.
COMMANDER FRANZ: Are there any—may I have a second, please.
DISTRICT 10 NEC REGINA FORTNER: Regina Fortner, District 10, Unit 130, I second it.
COMMANDER FRANZ: Are there any other nominations for the first position? Hearing none, I declare nominations closed. Clyrissa, do you accept?
DISTRICT 9 NEC CLYRISSA BROWN: I accept.
COMMANDER FRANZ: The nomination for the Finance Committee. All in favor of Clyrissa signify by saying aye; all opposed. Ayes have it. Motion carried. Clyrissa has been elected to the Finance Committee.
Do I hear any nominations for the second position?
DISTRICT 14 NEC DOBMEIER: Sandy Dobmeier, District 14, I nominate Denise Proffitt from District 13—excuse me, she's District 11, not 13.
COMMANDER FRANZ: May I have a second, please.
MS. KATHY DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, Texas, I nominate Evelyn –
COMMANDER FRANZ: You're not an NEC. It's got to be an NEC.
MS. DUNHAM: Oh.
DISTRICT 13 NEC TERRI YOUNG: Terri Young, Elkhart 19, District 13, Lynn Swanson.
COMMANDER FRANZ: We've got—well, I'll call for any other nominations. We need a second for Denise.
DISTRICT 10 NEC FORTNER: Regina Fortner, District 10, Unit 130, I give a second.
COMMANDER FRANZ: For Denise Proffitt.
DISTRICT 10 NEC FORTNER: Yes.
COMMANDER FRANZ: Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed. All in favor of electing Denise Proffitt for the Finance Committee say aye; any opposed. The ayes have it. Denise Proffitt has been elected to the National Finance Committee.
A chairman to the Finance Committee will be selected at a brief meeting immediately following the National Officer and Chairman meeting.

Since members of the National Executive Committee and National Finance Committee are in a position to influence the actions of the DAV Auxiliary with respect to matters decided by the Committees, a Conflict of Interest Policy has been established and must be acknowledged by the members of the National Executive Committee.

This document is being passed around for the review and the signature of each member of the National Executive Committee.

Please see that it is given to Pat Kemper or a member of her staff when all signatures have been affixed. Please do not leave this meeting until you have signed this document.

My appointments for 2019–2020 are National Adjutant Pat Kemper; (Applause) Assistant National Adjutant Bunny Clos; (Applause) National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus; (Applause) Caregiver Initiative Chairman, Melissa Pierce; (Applause)

Caregiver Initiative Event Coordinator, Bunny Clos; (Applause) History Book, Harold Holloway; (Applause) Junior Activities, Darlene Hanneman; (Applause)

VAVS, Melissa Pierce; (Applause) Deputy VAVS, Velma Steinman (Applause) and Ann Glende; (Applause) Sergeant-at-Arms Terry Grabowski; (Applause) and the Education Program Committee, Ellen Timmerman chairman, Diane Franz and Lynn Prosser; (Applause)

Interim Constitution and Bylaws, Judy Steinhouse chairman, (Applause) Delores Roussey and Sylvia Heath. (Applause)

I am also appointing an exploratory Service Program Committee for the purpose of researching programs that align with our mission and serve disabled veterans and their families and the two people to do the committee is Patti Rapisand and Donna Adams. (Applause)

I would like to appoint a Caregiver Initiative Committee that will be chaired by Melissa Pierce and will research caregiver self-care activities and formulate a business plan for expanding the program; and they are Sandy Dobmeier and Donna Tanner.

Outstanding Member of the Year Committee Fran Costa, Craig Johniken and Ellen Timmerman. (Applause) Dispute Resolution Committee, Judy Steinhouse and Delores Roussey. (Applause)

And the following chairmanships go to their respective national office: Community Service, Linda Gerke; (Applause) Americanism, Ann Marie Hurley; (Applause) Legislation, Julie—Julie; (Applause) Membership, Darlene Spence; (Applause) and Mae Holmes, the Senior Vice Lynn Prosser. (Applause)

I now ask the National Executive Committee for the approval my appointments for 2019-2020. May I have a motion.

DISTRICT 10 NEC FORTNER: Regina Fortner, District 10, Unit 130, I make a motion to approve.

COMMANDER FRANZ: I have a motion to approve. May I have a second, please.

DISTRICT 1 NEC SHARON DUFAULT: Sharon Dufault, Massachusetts, I second that motion.

COMMANDER FRANZ: District.

DISTRICT 1 NEC DUFAULT: Oh, District 1.

COMMANDER FRANZ: All in favor of these appointments signify by saying aye; any opposed. Ayes carry it. The motion carries. (Applause)

At this time I would also like to ask the approval of the National Executive Committee that should there be a problem within a unit or state department that results in national intervention I would like to have a motion that I be allowed to appoint a special committees. May I have a motion?

DISTRICT 10 NEC FORTNER: Regina Fortner, District 10, Unit 130, I make a motion that you are able to appoint a committee.

COMMANDER FRANZ: May I have a second, please.

DISTRICT 1 NEC DUFAULT: Sharon Dufault, District 1, I second that.

COMMANDER FRANZ: All in favor—it's been moved and seconded. All in favor of the special committee appointments signify by saying aye; opposed. Ayes have it. The vote carries.

Is there anything to be brought before the Committee before we close for announcements? I call on National Adjutant Kemper for announcements.

(Whereupon, Commander Franz withdrew from and Adjutant Kemper advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: I would like to ask the NECs, the members of the NEC and Alternates to stay after the adjournment of the meeting. It will only be a few minutes.

National officers and chairmen, make sure you have filled out the information that has been handed to you and also the W-9 if you have not previously submitted one of those forms. So you can give that information to Ann, Bunny or myself.

National officers and chairmen, national officers and appointees, we will have a brief meeting immediately following this meeting so please stay in the room.

And for the National Executive Committee, we will communicate via email as often as possible to keep costs down for postage and for more expeditious activity processing.

So make sure if you change your email addresses throughout the year that you advise us. Because unless the email bounces back we have no way of knowing that you did not receive the email.

And you must respond to the ballots. If we send you a ballot, please reply saying "received." And then also complete the ballot and return.

Please read any instructions we send to you. We really try to provide clear and concise instructions such as time, place, location, due date, all these deadlines. So please help us out because it seems like we're getting a little lax with that.

Always feel free to contact national headquarters with questions. I request that if you email a member of my staff that you copy me.

And matters of a serious nature must always be directed to my attention, not to a member of the staff. If I feel it needs to be dispensed to someone else, then I will handle that.

And a case in point, I don't know how many emails are sitting in Billie's inbox right now waiting for a response. So if you send directly to them, just copy me so we can just keep our communication going.

Observe deadlines. Read all the information.

One thing I would like to ask this Committee to do is to think between now and fall conference, our first meeting there. We are trying to gather information from our units.

We discussed this last year at the NEC meeting at national convention. Things sort of just, you know, disintegrated from there due to some conflicting and confusing information.

But we did send out Mae Holmes reports to the units. We send out information to distribute the Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award form, the report form, to all units to complete whether your state departments judge the reports or not.

We wanted this information because you all sat in there at the joint opening and you saw the DAV National Adjutant report and they put down miles. They put activities. They have all these statistics.

I don't have any statistics. I can't brag—we can't brag about ourselves. We know what we do as units or state departments, as individuals. But if I don't have the information; we can't disburse it.

And that's a good way to showcase our organization. Amazing things are being done by our members. So what I am asking you to do is think about something between now and the next meeting.

How do you think we can best communicate with our units, reach our units and get that much-needed information? So we will discuss it at fall conference.

I would like to add that—and this actually goes for anyone, whether you are an NEC officer or a unit member—but when traveling to the national convention, state convention, a state conference, district conference, national fall conference, if you receive funds from your unit, state department, district, for travel, you must be present at the events.

So that doesn't mean you come to the meeting and then go to Disney for the day. I mean that you come to the convention and check in the hotel and then go on your excursions.

So I say use your conscience. If you'd rather go to Magic Kingdom you should return money that was advanced to you by the (Applause) units and departments. It's becoming more and more common.

We are hearing that. And that's not what we are about. We are volunteers. Obviously the money that the units and state departments allot are very helpful.

But it's not for you to go and travel on your excursions. So we will try to put more information like that out so it gets spread around the country to all the units and state departments.

And, likewise, if you are traveling on national funds and you are also receiving funds from your unit or your state department, you use—you charge the national funds first and then if there is any additional expenses then you would use your state funds.

Always account. Always provide receipts, not just to national, but then whatever money you use from your state department or your unit you want to provide receipts back to them for accounting because financial reports are getting more and more demanding as far as information and receipts.

So things are being looked at and there is some auditing going on by the IRS. So we just want to make sure we are all covered and as long as we do the right thing then we are in good shape.

Finance Committee will meet after these other meetings that we are going to have.

The staging information for this evening, the national officers and NECs are to meet in the Conway Room. The Conway Room is on this level but on the other side—and it's down on the left so it's across from the Gatlin Ballroom—at 5:30. The Conway Room at 5:30.

Now, based on experiences I have had in the last two conventions I want to say be there at 5:15 just so I know everybody is present.

All I can say is do not come at 5:31 or later. Please, don't make me chase after you. So be there by 5:30. Check in with Bunny. Bunny is going to have the list.

So for everyone else, the Introduction of National Officers and Dinner is in the Gatlin area at 6:30. But, again, national officers, NEC, meet at 5:30 in the Conway Room.

You are going to need your badges when you enter the room. And if you have not yet gotten your table assignment, find out where you need to get your assignment.

They're not saving seats. You just have your table assigned and you go sit there. So I would say everybody has probably gotten their table assignments.

(Response of "No.")

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Wow. Okay. So you will pick them up after the meeting. You will have to go back over to check on your table assignment.

(Response of "Yes.")

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Information was in your packets about the fall conference in Lexington next month and, also, next year's national convention.

We will have info posted online. Just as an advance notice, the 2020 National Fall Conference will be held in Lawrenceburg, Indiana. That's in Southern Indiana. And it's about 16 miles from the Cincinnati, Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport.

So typically if we have had an event in Cincinnati you fly into CVG Airport and you go north to Cincinnati.

Next year at the 2020 Fall Conference one thing the hotel is going to do is they are going to provide some transportation because since it's in Southern Indiana you don't have the taxi service and the transportation.

So we have to work out the logistics but we will have to ask for your help next year in letting us know your air arrival date. So if you are flying in that way they will know what time to meet you at the airport.

And they will be there on Thursday. They will be picking up on Thursday and they will be transporting back to the airport on Sunday. We will give you information on that as time goes on.

This hotel does have complimentary parking. It's a parking garage. And there will be a free breakfast but it will be at a private dining room, not in the hotel restaurant.

So, again, I do ask for the NECs just to stay for a few moments after this adjourns. And then the national officers and appointees will also stay and the Finance Committee also stays. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and Commander Franz returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Thank you, Pat.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: So someone just asked when the dates were for which? Which fall conference? This? Twenty-twenty or 2019?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Twenty-twenty.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Twenty-twenty. Those dates are October 1 through the 3rd. And it will be at the hotel—it's a DoubleTree by Hilton. And there will be another overflow hotel.

It's also owned—it's owned by, there is a casino hotel nearby and there will be a shuttle that runs back and forth to the casino but there will also be some sleeping rooms at the casino hotel, as well. It's all the same property. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and Commander Franz returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Thank you, Pat. We will now have our closing prayer. (Three raps of the gavel.)

(Whereupon, the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: Please join me first in giving Pat, Bunny and Ann a round of applause for doing their hard work this week and making a success. (Applause)

We truly appreciate—you know, being three people in that is, in the office instead of four is hard enough but all you do every day in offices that normally would have probably 10. Thank you so much.

Also, if anyone finds that they have a member that's deceased that you would like me to send a card to their family, you have someone that is discouraged that needs a little bit of support, you can either let Pat know or you can send me an email directly. It's AuraLee63@aol.com. So my name, 63, at aol. No hyphen, though, on that one. And I will gladly send out cards.

Just let me know because my ESP is not very good these days so I do need a name and address. I do not have the national list of names and addresses so you do have to send me a full address.

Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, as we go forward for this coming year we ask that you will surround us with your love. Help us to be compassionate to each other and our members at

home. Please unite us, both us and the DAV working together for the betterment of our veterans and their families.

We pray for all of our new officers and our NECs and alternates. Bless their travels. Bless their mission. And help us always to keep our organization and our mission of caring for veterans and their families first and foremost in all of our activities.

Please guide our travels home. Bless us and keep us until we meet again. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER FRANZ: Please be seated. (One gave rap.) If there is no further business, I would like to have a motion for adjournment.

DISTRICT 19 NEC JERRY ROYSE: Jerry Royse, (Indistinguishable) County 5, Oregon, District 19, I make a motion to adjourn.

COMMANDER FRANZ: May I have a second, please.

DISTRICT 11 NEC DENISE PROFFITT: Denise Proffitt, District 11, I second that.

COMMANDER FRANZ: We have a motion and a second to adjournment. All in favor; opposed. Carried.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on Tuesday, August 6, 2019, at 10:37 a.m.)

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Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters

Financial Statements as of and for the Year Ended December 31, 2018, and Independent Auditors' Report

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the National Finance Committee of
Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters (the "Auxiliary"), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2018, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Auxiliary's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Auxiliary's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Auxiliary as of December 31, 2018, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 2 to the financial statements, in 2018, the Auxiliary adopted Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

April 9, 2019

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018

ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
GENERAL ASSETS:		LIABILITIES:	
Cash	$ 525,005	Accounts payable and other liabilities	$ 2,629,513
Accounts receivable	8,035	Contributions distributable to state departments	394,944
Inventory	27,147	Deferred membership fees	240,018
Investments	7,944,191		
Accrued interest receivable	18,599	Total liabilities	3,264,475
Prepaid expenses	7,184		
Office equipment—net	1,428	LIFE MEMBERSHIP—Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	6,377,480
SERVICE PROGRAM ASSETS:			
Cash	9,146	NET ASSETS:	
Investments	342,610	Without Donor Restrictions	5,267,134
Receivable from General fund	36,756	With Donor Restrictions:	
		Service Program	388,512
DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM ASSETS:		Disaster Relief Program	7,253
Receivable from General fund	7,253	Education Loan/Scholarship Program	1,139,127
EDUCATION LOAN/SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ASSETS:		Total net assets	6,802,026
Cash	180,659		
Investments	530,194		
Loans receivable (less reserve of $9,677)	27,474		
Receivable from General fund	400,800		
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ASSETS:			
Investments	4,399,021		
Accrued interest receivable	11,870		
Receivable from General fund	1,966,609		
TOTAL	$16,443,981	TOTAL	$16,443,981

See notes to the financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions			Total
		Service Program	Disaster Relief Program	Education Loan/ Scholarship Program	
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:					
Membership fees and mandates	$ -	$ 664	$ -	$ 677	$ 1,341
Life membership distributions	484,920				484,920
Contributions	162,468	8,779	8,045	18,621	197,913
Contributed facilities	8,204				8,204
Conference and meetings	27,162				27,162
National convention	23,599				23,599
Net investment return	(495,894)	(13,463)		(20,315)	(529,672)
Net assets released from restrictions	67,674	(3,424)	(16,000)	(48,250)	-
Other	320				320
Total support and revenue	278,453	(7,444)	(7,955)	(49,267)	213,787
EXPENSES:					
Program services	710,083				710,083
Fundraising costs	89,530				89,530
General and administrative	226,318				226,318
Total expenses	1,025,931	-	-	-	1,025,931
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(747,478)	(7,444)	(7,955)	(49,267)	(812,144)
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	6,014,612	395,956	15,208	1,188,394	7,614,170
NET ASSETS—End of year	$5,267,134	$388,512	$ 7,253	$1,139,127	$6,802,026

See notes to the financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

	Program Services	Fund Raising Costs	General and Administrative	Total Expenses
Salaries and wages	$213,789	$18,562	$ 89,282	$ 321,633
Employee benefits	62,175	5,277	25,457	92,909
Distributions to state departments	59,856			59,856
Fundraising expenses		63,140		63,140
Payroll taxes	16,601	1,265	6,846	24,712
Conferences and meetings	75,247			75,247
Expenses of national convention	88,816			88,816
Printing, stationery, and office supplies	14,191		19,850	34,041
Expenses of national commander and officers	62,560			62,560
Contributed facilities	5,467	433	2,304	8,204
Postage	67		6,409	6,476
Travel	10,641		26	10,667
Professional fees	3,371	630	44,427	48,428
Service program benefits	3,424			3,424
Scholarship program benefits	48,250			48,250
Disaster program benefits	16,000			16,000
Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services, memberships, and other awards	26,570			26,570
Other	3,058	223	31,717	34,998
Total	$710,083	$89,530	$226,318	$1,025,931

See notes to the financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	$ (812,144)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:	
Change in depreciation (appreciation) in investments	1,086,279
Realized investment gains	7,920
Depreciation	1,649
Changes in assets and liabilities:	
Accrued interest receivable	(8,933)
Inventory	(12,114)
Accounts receivable	7,760
Prepaid expenses	(4,274)
Receivable from General Fund	(311,350)
Accounts payable and other liabilities	293,658
Contributions distributable to state departments	(6,609)
Deferred membership fees	384
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	(275,944)
Net cash used in operating activities	(33,718)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Purchases of investments	(1,999,857)
Proceeds from sale of investments	2,021,579
Collections from repayment of education loans	11,235
Net cash provided by investing activities	32,957
NET DECREASE IN CASH	(761)
CASH:	
Beginning of year	715,571
End of year	$ 714,810

See notes to the financial statements.

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters (DAVA) is a not-for-profit membership and service organization formed under the provisions of the National Constitution of Disabled American Veterans (DAV). DAVA and its membership are organized for the betterment and improvement of the nation's disabled veterans and their families and for cooperation with all patriotic organizations and public agencies devoted to this purpose through volunteer work at veterans' hospitals, community service, educational assistance, legislative action, and encouraging good citizenship and patriotism.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements—The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

New Accounting Standards—In May 2014, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2014-09, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. ASU No. 2014-09 requires an entity to recognize revenue in a way that depicts the transfer of promised goods or services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods and services. ASU No. 2014-09 is effective for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018, and has the option to be applied using a full retrospective transition method or a modified retrospective transition method; early adoption is permitted. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it will not have a material impact on DAVA's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations.

In August 2018, FASB issued ASU No. 2018-13, *Fair Value Measurement (Topic 820): Disclosure Framework—Changes to the Disclosure Requirements for Fair Value Measurement*. The amendments in this Update modify the disclosure requirements on fair value measurements in Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurement*, based on the concepts in the concepts statement, including the consideration of costs and benefits. The effective date of ASU No. 2018-13 is for all entities for fiscal years, and interim periods within those fiscal years, beginning after December 15, 2019. Early adoption is permitted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact on the financial statements.

Newly Adopted Accounting Principles—DAVA implemented FASB ASU No. 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958) Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*, in the current year, applying the changes retrospectively. The new standards change the following aspects of the financial statements:

- The temporarily restricted net asset class has been renamed net assets with donor restrictions.
- The unrestricted net asset class has been renamed net assets without donor restrictions.

- The financial statements include a disclosure about liquidity and availability of resources (see note below).
- The financial statements include a disclosure for net assets released from donor restrictions (Note 6).

Cash—DAVA maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. DAVA has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Education Loan Receivable—Students who receive education loans are required to begin repayment six months after completion of their educational programs. DAVA maintains a reserve for uncollectible loans.

Investments—Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of DAVA's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments. DAVA's policy is to report cash equivalents, which includes money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

Contributions—Contributions received are recorded at their fair value and are classified as without donor restrictions or with donor restrictions for purpose. All contributions are considered without donor restrictions, unless specifically restricted by the donor. Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions.

Accounts Receivable—Amounts recorded as accounts receivable are reduced to their net realizable value, as appropriate.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more program or supporting services of the DAVA. Those expenses include salaries, benefits and payroll taxes, contributed facilities, telephone, and depreciation. These expenses are allocated between program, fundraising, and administrative based on the percentage of time spent by DAVA staff members on tasks related to each function.

Liquidity and Availability of Financial Assets—The DAVA's working capital and cash flows are attributable to the contributions received from general donations throughout the year.

The following reflects DAVA's financial assets at December 31, 2018, reduced by the amount not available for general use within one year of the statement of financial position date due to donor restrictions.

Total assets, excluding nonfinancial assets	$ 16,408,222
Subtract: Life Membership Fund	(6,377,500)
Subtract: With donor restrictions for specific purposes	(1,534,892)
Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	$ 8,495,830

The DAVA has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its general expenditures, liabilities, and other obligations come due. In addition, as part of its liquidity

management, the DAVA invests cash in excess of daily requirements in various long-term investments. The DAVA's long-term investments, such as common stocks, index funds, Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), and actively managed mutual funds, are invested with the intent on providing a safe return on investments for the general fund use.

Deferred Membership Fees—DAVA accounts for membership fees by deferring fees received in advance of the membership year (July 1 to June 30) and amortizing them to revenue ratably during the membership year for which they apply.

Income Taxes—As a not-for-profit service organization, DAVA has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income taxes as a 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to DAVA are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Use of Estimates—The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

3. LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Under the bylaws of DAVA, any eligible person may become a life member. Amounts paid for membership are placed in separate life membership accounts and invested; the only withdrawals permitted from these accounts are amounts required to pay local units, state departments, and National Headquarters (DAVA) per capita dues for services to be provided to the life members. Generally, life membership assets for National Headquarters per capita dues are transferred to the general assets of DAVA at the beginning of the membership year (July 1) and deferred and recognized as revenue in the statement of activities over the course of the membership year. The per capita chapter and department dues are distributed at the beginning of the membership year. The reserve for future distribution of membership dues represents the liability for the future life membership distributions to DAVA, departments, and units to assist with providing member services.

The changes during 2018 in the reserve for future distribution of life membership dues are as follows:

Balance—January 1, 2018	$ 6,653,424
Additions:	
Membership dues received	374,204
Earnings on invested assets	168,279
Total additions	542,483
Deductions:	
Dues to National Headquarters	481,330
Dues to local units	20,725
Dues to state departments	56,858
Loss on sale of investments	35,072
Investment fee	10,259
Total deductions	604,244
Change in depreciation of investments	(214,183)
Balance—December 31, 2018	$ 6,377,480

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Accounting Standards Codification 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, provides a framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value, as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The DAVA did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3) during 2018.

The DAVA's policy is to recognize transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers between Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 during 2018.

Asset Valuation Techniques—Valuation techniques used maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs. The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets recorded at fair value. There has been no change in the methodologies used at December 31, 2018.

Cash equivalents, composed of money market funds, are categorized as Level 1. Such investments are valued at cost, which approximates fair value. The money market fund represents DAVA's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

Common stocks, categorized as Level 1, are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

Shares of registered investment companies (mutual funds) are categorized as Level 1. They are valued at quoted market prices that represent the net asset value of shares held at year-end.

The major categories of financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2018, are as follows:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
Asset Category	**Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)**	**Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)**	**Total**
General fund:			
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 262,554	$ -	$ 262,554
Common stocks	772,012		772,012
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	2,600,730		2,600,730
International fixed income funds	226,594		226,594
Domestic equity funds	2,886,485		2,886,485
International equity funds	1,195,816		1,195,816
Total mutual funds/ETFs	6,909,625	-	6,909,625
Total	$ 7,944,191	$ -	$ 7,944,191
Service program:			
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 8,123	$ -	$ 8,123
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	161,754		161,754
Domestic equity funds	156,733		156,733
International equity funds	16,000		16,000
Total mutual funds/ETFs	334,487	-	334,487
Total	$ 342,610	$ -	$ 342,610
Education Loan/Scholarship program:			
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 14,998	$ -	$ 14,998
Common stocks	76,004		76,004
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	60,855		60,855
Domestic equity funds	354,115		354,115
International equity funds	24,222		24,222
Total mutual funds/ETFs	439,192	-	439,192
Total	$ 530,194	$ -	$ 530,194
Life membership:			
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 142,161	$ -	$ 142,161
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	3,374,106		3,374,106
International fixed-income funds	182,062		182,062
Domestic equity funds	566,833		566,833
International equity funds	133,859		133,859
Total mutual funds/ETFs	4,256,860	-	4,256,860
Total	$ 4,399,021	$ -	$ 4,399,021

5. FREEDOMS FOUNDATION

At the 2018 National Convention, the DAVA National Executive Committee approved the discontinuation of the DAVA's support of the Freedoms Foundation in Valley Forge, PA. The Committee further decided that the funds that were earmarked for the Freedoms Foundation should be transferred to the Scholarship Fund. The amount of the funds that were transferred was $9,081.

6. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS:

Net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes or by occurrence of the passage of time or other events specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions are as follows:

	2018
Subject to expenditure for specified purpose:	
Service Program	$ 3,424
Disaster Relief Program	16,000
Education Loan/Scholarship Program	48,250
	$67,674

Service Program—Donations from individuals and amounts received from each unit as a mandate for the service program are recorded as net assets with donor restrictions, which are used for persons eligible for DAVA who are in need of temporary financial assistance in accordance with the bylaws of DAVA. The total amount of assistance is limited to $1,000 per individual and in the aggregate is limited to total net assets with purpose restrictions. Benefits are paid directly to the service provider and not to the individual.

Disaster Relief Program—Donations from units and individuals for disaster relief are recorded as net assets with donor restrictions, which are used for members of DAV and DAVA who are in need of temporary financial assistance due to natural disaster, such as flood or earthquake. Donations from this fund are made to DAV and benefits are paid by DAV directly to the individual.

Education Loan/Scholarship Program—Donations from individuals and amounts received from each unit as a mandate for scholarships are recorded as net assets with donor restrictions from which scholarships are awarded to students in accordance with the bylaws of DAVA. Scholarships are paid directly to the educational institution and not to the student. In 2018, there were 33 scholarships in amounts ranging from $1,000 to $2,250 issued to selected DAVA member applicants for a total of $48,250. The existing education loans are still required to be repaid in accordance with the terms of the original loan agreements, which includes full repayment within seven years of graduation or withdrawal from school. At December 31, 2018, the total amount of loans outstanding was $27,474, net of reserve.

7. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Certain employees of DAVA are covered by the Disabled American Veterans Retirement Plan, a defined benefit pension plan. The benefits are based on years of service and the employee's compensation. Contributions are intended to provide not only for benefits attributed to service to-date, but also for those expected in the future. In 2018, DAV charged DAVA $92,909 for its share of the retirement plan cost, as well as other benefits for employees, including health and life insurance and contributions to a defined contribution plan.

DAV provides certain health care and life insurance benefits for its retired employees and their spouses. All employees of DAVA may become eligible for these benefits if they reach normal retirement age while working for DAVA. In 2018, DAV did not charge DAVA for these benefits. Such amounts are immaterial.

8. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

DAV provides services to the DAVA, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of DAVA.

DAVA occupies space in the DAV National Headquarters' building and also uses certain office equipment owned by DAV. No fees are charged for such usage. The value of these contributed facilities is estimated to be $8,204 in 2018 and is included as revenue and expense in the accompanying statement of activities.

Certain costs are paid by DAV National Headquarters on behalf of DAVA. Such costs are reimbursed by DAVA. As of December 31, 2018, DAVA owed approximately $89,216 for such costs, which is recorded as an accounts payable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

DAV National Headquarters also processes membership dues on behalf of DAVA. The amounts collected are remitted to DAVA. As of December 31, 2018, DAVA was due approximately $8,035 for dues collected, which is recorded as an accounts receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

9. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2018, but before April 9, 2019, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, that require consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the financial statements.

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