RESOLUTION 16 – 25

TINNITUS & HEARING LOSS PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION

WHEREAS, many veterans, whether or not they served in combat or worked in certain occupational specialties, have higher than average incidences of hearing loss or tinnitus as a result of their time in service; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the second highest service-connected disability granted by the VA has been for hearing loss and tinnitus; and

WHEREAS, an Institute of Medicine (IOM) study released in 2005 indicated that the majority of servicemembers are exposed to some form of auditory trauma, including high-level repetitive noise, during their time in service leading to some level of hearing loss and/or tinnitus and given these findings, reasonable doubt must be resolved in favor of veterans who suffered hearing loss and/or tinnitus as a result of their service in the military; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS urge Congress and the VA to grant service connection on a presumptive basis for any veteran diagnosed after discharge with hearing loss and/or tinnitus when there is evidence that the veteran:

- participated in combat operations;
- worked in a position or occupational specialty likely to have damaged the veteran’s hearing; or
- was exposed to any form of auditory trauma.