



2021-2022 DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

AMVETS

PREPARED BY

*AMVETS Legislative
Committee*

PREPARED FOR

*AMVETS
Membership*



2021 National Convention - Greensboro, NC

BENEFITS

Resolution 22-01

Subject: Increase Veterans Burial Benefits

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, the VA pays a higher level of burial benefits upon the death of a veteran who dies from a service-connected illness or disability and lesser burial benefits upon the death of a wartime veteran who dies from a non-service-connected illness or disability; and

WHEREAS, the current VA burial expense payment for a service-related death is up to \$2,000 for those occurring after September 11, 2001, or up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to September 11, 2001. For non-service related deaths VA will pay up to \$749 toward burial and funeral expenses for deaths on or after October 1, 2016 if hospitalized by VA at time of death, or \$300 if not hospitalized by VA at time of death. Due to the dramatic increase in private sector funeral expenses, this benefit has been seriously eroded over the years; and

WHEREAS, while these benefits were never intended to cover the full costs of burial, they now pay for only a small fraction of what they covered in 1973 when the federal government first started paying burial benefits; and

WHEREAS, the VA should provide the resources needed to meet increasing private-sector costs of burial; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS believes there is still a serious deficit between the original value of the plot allowance benefit and its current value. Congress should increase the plot allowance for all eligible veterans and expand the eligibility for the plot allowance for all veterans who might be eligible for burial in a national cemetery, not just those who served during wartime; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS urges Congress and the Administration to provide the resources required to meet the critical and sensitive nature of the National Cemetery Administration's mission thereby fulfilling the nation's commitment to all veterans who have served their country so honorably and faithfully.

Draft Resolution 22-02

Subject: Concurrent Receipt

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, military retirees are paying for their own disability with their military retired pay. This unfair policy has adversely impacted disabled veterans and their families for more than a century, but was partially repealed by Congress in 2004; and

WHEREAS, under current law disabled veterans with 20-plus years of active military service who are also in receipt of a V A disability determination of 50 percent or higher may retain both military retirement pay and their VA compensation; and

WHEREAS, the law did not provide the same equity to service-connected disabled military retirees with VA ratings of 40 percent or below, or Chapter 61 retirees who were medically retired with less than 20 years, regardless of VA disability rating; and

WHEREAS, a disabled veteran who does not retire from military service but elects instead to pursue a civilian career after enlistment expires can receive full compensation and full civilian retired pay. AMVETS believes that a veteran who has served this country for 20 years should have that same right and not be penalized for choosing a military career rather than a civilian career; and

WHEREAS, no other category of federal employee faces the same restriction on disability and retirement pay; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS supports legislation that would provide for the full and immediate concurrent receipt of military retirement pay and VA disability compensation, without offset, regardless of their VA rating percentage in order to end the unfair policy of forcing many military longevity retirees to forfeit some of their retired pay in order to receive equal amounts of disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Draft Resolution 22-03

Subject: Tinnitus & Hearing Loss Presumptive Service-Connection

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

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, various studies indicate 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.

Draft Resolution 22-04

Subject: VA Claims & Appeals

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, as of March 2021 the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has over 350,00 claims pending for disability compensation and pension claims in addition to 212,000 that have been pending for more than 125 days, often referred to as backlogged claims; and

WHEREAS, due to the increasing complexity of both VA claims and appeals, the need for compliance with Court of Veterans Appeals claims decisions, continued VA requirements for repetitive and unnecessary examinations and the severe staffing shortages, progress on cases remains slow and unsatisfactory; and

WHEREAS, due to the impending drawdown, the demand for VA services and resources will continue to rise and is expected to remain high for the foreseeable future; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS urge Congress to ensure adequate funding and trained staff levels for the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve upon the timeliness and accuracy of all claims and appeals being filed; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS push for the Veterans Benefit Administration to process timely and accurate claims the first time they are reviewed, as well as the immediate implementation of a uniform data claims processing system, as well as, improved training for both VA claims and appeals processors to ensure a timely and accurate claims and appeals process for every veteran.

EMPLOYMEN T & HOUSING

Draft Resolution 22-05

Subject: Civilian Credentials for Military Training & Experience

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, AMVETS recognizes that it is in the best interest of our nation to have a strong and viable veterans' employment and training system in place. Unfortunately, the unemployment rate among our nation's veterans continues to be an area of intense focus and concern, much of which is related to issues of post-service licensure and credentials; and

WHEREAS, Congress has begun to recognize the fact that veterans of all eras, especially recently separated and older veterans, find it difficult to obtain meaningful, living-wage employment. The importance of licensing and credentialing, as an integral part of the overall veteran transition process, cannot be overemphasized; and

WHEREAS, while there are certain employment programs in place for veterans, such programs must have a pro-active, long-term career focus which, not only recognize the problems of licensing and credentialing, but develops workable solutions; and

WHEREAS, every year between 240,000 and 360,000 military members make the transition from military to civilian life and employment, and as the drawdown continues, more than a million service members are expected to transition over the next few years; and

WHEREAS, as a nation we need to be prepared to do our part to assist our transitioning service members with living-wage employment opportunities so that they become valued additions to our society and economy and are able to adequately support their families; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS should encourage Congress to engage in a national dialogue to include the Administration, DoD, VA, DOL, governors, state adjutant generals, employers, trade and professional associations, and licensing and credentialing entities, to establish a process so military training meets civilian certification and licensing requirements for states in which veterans choose to live once they leave the military.

Draft Resolution 22-06

SUBJECT: Continue Fighting to End Veteran Homelessness

SOURCE: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, the streets of many American cities continue to be inhabited by veterans who lack adequate food and housing; and

WHEREAS, veteran homelessness has decreased over the last few years thanks to multi-agency efforts at the federal level; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of female veterans, many with dependent children, are joining the ranks of homeless veterans; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS ensure that the issue of veteran homelessness remains a priority for both the Administration and Congress; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS encourages Congress to increase the availability of affordable housing; expand education/training programs; and provide employment opportunities until all veterans are properly housed and gainfully employed.

HEALTH CARE

Draft Resolution 22-07

SUBJECT: Posttraumatic Growth

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), the veteran suicide rate has increased steadily every year since 2001 and is especially high among 18-24 year old OEF/OIF/OND combat veterans; and

WHEREAS, the current approach to mental health care is limited and flawed by focusing on pharmacotherapy and symptomatic treatment, resulting in countless veterans reporting frustration with overmedication, addiction, overdoses, side-effects and ineffectiveness of medications; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS supports complementary and alternative treatments that are not considered to be standard in the current practice of western medicine; and

WHEREAS, many veterans have had their personal or professional lives directly or indirectly impacted by the misconceptions and perceived issues of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, this problem is clearly linked to stigma as it is a compounded assumption that every combat veteran with PTSD is a 'damaged hero'; and

WHEREAS, post-traumatic growth (PTG) is a theory that explains the phenomenon of positive personal change that emerges in the aftermath of a traumatic experience; and

WHEREAS, PTG can be reflected by positive adjustment, closer relationships, greater appreciation of life and improved self-efficacy; and

WHEREAS, non-profit organizations across the country have designed non-clinical programs designed to cultivate and facilitate post-traumatic growth amongst veterans struggling with PTSD and/or combat stress; and

WHEREAS, studies conducted on participants of these program have shown dramatic improvements in PTSD, depression, anxiety and insomnia; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS seek to promote and instill 'post-traumatic growth' rather than the narrative which is heavily embedded in American society that veterans return from war as 'broken heroes'; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to collaborate with non- profit mental health organizations that implement programs designed to cultivate

and facilitate post-traumatic growth amongst those struggling with posttraumatic stress disorder and/or combat stress to prevent suicide among veterans.

Draft Resolution 22-08

Subject: Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, the continued prevalence of military sexual assault continues to grow and has been the subject of numerous military reports, Congressional hearings, documentaries and media stories. Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is a heinous crime which is a disgrace to all of those who have worn the uniform of the Armed Services; and

WHEREAS, DoD and VA have made progress towards developing and implementing a policy that creates a tangible, visible deterrent to perpetrators through consistent prosecutions or other severely negative consequences to one's military careers, both departments must commit to improving their Integrated Mental Health Strategy; and

WHEREAS, the effects of untreated MST can be devastating to the overall health of veterans and in the successful transitioning back into their families and communities; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS calls on DoD to continue to enhance its MST awareness programs, and calls on VA to continually improve its MST treatment programs and to disseminate evidence- based clinical practice guidelines to clinicians who care for veterans who have suffered from MST; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS calls upon Congress to continue its oversight and hearings related to military sexual trauma care and benefits with the goal of improving VA and DoD collaboration and improving policies and practices for military sexual trauma care and disability compensation.

Draft Resolution 22-09

Subject: Toxic Exposure

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, military bases have historically used and disposed of chemical degreasers and other toxic substances that were later determined to contaminate drinking water and pose multiple health risks including cancers; reproductive disorders; birth defects; and numerous other serious difficulties; and

WHEREAS, countless combat deployed military personnel or those stationed on any of the 141 toxic bases within CONUS have been exposed to a wide variety of contaminants, through drinking water, general water usage, exposure through vapor seepage, soil contact, as well as exposure to toxic smoke from oil field fires or burn pits; and

WHEREAS, Vietnam veterans have been granted presumptive service-connection for conditions related to Agent Orange exposure; many other veterans, including Ft. McClellan; Blue Water Navy; Korean DMZ; C-123 air crews; Gulf War; and Iraq & Afghanistan are still arbitrarily and unfairly denied recognition of their exposures and therefore access to healthcare and compensation benefits; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS aggressively urge Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs to invest adequate resources to fully research, diagnose and treat conditions associated with toxic exposures. And that any significant developments stemming from the previously mentioned activities be shared with veterans as it becomes available; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS continues to seek system-wide changes related to military environmental hazards and toxic wounds, including:

- seeking improvements to the pre- and post-deployment health monitoring and assessment program to address all currently recognized and emergent environmental hazard and toxic wound health issues;
- seeking improvements to the DoD-VA health research systems so that they aggressively focus on treatments, diagnostic biomarkers and mapping out bio-pathology and symptoms for the full range of environmental hazard and toxic wound health issues;
- seeking the implementation of a seamless DoD-VA environmental health evaluation/treatment system to ensure medical evaluation, evidence-based

treatment, and ongoing medical surveillance for current and former service members suffering from toxic wounds; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS encourages the Department of Veterans Affairs to extend presumptive service-connection to all veterans suffering from conditions associated with toxic exposures while serving in the military.

Draft Resolution 22-10

Subject: VA Drug Pricing Initiatives

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, the VA is the primary source of medication for those veterans who are eligible for and receive services from the VA based upon their military service to our country; and

WHEREAS, recently there are efforts in various states, such as Washington, Louisiana, South Dakota and Maine, to require state governments to not pay more for their drug purchases for state employees and other state medical recipients than those paid by the VA; and

WHEREAS, in 2016 this issue was on the November 2016 California ballot as Proposition 61 where it was opposed by over 30 veterans' organizations; and

WHEREAS, California voters listened to the veterans' service organizations and overwhelmingly defeated Proposition 61 by a margin of 53.79 percent to 45.39 percent; and

WHEREAS, there is currently a ballot measure similar to Proposition 61 on the November 2017 ballot in Ohio; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, Issue 2, a ballot measure similar to Proposition 61 was on the ballot in Ohio and was opposed by over 15 veterans' organizations; and

WHEREAS, Ohio voters supported the veterans' service organization's position, as well as other non-profit organizations, overwhelmingly defeated Issue 2 by a margin of 79% to 21%; and

WHEREAS, these VA price controls were previously tried by Congress in the 1990s and after they proved to be unworkable, they were cancelled by Congress; and

WHEREAS, the VA stated that if Proposition 61 had passed it would have cost the VA an additional \$3.8 billion per year in increased drug prices and administrative costs; and

WHEREAS, if any of these ballot or legislative measures pass, it will undoubtedly require the VA and Department of Defense to raise medication co-payments and/or reduce services based upon their current budgetary constraints; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS shall oppose any effort to require any governmental agency, in any state, to align its drug pricing structure with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Draft Resolution 22-11

Subject: Expand Veteran Treatment Courts

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, 2017 marks the sixteenth straight year of America at war, and there are now more than 21 million U.S. veterans including nearly two million from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, the United States military instills a sense of honor, duty, leadership, commitment and respect, evident in the millions of veterans who have returned home to their communities as productive citizens, strengthened by their military experience; and

WHEREAS, an estimated twenty percent of veterans has symptoms of a mental disorder or cognitive impairment, and about 1 in 10 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan seen in the VA healthcare system have a substance use disorder and there is a well-established link between substance abuse and combat-related mental illness and an unprecedented number of veterans nationwide are appearing in the courts to face charges stemming directly from these issues; and

WHEREAS, Drug Courts evolved out of the necessity for a solution-based approach to an influx of drug abusing offenders before the courts; and the Drug Court model and the Mental Health Court model are the nation's most successful, cost effective, and scientifically validated tool to deal with substance abuse and mental health issues in the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Treatment Courts are hybrid Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts and have evolved out of the growing need for a treatment court model designed specifically for justice-involved veterans to maximize efficiency and economize resources while making use of the distinct military culture consistent among veterans; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Treatment Courts build upon this camaraderie by allowing participants to go through the treatment court process with people who are similarly situated and have common past experiences; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS advocates for the continued use and expansion of Veteran Treatment Courts across the country.

Draft Resolution 22-12

Subject: Add to the List of Agent Orange Presumptive Illnesses

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, AMVETS is a national organization of wartime veterans who have dedicated themselves to the service of their community, state, and nation; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs annually adds to or amends illness related diseases on Agent Orange; and

WHEREAS, 14 Agent Orange illnesses are listed, affecting 2.2 million veterans who served "boots on the ground" in Vietnam and Thailand from 1961-1971 and thousands more veterans in Korea from April 1, 1968 to August 31, 1971; and

WHEREAS, more than 34,000 Vietnam veterans have been subjected to countless delays while living with debilitating illnesses associated with their exposure to Agent Orange; and

WHEREAS, Congress has already acknowledged Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism as a service connected illness for Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange when they passed the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS hereby urges the Department of Veterans Affairs and the President of the United States to fully and speedily implement the legislation that was passed by Congress in 2020 that would establish a presumption of service connection for veterans suffering from Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism.

Draft Resolution 22-13

Subject: Support for the Rescheduling and Research of Cannabis as an Opioid Alternative

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) reported in 2014 that "more than 50 percent of all Veterans enrolled and receiving care at VHA (Veterans Health Administration) are affected by chronic pain, which is a much higher rate than in the general population. Veterans who suffer from chronic pain also experience much higher rates of other comorbidities (post traumatic stress disorder, depression, traumatic brain injury) and socioeconomic dynamics (disability, joblessness) that may contribute to the challenges of pain management when treated by opioids"; and

WHEREAS, from 2004 to 2012, VA increased the number of opioids prescribed to veterans by 77%--in 2012 nearly one-third of veterans receiving healthcare from VA were prescribed opioids. The Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law (CERL) cited a VA inspector general report: "Between 2010 and 2015, the number of veterans addicted to opioids rose 55 percent to a total of roughly 68,000. This figure represents about 13 percent of all veterans currently prescribed opioids"; and

WHEREAS, a 2011 study of VHA found that veterans were twice as likely to die from an accidental drug overdose, with opioids as primary agent; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs has since drastically reduced the number of opioids prescribed to veterans, but lacks effective, low-risk alternative medications for pain management; and

WHEREAS, many veterans are prescribed multiple medications for their service-connected injuries--including opioids, sedatives, and tranquilizers, all of which are recognized to have a high potential for abuse, with use potentially leading to severe psychological or physical dependence; and

WHEREAS, with a population of approximately 20 million , at least 20% of veterans have post traumatic stress, at least 50% experience chronic pain, approximately 20% have a traumatic brain injury, and there are significant rates of alcohol abuse, depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders; and

WHEREAS, this combination of mental, physical, and pharmaceutical challenges and risks helps explain why the suicide rate for veterans is 50% percent higher than those who never served in the military, and higher still for post-9/11 veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health of Human Services (HHS) has positively affirmed the medicinal value of cannabis as antioxidants and neuroprotectants by patenting and licensing cannabinoids, the chemical compounds found in the cannabis plant; and

WHEREAS, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) currently considers synthetically derived tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary cannabinoid found in the cannabis plant, to be a Schedule III drug that is non-narcotic and has low risk of physical or mental dependence; and

WHEREAS, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recently argued that cannabidiol (CBD), a non-euphoric cannabinoid, does not meet the requirements for scheduling because of its non-intoxicating and non-toxic nature; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has acknowledged the potential medical efficacy of cannabis by approving a first-of-its-kind smoked cannabis study on combat veterans with PTSD in 2017; and

WHEREAS, several studies suggest that where medical and adult-use cannabis is accessible, there is a reduction in opioid prescribing, opioid use, and opioid-related overdose; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has an explicit legal, ethical, and moral obligation to care for the veterans of the nation's wars, and to provide the best treatment possible to those injured in service to the country; and

WHEREAS, veterans have noted often sudden and long-lasting improvements to their ability to treat and manage their service-connected injuries with cannabis; and

WHEREAS, a 2017 American Legion survey reported that one-in-five veterans use cannabis to treat a service-connected condition; and

WHEREAS, veterans and their loved ones have described seeing marked improvements in their relationships and ability to reconnect with their family and friends after beginning treating themselves with cannabis; and

WHEREAS, veteran patients have reported transitioning from regular states of depression, anxiety, and rage under prescribed medications to more normal functioning and better quality of life with the sole use of cannabis; and

WHEREAS, cannabis is currently legal and regulated for adult and medicinal use in more than 35 states, representing more than half of the US population, yet veterans have no way to access cannabis through the Department of Veterans Affairs and risk

loss of employment or imprisonment for cannabis use in certain circumstances; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we call upon the White House and Congress to fulfill their responsibilities to the nation's veterans by recognizing the inappropriateness of cannabis' current scheduling and removing it from the Controlled Substance Act, by removing the roadblocks to expanding approved cultivation and research, and committing all necessary resources to understanding the therapeutic potential of cannabis and bringing those derived medications to veterans as quickly as possible.

Draft Resolution 22-14

Subject: Supporting Women Veterans

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, women veterans are the fastest growing population in the veteran community; and

WHEREAS, more women veterans are using VA health care services than ever before; and

WHEREAS, women veterans are reporting military sexual trauma at very high levels; and

WHEREAS, women veterans require specialized health care providers with expertise in women's health; and

WHEREAS, many VA medical centers don't offer specialized treatments such as mammography, maternity care, and gynecology; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we urge Congress to support and increase the availability of high quality gender-specific services at the VA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge VA to ensure that every VA facility has a zero tolerance policy towards sexual harassment for employees and patients.

Draft Resolution 22-15

Subject: Addressing the VA Mental Health Gap

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, more veterans have died by suicide since 9/11 than in combat in the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, nearly 100 billion dollars has been spent on a traditional mental health/pharmaceutical approach with no longitudinal evidence of providing positive long-term outcomes for the veterans that are utilizing these services; and

WHEREAS, the mental health budget has grown from \$300 million per a year since 9/11, to more than \$15 billion per a billion dollars per a year, and the rate of suicide has only continued to grow; and

WHEREAS, many of VA prescribed pharmaceuticals have been linked to increased rates of suicide in the veteran and military community; and

WHEREAS, Congress has failed to adequately investigate the long-term outcomes of existing traditional mental health approaches and manualized therapies; and

WHEREAS, Congress has failed to require VA to provide long-term outcome related data that would track measures related to retention in VA mental health programs to include longitudinal increases in quality of life and decreases in symptomatology; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we urge Congress to spend the totality of any proposed budget increase for VA Mental Health on a VA/DOD Mental Health Center for Innovation, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge Congress to pass legislation that funds nontraditional mental health services and training.

OTHER

Draft Resolution 22-16

Subject: Support for Afghans who served with American Armed Forces

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, In Afghanistan, and other places around the globe, our efforts have only been possible because local allies helped us do that job; and

WHEREAS, Afghans patrolled with us on missions, worked beside us on bases, and saved our lives in firefights; and

WHEREAS, As we draw an end to America's longest war, we must remember that our departure from Afghanistan will put our allies there at grave risk. Providing an exit for these Afghans must be as high a priority as protecting and safely redeploying American troops and equipment. We owe these Afghans a debt of honor; as our armed forces withdraw from Afghanistan, we must honor that debt; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. has successfully undertaken such efforts before. In 1975, the Ford administration evacuated 130,000 Vietnamese to Guam where these refugees went through initial screenings before they were flown to reception centers in the continental U.S. In 1996, the Clinton administration airlifted thousands of Iraqis who had assisted American efforts in Northern Iraq to Guam, where they completed security screening and immigration processing. In 1999, after Serbian forces attacked Pristina in Kosovo, the Clinton administration airlifted 20,000 Kosovar Albanians to Fort Dix, NJ, where they were processed and received refugee status. Honoring our commitments in Afghanistan will rightly be seen as part of a history of American actions to protect allies under threat; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, AMVETS calls on President Biden to immediately evacuate Afghans who risked their lives to serve with American armed forces and have applied for a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) to American territory, where their visas can be safely vetted and processed.

Draft Resolution 22-17

Subject: U.S. Flag Protection

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, the flag of the United States of America is a symbol of our country and of freedom around the world; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, the United States Supreme Court ruled that flag desecration is protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS has strongly supported reversing this ruling since 1989; and

WHEREAS, a flag protection amendment is supported by over 80 percent of the American people; and

WHEREAS, all fifty State legislatures have passed resolutions asking Congress to submit a flag protection amendment for ratification; and

WHEREAS, Congress should be permitted to protect the American flag from desecration; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS petitions Congress to allow United States citizens to consider approval for a flag protection amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

Draft Resolution 22-18

Subject: Suicide Prevention Outreach

Source: AMVETS Legislative Committee

WHEREAS, as of the latest Department of Veterans Affairs data twenty veterans commit suicide daily; and

WHEREAS, women veterans commit suicide at the highest rate compared to male veterans and female and male civilians; and

WHEREAS, suicide causes suffering and feelings of helplessness among families and loved ones; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that suicide awareness needs to be front and center at our community, state, and federal level; and be it further

RESOLVED, that each AMVETS department have a designated suicide liaison from either AMVETS, AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, AMVETS Sons, or the AMVETS Riders; and be it further

RESOLVED that each AMVETS department have, or have access to, a suicide awareness silhouette or something similar for outreach and to help promote awareness.

Draft Resolution 22-19

Subject: California's Dangerous Dependence on Foreign Oil

Source: AMVETS Department of California

WHEREAS, California with over 40 million people is the fifth largest economy in the world and

WHEREAS, California imports about 70% of its crude oil supplies, most of it from foreign sources like Saudi Arabia and Iraq who do not pay California taxes or hire Californians, and, and

WHEREAS, California spends an estimated \$25 billion annually for the oil it imports, and

WHEREAS, California with 12% of the U.S. population accounts for 41% of the net energy imports to the U.S., and

WHEREAS, because of its geographic location, California is not able to access the national oil pipeline distribution system, and

WHEREAS, recent and ongoing attacks on oil production and transportation in the Middle East highlights the inherent risks of heavy reliance on foreign oil imports, and

WHEREAS, this continued Middle East disruption of California's foreign oil importation is a direct threat to California's national and economic security and the way of life of its 40 million residents, and

WHEREAS, the California oil industry continues to contribute to the California economy by providing tax revenues and high paying jobs with benefits to veterans as well as others, and

WHEREAS, these high paying jobs are ideally suited for our servicemen and women who have been discharged from the military in California, and

WHEREAS, high school graduates who leave military service can receive G.I. Bill benefits while training for these union building trades and construction jobs, and therefore, be it

RESOLVED that AMVETS, Department of California declares that California's reliance on foreign oil is a national and economic security issue for the state and the nation, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Department of California supports the continued growth and prosperity of the California oil industry, and be it further

RESOLVED to oppose all efforts to reduce or disrupt the California oil industry by either local, state or national authorities.

Draft Resolution 22-20

Subject: Support for First Responders & Law Enforcement Agencies

Source: AMVETS Department of Connecticut

WHEREAS, AMVETS is an organization of veterans created by an act of the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS is committed to the security and defense of the United States and its allies; and

WHEREAS, the members of AMVETS are veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States and have taken a solemn oath to “defend the United States against ALL ENEMIES, FOREIGN and DOMESTIC”; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS members regularly reaffirm our commitment to the defense of the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the rule of law is vital to the safety and security of the citizens of our Nation; and

WHEREAS, in response to this clear act of aggression against law abiding citizens of the United States by domestic organizations who plan and carry out destruction and murder against law abiding citizens; and

WHEREAS, those that affiliate, defend and those that harbored them, are complacent in their actions; and

WHEREAS, Our First Responders and Law Enforcement Agencies, displaying great courage and commitment to the mission of protecting and serving the citizens of this Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By AMVETS Department of Connecticut Executive Committee, assembled at in regular session on September 28, 2020 that AMVETS show its support for First Responders, Law Enforcement agencies for their bravery and selflessness in protecting the citizens of our Nation: and, be it further

RESOLVED, That AMVETS fully supports the men, women, and leadership of our First Responders and Law Enforcement Agencies of this Nation that lawfully protect and defend the citizens of the United States; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That AMVETS urges all Americans and freedom-loving peoples everywhere to stand united in their support of the First Responders and Law Enforcement Agencies; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the National Commander be, and is hereby authorized, to use whatever means at her disposal to disseminate accurate information about this internal threat, and to engage whatever means necessary to ensure the united support of the American people.

Draft Resolution 22-21

Subject: West Los Angeles Land Use

Source: AMVETS Department of California

WHEREAS, at the 2019-2020 AMVETS National Convention - Resolution 20-23, calling for the endorsement and support of Federally mandated land-use by Veterans and their families at the West Los Angeles VA Soldiers Home and development of a Veterans Master Plan aligning with that principle were unanimously adopted, and,

WHEREAS, that Resolution is generally congruent with the land use policies advocated by Vietnam Veterans of America and American GI Forum National resolutions remaining in effect, and,

WHEREAS, over the course of that Resolution AMVETS Post 2 in Los Angeles, California unites with many local Veterans Services Organization leaders, Los Angeles Community residents, local businesses and journalists to build awareness of homeless Veterans entitled use of, access to and stakehold in the West Los Angeles VA Soldiers Home, and,

WHEREAS, upon that Resolution - the actions by AMVETS of Post 2 in Los Angeles and AMVETS in several U.S. Cities continue inspiring and directly resulting in many homeless disabled Veterans in Los Angeles receiving shelter, housing, food, bathrooms, improved relations with local law enforcement, and sanitary services that they were previously denied, and,

WHEREAS, advocacy born of that Resolution generates new AMVETS memberships, donations and positive sentiment for our Veterans Services Organization, and,

WHEREAS, recently the U.S. District Courts have Adjudged, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has made arrests, the Department of Justice has made criminal convictions, Congress has generally acknowledged and the Press has substantially reported - significant and continued, non-compliance with our Public Laws, by many third-party land users at the West Los Angeles VA Soldiers Home; preventing disabled and homeless Veterans mandated, conflict-free access to their entitled housing and services thereat, and,

WHEREAS, to date all recommendations by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of the Inspector General in result of its September 2018 Audit Findings, that over

60% of third-party land users at the West Los Angeles VA Soldiers Home are non-compliant with Public Laws, remain unsatisfied as provided for under Public Law, and,

WHEREAS, Los Angeles is the United States capital of Veteran homelessness, so be it,

RESOLVED, that this AMVETS 2020-2021 State Convention does hereby Renew and Amend the 2019-2020 Resolution as provided for herein - to proactively continue and improve upon AMVETS advocacy for lawful land-use, the entitlements of disabled and homeless U.S. Military Veterans, the development of a Veterans Master Plan in such alignment and recognition of the terms of original Deeds to the United States Federal Government, to Permanently Maintain the West Los Angeles VA Soldiers Home as a Home for disabled and homeless U.S. Military Veterans.

Draft Resolution 22-22

Subject: Resolution submission to the 2021 AMVETS National Convention

Source: AMVETS Department of Ohio

WHEREAS, The AMVETS National insignia has not been updated to reflect the new generations of Veterans since the Vietnam Era. And

WHEREAS, It is time that we recognize our newer Veterans as vital members of AMVETS. And

WHEREAS, The recognition of these Veterans should help to show them and all Veterans that AMVETS is progressing and interested in growth. And

WHEREAS, This recognition should and could also be used as a great tool in the ongoing public relations efforts of our organization to recruit new generations of Veterans into AMVETS. And

WHEREAS, The addition of one star to the AMVET insignia should be added to the current insignia recognizing our newer generations is long overdue. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, It is the request and desire of the Department of Ohio that a fourth star be considered and added to the current AMVETS National logo to represent all Cold war and Post-Vietnam Era Veterans.

Draft Amendment 22-1

Subject: Appendix B Amendment

Source: AMVETS Department for Iowa

WHERE AS, Appendix B of the National Constitution and By-laws does not specify, and that the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order does not specify that a member of AMVETS who has had charges filed against him is suspended from holding an office within in the Department and / or post; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the AMVETS National Constitution and By-laws, Appendix B, Section 3, be amended to read (new paragraph) as follows:

Any member of AMVETS who has charges filed against him at any level is suspended from the time the charges have been mailed to him, and that all rights as a member of AMVETS are suspended pending the disposition of the case, and be it further

RESOLVED that this amendment goes onto effect upon its passage.

Draft Amendment 22-2

Subject: Creation of an Appendix F

Source: AMVETS Departments of Illinois, Florida, and Iowa

WHEREAS, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has caused AMVETS National, Department and Post organizations to work around parts of our Constitutions and Bylaws and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, and Governors of the states have executive powers vested in them allowing authority to shut down operations in their respective areas of responsibility, and

WHEREAS, AMVETS needs to be prepared for the possibility of future national or state emergencies and pandemics; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED that AMVETS National Bylaws be amended by adding Appendix F to establish protocols to be used in such instances:

APPENDIX F; UNIFORM CODE OF PROCEDURES WHERE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS OR CONVENTIONS ARE NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO A NATIONAL OR STATE EMERGENCY OR PANDEMIC

Section 1.

(a). Protocols contained in this Appendix F are in effect when a national or state emergency or a condition of widespread pandemic declared by the President of the United States, or the governor of a state prevents physical meetings or conventions and AMVETS functions.

(b). The National Commander with the concurrence of the National Executive Committee has the power to implement the procedures identified in this Appendix F.

Section 2.

National Constitution Article V requirement for an annual National Convention is suspended. National Convention will be cancelled at the latest point in time which would normally allow convention planning to be implemented. Plans would then be shifted to the next scheduled annual convention.

Section 3.

In the event of a convention being cancelled all election of officers shall be postponed until the next scheduled convention. This is to include all National officers and National District Officers, causing their terms to be extended until the next scheduled convention.

Section 4.

A department canceling their convention due to the above conditions, will have their officers remain in place until the next election. If for some reason, an officer cannot continue due to personal reasons, they may resign, and the vacant position be filled according to the department bylaws. In the event of an NEC or Alternate NEC term is expiring during the canceled convention their term will be extended until their next scheduled election year (A – M Even years; N – W Odd years).

Section 5.

(a). The Finance Committee and the National Executive Committee, where possible, will meet utilizing secure online video meeting technology to complete their regularly scheduled meetings.

(b). Finance Committee will submit a provisional budget to the National Executive Committee for its approval via U. S Mail or email to all voting members by August 15th.

(c) NEC votes may be cast via email on incidental issues which arise during the year.

(d). The National Grievance Committee shall function utilizing secure online video meeting technology.

Section 6.

(a). Where face to face meetings are not possible due to Section 1, department (state) executive committee and post meetings may be held via secure online video meeting technology.

(b). Post elections may be held as a write-in or sign-in ballot or by email. Where these means are not available post officers will retain their positions until the next scheduled election.

Section 7.

(a). All state departments or subordinate organizations not affected by the circumstances described above will proceed within their respective CBL.

(b). If a state department or subordinate organization is impacted and does not have policies in place regarding cancelation of meeting or convention, they shall follow the above guidelines.

Section 8.

If a Post or Department Charter has been suspended and the 60 day period falls in the period defined by the above mentioned circumstances the appropriate body is empowered to continue proper actions to revoke or cancel the charter.

Section 9.

At the conclusion of circumstances that make a physical meeting or convention an impossibility the National Commander will make all efforts to resume normal operations after appropriate consultations with NEC.

Draft Amendment 22-3

Subject: Amendments to Prepare National Bylaws for National Emergencies

Source: AMVETS Departments of Illinois, Florida, and Iowa

WHEREAS, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has caused AMVETS National, Department and Post organizations to work around parts of our Constitutions and Bylaws and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, and Governors of the states have executive powers vested in them allowing authority to shut down operations in their respective areas of responsibility, and

WHEREAS, AMVETS needs to be prepared for the possibility of future national or state emergencies and pandemics; now therefore,

Be it resolved that AMVETS National Bylaws be amended by the following changes:

National Bylaws, Article I, National Executive Committee

Section 2 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic meeting protocols contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

Section 7 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic Grievance Committee protocol contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

National Bylaws, Article IV, Charters

Section 1 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national or state emergency or pandemic post charter suspension protocol contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

National Bylaws, Article X, Meetings

Section 2 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic National Executive Committee voting protocol contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws

National Bylaws Appendix E,

Section 3 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national or state emergency or pandemic department convention protocol contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws

National Bylaws Appendix E,

Section 10 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national or state emergency or pandemic department (state) executive committee meetings protocol contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws

Draft Amendment 22-4

Subject: Amendments to Prepare National Bylaws for National Emergencies

Source: AMVETS Departments of Illinois, Florida, and Iowa

WHEREAS, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has caused AMVETS National, Department and Post organizations to work around parts of our Constitutions and Bylaws, and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, and Governors of the states have executive powers vested in them allowing authority to shut down operations in their respective areas of responsibility, and

WHEREAS, AMVETS needs to be prepared for the possibility of future national or state emergencies and pandemics; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED that AMVETS National Constitution be amended by the following changes:

National Constitution, Article V, National Convention

Section 1

(new paragraph)

In all contracts with convention sites the force majeure clause shall include national and state emergencies or pandemics

Section 10. (new)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic National Convention protocols contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

National Constitution, Article VI, National Officers

Section 2 (new)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic certain officers terms contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

National Constitution, Article VII National Executive Committee

Section 4 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic certain officers terms contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

National Constitution, Article IX, Department Organization

Section 3 (new paragraph)

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national or state emergency or pandemic convention protocol contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

National Constitution, Article XI, Finances

Section 3

The Finance Committee shall meet annually in the month of July and prior to each NEC meeting. Special meetings may be called by the chairman or by any three members of the committee. National Finance Committee meetings may be conducted via secure online video meeting when necessary.

In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic meeting protocols contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

Section 5. The Finance Committee shall submit a provisional annual budget to the National Executive Committee for its approval at its pre-convention meeting. In cases where face to face meetings are not possible due to a national emergency or pandemic reporting protocols contained herein will be altered per procedures established as Appendix F to AMVETS National Bylaws.

Section 6.

(g) The National Commander, the National Finance Officer, and any one other voting member of the National Finance Committee, by a majority of the three, in person, or by US Mail, telephone, FAX, secure online video meeting or e-mail, may utilize monies from the contingency fund to the limit duly approved by the National Executive Committee via the annual budget process.

National Constitution, Article XIV, Subordinate Organizations

Section 1 (new paragraph)

(c) All subordinate organizations will include in their constitution and bylaws protocol for operating during instances of national or state emergency or pandemics. These will be in accordance with the provisions of Appendix F of AMVETS National Bylaws.