

**PROCEEDINGS
of
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
2018 NATIONAL CONVENTION**



July 14–July 17, 2018

Reno, Nevada

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS
OF DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE NATIONAL ADJUTANT,
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

TRANSMITTING

2018 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, PURSUANT TO
36 U.S.C. 50308 AND 44 U.S.C. 1332



November 28, 2018—Referred to the Committee on Veterans'
Affairs and ordered to be printed

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE
WASHINGTON: 2018

XX-XXX

LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

November 29, 2018

Hon. Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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, 2017, as described in 36 U.S.C. 10101.

Sincerely,



J. MARC BURGESS
National Adjutant
Chief Executive Officer

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**NATIONAL OFFICERS 2018–2019
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS**

National Commander

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

Senior Vice Commander

Stephen Whitehead, 16095 Excel Way, Rosemount, MN 55068

1st Jr. Vice Commander

Donald Day, 3112 Farragut Road, Brooklyn, NY 11210

2nd Jr. Vice Commander

Andrew Marshall, 750 Tomoka Drive, Palm Harbor, FL 34683

3rd Jr. Vice Commander

Joseph Parsetich, 1801 1st Street South, Great Falls, MT 59405

4th Jr. Vice Commander

Nancy G. Espinosa, 1369 Country Park Drive, Kaysville, UT 84037

National Judge Advocate

Michael E. Dobmeier, 404 25th Ave. 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



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



Delphine Metcalf-Foster
National Commander
2017–2018
Disabled American Veterans

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS**

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Michael E. Dobmeier, 404 25th Ave. South, Grand Forks, ND 58201

National Chaplain

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

Past National Commander

David W. Riley, 11140 Cricket Hollow, Semmes, AL 36575

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2017–2018

First District	Coleman Francis Nee, Boston, Massachusetts
Second District	Chester Wisnesky, Jr., Constable, New York
Third District	Robert A. Nicodemus, Enfield, New Hampshire
Fourth District	James M. Kopley, Princeton, New Jersey
Fifth District	Samuel Blow, Jr., Melrose Park, Pennsylvania
Sixth District	Idalis M. Marquez, Toa Baja, Puerto Rico
Seventh District	John C. Raber, Bradenton, Florida
Eighth District	Johnnie Carver, Sevierville, Tennessee
Ninth District	Tincie M. Lynch, Marietta, Georgia
Tenth District	James R. Dempsey, Dexter, Michigan
Eleventh District	David C. Uetterling, Defiance, Ohio
Twelfth District	Alfred C. Reynolds, Mt. Zion, Illinois
Thirteenth District	George Hall, Harold, Kentucky
Fourteenth District	David P. Valtinson, Grand Rapids, Minnesota
Fifteenth District	Jim Shuey, Omaha, Nebraska
Sixteenth District	Michael Steinbaugh, Berkeley, California
Seventeenth District	Paul W. Jackson, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Eighteenth District	Richard Walker, Jr., Henderson, Nevada
Nineteenth District	Harvey E. Dixon, Boise, Idaho
Twentieth District	Percy Spence, III, Selma, 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.
 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

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 97th NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS HELD AT**

Reno, Nevada

July 14, 2018

Joint Opening Session

- - -

The Joint Opening Session of the Disabled American Veterans 97th National Convention and the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary 96th National Convention convened in the Summit Pavilion on the Casino Level of the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, Nevada, on Saturday, July 14, 2018, and was called to order at 8:30 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster.

COMMANDER DELPHINE METCALF-FOSTER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. And welcome to "the Biggest Little City in the World," Reno, Nevada. (Applause) I now call to order the 97th 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 97th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans to be convened in Reno, Nevada, at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, July 14th, 2018. Consideration and disposition of business brought before this Convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask everyone in attendance to please silence your cell phones and other portable devices. I will now ask Black Mountain Chapter 12 located in nearby Henderson, Nevada, to deliver our national standard. Present Colors.

(Whereupon, the Colors were presented and posted by the Black Mountain Chapter 12.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Ladies and gentlemen, Sandi Tenbor, a retired 22-year Air Force veteran will now perform our National Anthem.

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Now please join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, after which the members of Black Mountain Chapter 12 withdrew.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in thanking the Black Mountain Chapter 12 and Sandi for their wonderful participation in the 97th National Convention. (Applause)

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

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL PATRICK DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Good morning, all. Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we still ourselves before you for you are filled with beauty and light and care deeply about us. Help us to listen and to understand. Help us to value and appreciate one another as we strengthen our friendships and make new friends. May your light enfold us. May your spirit guide us. And may your grace abound in us. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. Welcome to the 97th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans. I am proud to introduce our 2018 National Convention Chairperson. I want to tell you a little about the Department of Nevada's immediate Past Commander William—better known as Bill—Dolan.

A native of Buffalo, New York, Bill enlisted in the United States Army in December of 1972. After serving as a military police officer he left active duty in November of 1982 to help care for his ill father but remained active in the reserves for four years.

Bill comes from a long line of military members. His father, James Dolan, was in the United States Navy during World War II. His oldest brother, Raymond, was in the United States Army. Middle brother, Richard, was in the United States Navy. And his two sons, Michael and James, were both in the U.S. Army.

In 1984, Dolan moved to Nevada to retire, which did not last long. And he returned to school and earned his degree in nursing. His nursing career would span almost 25 years.

Bill also served five-and-a-half years in local politics in Nevada where he now resides with his wife of six years, Marilyn. Between them they have a combined family of 13 children, 24 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren.

Ladies and gentlemen, your 2018 convention chairperson, Bill Dolan. (Applause)

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN WILLIAM "BILL" DOLAN: Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster, for that very kind introduction. Good morning, everybody.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN DOLAN: National Commander Metcalf-Foster, National Adjutant Burgess, National Line Officers, Auxiliary Commander Johniken, Auxiliary National Adjutant Kemper, Auxiliary National Line Officers, distinguished guests and my fellow DAV members, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 97th DAV and Auxiliary National Convention right here in "the Biggest Little City in the world."

Nevada is the fastest growing state in the nation right now with the Reno/Sparks area bringing in companies like Tesla, Amazon, the Sierra Nevada Corporation, Intuit, just to mention a few. And along with that has come growth and employment.

Here in Northern Nevada we are a world-class destination, not only with gaming but with our wonderful River Walk District, with the fine dining and shopping. We have the great Lake Tahoe and Carson City. And who can forget Virginia City, Nevada, home of the TV show "Bonanza." These are all half-day trips here in Nevada.

We have one of America's greatest automobile museums right here in Reno, as well. There are so many reasons to indulge yourself here. We like to say, "If you can't find your passion here, you may never find it."

So please, while you are here, take some time and go explore "the Biggest Little City in the World." But, above all else, 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 also not forget to have some fun while we're here as well.

I'd like to ask Commander Metcalf-Foster, National Adjutant Burgess, Auxiliary Commander Johniken, and Auxiliary Adjutant Kemper to the stage. We would like to present you with a token of all of your hard work.

(Whereupon, each of the individuals joined Convention Chairman Dolan on the stage.)

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN DOLAN: Commander, on behalf of the State Department of Nevada we'd like to present this to you from our great Thunderbirds at Nellis Air Force Base.

(Whereupon, Commander Metcalf-Foster received a photograph of the Thunderbirds from Convention Chairman Dolan, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. Beautiful.

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN DOLAN: While Adjutant Burgess is bringing this up, we also are—are pleased to have four wineries in the State of Nevada. And we will be presenting wine baskets from our international award-winning winery in Pahrump, Nevada, to each of our distinguished guests.

(Whereupon, wine baskets were presented to DAV Adjutant Burgess, DAV Auxiliary Commander Johniken, and DAV Auxiliary Adjutant Kemper, followed by a round of applause.)

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN DOLAN: Thank you all for your service. Now on behalf of the Department of Nevada Commander Redell Samuel and Department Adjutant Richard Walker, welcome to our great city and state.

I wish you all a great stay and the best of luck, both on the tables and with the important business we have ahead of us. Thank you, Commander.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. (Applause) Thank you so much, Bill. It's an honor to have you with us here today. And now, your DAV Auxiliary Staff and National Officers.

MR. DANIEL CLARE: And now your DAV Auxiliary Staff and National Officers: Auxiliary Past National Commander Fran Costa; (Applause) National Auxiliary Adjutant Pat Kemper of Kentucky; (Applause) National Chaplain, Aura-Lee Nicodemus of New Hampshire; (Applause) Judge Advocate Donna Adams of Arizona; (Applause) Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh of California; (Applause) Third Junior Vice-Commander Carolyn Sensat of Louisiana; (Applause)

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

And now your DAV National Officers: Your Past National Commander and Chairman of the Board of Directors, from Semmes, Alabama, Dave Riley; 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 Great Falls, Montana, Joe Parsetich; (Applause) your Third Junior Vice-Commander from Palm Harbor, Florida, Andy Marshall; (Applause) your Second Junior Vice-Commander, from Brooklyn, New York, Donald Day; (Applause) your First Junior Vice-Commander from Rosemount, Minnesota, Stephen "Butch" Whitehead. (Applause) And last but by no means least, your Senior Vice-Commander from China Spring, Texas, Dennis R. Nixon. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a reveille sounded, followed by laughter.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER DENNIS R. NIXON: Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce our next speaker. She took on the legacy of her father, a Buffalo Soldier, when she decided to pursue a career in the United States Army. Twenty-one years later, in 1996, she retired as a first sergeant.

Her military career included service with the U.S. Army Reserve, 689th Quartermaster Unit, 6253rd Hospital Unit, and 6211th Transportation Unit at Letterman Army Medical Center.

While serving in Saudi Arabia in her support of the Persian Gulf War, she was injured and medically evacuated to Germany for care and treatment.

She has been active within the DAV Department of California, becoming the first woman to serve as commander for the state. Her leadership has been sought at the local, state and national levels. She served as chairperson of the Hospital/Volunteer Interim Committee, and the National Executive Committee 16th District.

She was elected as national commander of the more than one million member DAV at our national convention last year in New Orleans. She is the first female veteran to assume the organization's highest post, the first African-American woman to lead the organization, and the first woman elected to lead one of the country's major veterans' service organizations.

Please give a rousing DAV welcome to our National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster. (Standing Ovation) We love you.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. Hello, everyone. Again, welcome to Reno, Nevada. How excited are all of you to get this 97th National Convention underway. (Applause) All right.

Adjutant Burgess, Executive Director Jesinoski, Executive Director Augustine, fellow veterans, families and honored guests, thank you so much for being here and for the great welcome.

When I stood before all of you last year in New Orleans, the realization of taking over this great organization possibly had not quite set in. However, it quickly hit home with a live on-air national interview the next day.

It became crystal clear to me that things were going to stay busy for DAV. So much work to do. I've worked closely with many of you over the past years and I could not have wished for a better group of people to support me and have my back.

Before I go into more detail about this year's activities, let's talk about our folks who are out there on the front line each and every day. If you're a national, chapter, department, or transitional service officer, please raise your hand.

(Whereupon, national, chapter and department and Transition Service Officers raised their hands and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Hospital service coordinators, community volunteers, and DAV Transportation Network drivers, let me hear from you. (Cheers) All right.

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much for your hard work. And thank you to all of our chapter and department leaders. Get your hands up. You keep DAV strong and your service to veterans and families is vital to our mission.

We have a lot to be proud of as we reflect back from last summer to now. And I could not have done it alone.

A special recognition must be given to my chapter, DAV Chapter 21. I would be negligent if I did not personally thank my chief-of-staff and Past Department Commander Kirk Johnson, our CEO and Past

Department Commander Dan Contreras, as well as many of the committee members and, of course, the entire Department of California.

I simply would not have made it through the past year without all of you. I now ask for all of my Golden State veterans to stand and be recognized.

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: There are over one million of us in DAV. I'm very proud of that and you should be as well. Last year our charity secured more than \$4.3 billion in new and retroactive earned benefits for veterans and their families.

We often hear statistics and they are hard to put into context in our lives. But the folks in this room understand the significance of that particular figure. That's \$4.3 billion. That changes a lot of lives and wouldn't be possible without you.

Keeping our promises to American's veterans, their families and survivors is accomplished through service. Service is always at the heart of what we do. When our message of hope and service is seen, it is a victory for the DAV and all veterans.

In 2018 our message was viewed on nearly every major national television and cable network channel. DAV was also highlighted in Field and Stream magazine, Food and Wine—two of my favorite things—Money and Time magazines, and the Wall Street Journal.

From billboards to television to radio, DAV messages garnered more than 6.5 billion impressions this past year. I know there are plenty of people here who have made it their mission to share our public service announcements. And I thank you for the important role you each played in spotlighting DAV throughout our community.

With a growing gap between the military and civilian population we need every opportunity we can to find and remind the American public of the sacrifices that our nation's heroes have made.

I stood before you last year in New Orleans and I promised that we could continue to be the leading voice for unique issues concerning our sisters-in-arms. We continue our advocacy on behalf of the women veterans and the voices of women veterans are sounding off louder than ever. Sisters-in-arms, let me hear from you. Tell Reno we are here for us.

(Whereupon, the women veterans present cheered and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: In March, DAV testified at the legislative hearing on S.804, the Women's Veterans Access to Quality Care Act of 2017 and other bills that would improve access to gender-specific care and address the needs of women veterans.

DAV also continued the work with Congress to enact the remaining recommendations from our groundbreaking 2014 report Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home. Once more, in August, DAV co-sponsored the 2017 National Women Veterans Summit.

I am pleased to announce that DAV will be releasing a follow-up report on women veterans in September and hosting an event on Capitol Hill. We will remain steadfast and dedicated to these causes until women have the support they earned through service. (Applause)

Another major legislative priority is the ongoing battle for our unsung heroes—fairness for all of the relentless and dedicated caregivers. As part of our efforts to expand the VA's comprehensive caregiver assistance program to veterans of all eras, DAV took part in the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee roundtable discussion in April and testified in May before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee in support of the Military and Veteran Caregiver Service Improvement Act of 2017.

We followed up our efforts with a letter signed by 44 organizations calling for the enactment of the Caregivers Improvement Act and even drove the efforts behind a petition that was signed by 182,000 supporters and delivered to Congress.

Our hard work paid off. Just a couple of months ago DAV was on Capitol Hill to see the House Committee on Veterans Affairs approve bipartisan legislation that would expand caregivers benefits to earlier generations of veterans. (Applause) It was signed into law by the president last month and significantly improves access to veterans and caregivers wounded before 9/11.

This is a major milestone, but we will not slow down or flinch in our unwavering support and will ensure the swift implementation of this new law. As a former caregiver to my late husband, who was also a veteran, this effort is near and dear to my heart. And I know Jimmy would be proud of your hard work. I know I am. And thank you. (Applause)

In New Orleans I asked for your help in furthering our mission of providing a lifetime of service to veterans and their families and you have delivered. We were busy people, indeed. Thanks to our members, DAV has a lot to be proud of, but there is still much more work to do.

We must remain strong to be the organization that fellow veterans, their families and supporters, deserve and look to when a veteran needs help. We must continue our efforts in addressing veteran employment, especially employment of disabled veterans and veterans' under-employment.

I hope you leave Reno with the mindset of recruiting other veterans under our name. The camaraderie we enjoyed in uniform is here in this room. It's a feeling that only we can understand, but we can share it with our fellow veterans.

Leading an organization like DAV isn't easy, but it remains one of the greatest honors of my life. It has been a very rewarding experience. And I made many friends along the way. The memories of my year as commander will last a lifetime. I am proud of what we have accomplished together, but remain hungry for much, much more. (Applause)

I must offer a special thanks to Marc, Barry, Garry, and our directors who form a strategic force that makes DAV so successful. They honor our volunteers and advocates in the field with their thoughtful leadership.

They are impressive people who DAV is lucky to have. Serving with them and alongside you has been an honor. I want all of you to know that I believe our organization is a great place as a result of leadership at the chapter, department, and national levels.

I have learned so much from all of you. I hope in the years to come I'll get to know more of you and continue my service, just in a different capacity.

Before my time is through, in keeping up with our tradition, hope you will allow me to honor you with my final salute for all you do to ensure we maintain our mission of providing a lifetime of support for our veterans, their families, and survivors.

(Whereupon, Commander Metcalf-Foster saluted the membership, after which she withdrew from the podium followed by a standing ovation.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER NIXON: Commander, under your leadership this has not only been an incredible year for DAV but also a groundbreaking one. Thank you. You set an inspiring example for all of us. And now I have the privilege of moving to accept the national commander's report. Do I hear a second?

MR. KIRK JOHNSON: Kirk Johnson, District 16, seconds the motion.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER NIXON: The motion has been made and seconded. Calling the question. All in favor say aye. The ayes have it. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: 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 METCALF-FOSTER: And I ask the Auxiliary National Executive Committee, to stand and be recognized.

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: It now gives me great pleasure to announce a friend to me and to all our nation's veterans and their family members. DAV Auxiliary National Commander Craig "Hub" Johniken broke ground when he was elected the first male to the office at our national convention last year.

Commander Johniken's interest in serving the Auxiliary began long before he was eligible for membership. When membership opened to male members in 2005, he was one of the first to join.

The commander, whose wife and son are both service-connected disabled veterans, has been a staunch advocate for extending caregiver benefits to severely-disabled veterans of all eras.

He has given voice to a group of individuals often overlooked as caregivers—the husbands, sons, brothers, and other male family members who help care for the nation's injured and ill veterans.

Having served in numerous leadership positions before rising and leading the Auxiliary, Commander Johniken has been a vibrant and active part of the DAV family, participating in countless events and fundraisers to help carry forward the organization's mission.

Please welcome DAV Auxiliary National Commander Craig "Hub" Johniken. (Standing Ovation)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER WILLIAM CRAIG "HUB" JOHNIKEN: Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster. 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 as a veteran's spouse, a veteran's father, a grandfather, and a member of the DAV Auxiliary; rather, they are essential to all veteran families.

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

The Auxiliary opportunities or priorities during my year as commander included youth involvement, local veterans' assistance, and meeting the needs of all caregivers. I thank the DAV for your members' relentless work in the effort to bring caregiver equity to the forefront.

I know we will continue that march and reinforce the need for pre-9-1-1 caregiver benefits for all of our most severely disabled heroes (Applause)—whether they were wounded or made ill in wartime service.

Another area of great importance is the involvement of young family members in the DAV and the Auxiliary community projects. This involvement doesn't just look great on a college scholarship application or a job resume; I look at it as an opportunity to build character and an education in life.

Just looking at my grandkids' involvement and the junior members in my state alone, it is amazing how they have come to know volunteerism and community service as a second nature and, most importantly, the right thing to do. Fundamental social interaction skills, respect, and patriotism are naturally instilled as they work alongside veterans and their families during these worthy service projects.

I'm pretty sure almost everyone in this room has young family members who can benefit from these types of experiences. If they aren't involved, why not take them along with you on your chapter or unit's next project?

Those kids can invite their friends to help, and this can create a snowball effect where their families might pick up an interest in supporting the organization and our nation's heroes. Everyone will benefit from that experience in the long run.

These young people don't have to be DAV Auxiliary members to help out. But in case you didn't already know, junior membership is complimentary though the age of 17. And we do encourage their parents to sign them up.

These local activities accumulate hours that can be reported on DAV's Local Veterans Assistance Program and the Auxiliary's annual reports, as well. This information gives recognition to the services we provide to the veteran community and can act as a motivating factor to those considering joining our ranks.

For those departments and chapters that don't currently have a working relationship with your Auxiliary counterpart, I ask you to take that first step to invite them to partner with you on future projects.

Those long-delegated roles of cooking and providing pre-meeting meals and hall cleaning do not define the DAV Auxiliary; and National Adjutant Pat Kemper would agree that we have to shift away from that type of mindset and aim for more important opportunities and goals. (Applause)

When I joined the Auxiliary in 2005 I wasn't new to the DAV family. My wife, Teresa, had been very involved in the DAV and when she needed my help I was there—our whole family was there. Finally, being able to join the Auxiliary was a life-changing opportunity.

When I mailed that membership application off to the headquarters, I didn't foresee that I would be elected to serve as the first male DAV Auxiliary Commander. (Applause) My goal was to simply serve alongside other DAV Auxiliary members and join DAV in a united mission of service.

Let's strengthen both the DAV and the Auxiliary by working together and supporting each other. The DAV Auxiliary motto is "Making a Difference." Each of us has the capability to make a difference every single day and we do.

I don't say these words without conviction. I truly thank you 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 my family and 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.

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 Mary Lee Kolter. (Applause) She is a member of Unit 101 in Port Charlotte, Florida.

In the past four years Mary Lee has served as Unit 101's adjutant, senior vice commander, and unit commander. In June of 2017 she was the recipient of the 2017 Person of the Year for the Department of Florida and elected to the state department's Finance Committee.

In 2016, under Mary Lee's leadership, her unit was recognized with a unique "Special Americanism" award from the National DAV Auxiliary for founding and continuing to broaden and develop the Auxiliary's unit and its engagement with the local community and veterans.

On top of all this, Mary Lee has also served her local community as a school teacher, an elementary school principal, a police officer, and the chief of police. (Applause) Throughout her career and in every aspect of her life she has been consistently recognized for her innovative and cooperative style of collaboration.

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

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

MS. MARY LEE KOLTER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MS. KOLTER: I represent the State of Florida. (Applause) Which is something when you come from Pittsburgh. Very briefly—I have my orders here—I would like to thank everyone and everyone and everyone I've ever, ever known in the DAVA and the DAV for this outstanding award. I do not deserve it, all of you do. I may represent Florida, but I represent you. And you are wonderful. (Applause)

I've had the opportunity this past few days to observe people coming and going, as I'm sure you have, too. And as a former art major I have watched people's faces and wanted to draw them or sketch them but I held back.

I want you to know what I have seen in your faces. I have seen dedication. I have seen experience. I have seen the wisdom of age and the joy and anticipation of our youth. I have seen respect for each other and sincere caring for each other. I have seen acts of kindness in the last few days that I have rarely seen in other organizations. And for that you should be applauded because it is so sincere. (Applause)

I would be remiss if I did not thank my home Unit 101 in Nokomis, Florida. I'm sure you've all heard of it. (Laughter)

No one does this alone, as I said before. People come to the plate and they stand by you and there is no greater act of dedication and pride and responsibility of the heart, the real heart. Our patriots, our veterans, our veterans' families, and all those associated with this country and its defense are to be commended today, not me.

I would like to thank certainly the people who have chosen me for this award. I can't do that individually because, you know, it was a secret ballot and all that. So I am limited or I could go on. I could go on and tell you all kinds of stories.

But, sincerely, thank you for this great opportunity. And it won't go unnoticed by many. Thank you. (Applause)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I do have a small token of appreciation that I want to present to Mary Lee.

MS. KOLTER: Oh. Wow. Thank you.

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Outstanding.

MS. KOLTER: Thank you. Thank you very much. (Applause)

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

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you, Mary Lee. And thank you Commander Metcalf-Foster for your friendship, your partnership. It's been an honor to serve alongside you. And God bless you and your families. This concludes my report. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much, Commander. It is my honor to introduce our next speaker, the Acting Secretary of Veterans' Affairs, Mr. Peter O'Rourke. Peter O'Rourke brings a highly diverse skillset to transformation, innovation, and leadership honed over 27 years of demanding fields and challenges.

He served in the military as a Navy enlisted plane captain and an Air Force officer. He has held positions in consulting and government service, including service as a senior policy advisor, congressional staffer, and executive director for a non-profit focused on generating support for federal government efficiency.

Mr. O'Rourke served as VA Chief-of-staff from February 16, 2018, to May 29, 2018. In that short period he was very instrumental in finalizing VA's electronic health record modernization contract as well

as working with the White House, Congress, and veterans' service organizations to secure passage of the landmark VA Mission Act.

Prior to becoming VA Chief-of-Staff, O'Rourke served as the first executive director of VA's Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection. In that position he established and led the new office, which is the first of its kind in the federal government. In that role he quickly became a trusted advisor to many leaders throughout the department on accountability and cultural issues.

Mr. O'Rourke is a 1998 graduate of the University of Tennessee and the U.S. Air Force Institute of Technology in 2005. Ladies and gentlemen, please greet Mr. Peter O'Rourke.

(Whereupon, Mr. O'Rourke was greeted with a standing ovation as he advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he advanced to the lectern.)

THE HONORABLE PETER O'ROURKE: Delphine, thank you for that introduction and, more importantly, for your service to veterans and the leadership of DAV.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you.

ACTING SECRETARY O'ROURKE: I'd like to also acknowledge Craig Johniken, Auxiliary National Commander; Marc Burgess, National Adjutant; Garry Augustine, Executive Director of your Washington Headquarters; and Randy Reese, Assistant Executive Director. I and the leadership of VA are grateful for this partnership and the help of such a dedicated and experienced DAV leadership team.

On a personal note, I am extremely honored to be here with you this morning. I'm a veteran of the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, and Afghanistan conflicts, serving both as enlisted and an officer. In that experience I've watched as many of our most dedicated warriors, those who volunteered to face harm, come home only to isolate and ignore their own physical and emotional pain.

Like many, I left the service and never sought help from a bureaucracy that I didn't feel a part of. I'm here to encourage you to be that voice and the example because there is no one better.

Being here with veterans from most of the conflicts of our recent memory is humbling and reaffirms my personal commitment to our work here at the VA.

Your work with DAV is so important to the VA and you, the members, are essential to bridging the gap between the veteran and their local community.

Whether you are one of the thousands of DAV drivers who transport veterans to their appointments or one of the hundreds of veteran service officers who fight daily for your fellow brothers and sisters, your continued commitment to the mission of DAV stands as true today as it has for nearly a century.

The partnership between VA and DAV has never been stronger. Here in Northern Nevada DAV advocated for a struggling female veteran who suffered from military sexual trauma. After discharge her injuries made it difficult to find a job in the civilian world. As a single parent supporting two young children her financial situation became so dire she was about to lose her home.

This is where DAV got involved. And now this veteran is financially stable and leads by example, volunteering her time at her local VA. There are countless stories just like this one where DAV members, like you, are connecting with and helping veterans survive their second fight.

Not only does DAV help build a path for veterans to access their services, it helps care for their physical, emotional, and financial needs. We see this in our partnership in so many communities.

One that impacts the lives of some of our most severely injured veterans and their families is one that may have impacted many of you in the room today. Every year at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic 400 veterans experience "The Miracles on the Mountainside." This program demonstrates there is life after injury. This event wouldn't be possible without the partnership between VA and DAV.

Our veterans are personally vested in this noble mission to honor and care for our disabled veterans and their families. They are the friends and peers who refuse to let a brother or a sister isolate themselves.

This is exactly why the VA and DAV partnership works so well together. We will continue to deliver the benefits that our injured veterans deserve.

Now to some specific things that are going on at the VA as we move forward with historic and transformative improvements.

The Congress passed and President Trump signed into law five major promises to veterans. Those promises included modernizing the claims appeal process, consolidating Community Care programs, and implementing the Forever GI Bill.

The VA will modernize the way we care for veterans using a state-of-the-art health records system that will seamlessly share health records between DoD and VA, bringing transparency to veterans and their caregivers and enable the veteran to be in the driver's seat for their healthcare.

Also last year the President signed the Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act. The implementation of that law is rebuilding the accountability of the VA by enforcing standards and providing VA employees a fair and positive environment, enabling them to focus clearly on serving our veterans.

I'd like to specifically give you an update on a couple of these efforts. First, the modernization of the appeals process is on track to be completed by February 2019. These VA-wide efforts are already helping to improve our benefits claims processes across the Veterans benefit administration.

One exciting result is the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program, or RAMP, that allows veterans with benefit claims appeals to use the overhauled appeals system. As of Tuesday, over 40,000 appeals have gone through RAMP, with over \$30 million retroactive benefits paid in an average of 80 days. That means—(Applause) that means almost 30,000 veterans that opted into the RAMP program know what "Appeals Modernization" is all about.

But while RAMP is beginning to deliver these results, we know there are opportunities to continuously improve. And we ask for your help and your continued efforts in this effort.

Processing appeals at the Board of Veterans Appeals remains a priority. So far this year the Board has completed over 63,000 decisions. This is an historically high number at the Board and it is well on its way to meeting its goal for this year.

We are on a critical mission, all of us, together. It is my hope that leaders and those who have served continue with us to reach each and every veteran. I am making a personal commitment to you and ask the same of you, that we work together to recognize when our brothers and sisters are in need and help bridge that gap. We must ensure that no veteran is left white knuckling it on their own.

One other thing I'd like to share with you today. It's about my friend. My friend Ed Back, lives in Virginia. I call Ed once a week, share a story, give him some news, see how some treatments are going with him. Ed turned 80 last September. Great guy. I love him to death. I really couldn't imagine not being able to make that phone call.

As you all know, the suicide statistics came out. Really nothing on that has, unfortunately, changed. One of the things they didn't prepare me for or tell me about when I took over as Acting Secretary was every time a veteran takes his life or her life on a VA facility within hours an alert goes out and it comes to me. And I read about it.

Over the last couple of days I've had two of those emails: one a 77-year old veteran; one an 86-year old veteran. I just, I really can't explain to you what that feels like. We all know those things. We hear about them. We see statistics. We hear explanations. We talk about efforts and monies spent to prevent suicide. It's never going to be enough.

But I do know that what you all do, reaching out in your communities, prevents those opportunities. And so I ask you to do that and more. Make that phone call. Reach out to that friend or reach out to that person that you know may be struggling.

I don't know why people make that decision. I only know what I can do. And I share with you those efforts to do what we can.

So thank you for your efforts. Thank you for what you do for veterans. And let's continue that journey together. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Commander Metcalf-Foster spoke to Acting Secretary O'Rourke after which he withdrew from the stage during a standing ovation.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much, Mr. O'Rourke. I believe I speak for all the veterans in this room when I say thank you for joining us here today and for your support. (Applause)

DAV's commitment to fulfilling our promises to the men and women who served is clear through the work of our 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 VA medical facilities.

Since 1987 DAV headquarters, chapters, departments, the National Service Foundation and Columbia Trust have purchased 3,393 vehicles at a cost of more than \$76.3 million. (Applause) 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 nearly 615,000 free rides for veterans to and from their critical VA appointments, covering over 18.4 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. (Applause)

Joining us today is a special guest with more news about the long-standing Ford/DAV partnership. (Whereupon, "Ford Truck Man" played as Mr. Dirksen advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Bill Dirksen is a vice-president of Ford's Labor Affairs and leads global labor policy, employee health care management and the company's collective bargaining with unions worldwide.

Dirksen, a graduate of Notre Dame and Cornell University, joined Ford in 1985, and has served as the senior human resources leader in Ford Credit, as well as for manufacturing and quality operations. (Applause)

MR. BILL DIRKSEN: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. DIRKSEN: Thank you, National Commander Metcalf-Foster. I'm so honored to be here with you and the men and women of DAV this morning. I have great admiration for those who serve our country and am fortunate to work with many veterans at Ford Motor Company.

My primary responsibility, as you heard, at Ford is to work with all of our labor unions around the world, including the UAW in the United States. Ford has a long history of partnership with the UAW in supporting our veterans and active duty military.

Together we run and support a range of programs. Let me just give you a couple of examples. One is a welding training program for returning veterans that we hold at our Technical Training Center in Michigan where we train our skilled trades' employees. This program has prepared over 100 participants, many of whom are Purple Heart recipients, for apprenticeships or entry-level welding jobs in construction or manufacturing.

Another initiative with the UAW that we are really proud of is the Active Heroes program in Louisville, Kentucky. The mission of Active Heroes is to eliminate veteran suicide. And over the last five years the organization has provided training and outreach to over 800 veterans. Partnering with Active Heroes, the UAW (Applause). Thank you. We're really proud of their work.

Partnering with Active Heroes the UAW and Ford recently built a retreat center on 147 acres in Kentucky that provides a venue for camping, outdoor activities and agricultural training for veterans and their families. It's a beautiful spot for our heroes and their families when they need to just get away for a little while.

I am also honored to serve as the Executive Champion of the Ford Veterans' Network Group. This is a company-sanctioned and supported group of employees, most of whom are veterans, who help the company understand the needs of veterans, both in our company and in our community.

And they leverage support for both veterans and our employees still proudly serving in the National Guard and Reserve Forces. This is a very active and passionate employee group and it's a real pleasure to work with them.

Now, as many of you know, Ford and the DAV have a relationship that dates back to 1922 when Henry Ford provided 50 Model T's so that veterans could attend the Second DAV Convention in San Francisco. (Applause) Ninety-six years.

And here we are 96 years later still supporting the important work that the DAV is doing to 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. Our support includes helping veterans with medical transportation and rehabilitation as well as scholarships and job training opportunities.

And a big thanks to all of you as well for supporting Ford. According to the Polk vehicle registration study when American military families buy a new vehicle, they prefer Ford trucks, utilities, and cars over every other brand. Thank you. (Applause) Thank you very much.

That is no surprise to us because since 2001 DAV members and their families have purchased more than 24,000 vehicles from Ford through the Ford Partnership Recognition program or what we call X Plan. Those numbers put DAV members among the top four of 6,000 organizations that utilize X Plan to purchase vehicles. Thanks to all of you for your loyalty to Ford. (Applause)

So while you are here be sure to visit my colleagues at the Ford booth. They can help with any questions you have about the X Plan vehicle purchase program and our current military bonus cash offer.

For the 96th anniversary of our great partnership with DAV Ford has brought a special activity just for you. We have a special photo booth opportunity available after the Opening Session right out in the event hallway. Make sure to stop by with your friends and family, have your picture taken.

We also have a lot of great information for you at the Ford booth about your special member benefits just for being a DAV or DAVA member. Stop by the Ford booth to learn all about your exclusive Ford

vehicle pricing, Mobility Motoring vehicle adaptations, and about how to earn money for your DAV chapter by participating in Ford's Drive 4UR Community Program.

For those that stop by the booth and fill out a survey, you will have the opportunity to win some very cool prizes—including a GoPro camera, a small-scale die-cast 1968 Ford Mustang Bullitt which is signed by Bill Ford, and the chance to win a Shinola watch. This is just for filling out the short survey. So make sure to stop by the booth and say hello to our Ford team.

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

(Whereupon, Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess joined Mr. Dirksen at the podium.)

MR. DIRKSEN: Ford began donating vehicles to DAV in 1996. And last year Ford vehicles assisted nearly 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 across the country. (Applause) This year's recipients, as you can see, are medical centers in: Tucson, Arizona; West Los Angeles; Boise; Fort Harrison, Montana—I hear you out there; Las Vegas; Fargo; White City, Oregon; and Spokane, Washington. (Applause)

We are really 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, Mr. Dirksen presented a ceremonial check to Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

MR. DIRKSEN: This gift means that Ford Motor Company has donated a total of 223 vehicles to DAV since 1996, representing a value of nearly \$6 million. (Applause) Thank you.

We are also proud to support the families of DAV members through the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program. And now it is my pleasure to present this ceremonial check to National Commander Metcalf-Foster in the amount of \$45,000 to support this outstanding academic program. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Dirksen presented a ceremonial check in the amount of \$45,000 to Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. DIRKSEN: Now if you would both please stay up here with me for just a second and I would like to ask National Auxiliary Commander Craig Johniken to please join as well.

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

MR. DIRKSEN: 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.

(Whereupon, Mr. Dirksen presented gifts to DAV Commander Metcalf-Foster and DAV Auxiliary Commander Johniken, after which they withdrew.)

AUXILIARY COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you.

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

In closing, on behalf of the more than 200,000 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. (Standing Ovation)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Let's give Mr. Dirksen another round of applause. Please. Yes. (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 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 a group of committed young volunteers with scholarships for higher education in recognition and appreciation of their voluntary service to our nation's veterans.

The Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship 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 did not 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 by the President of the United States to become the first African-American Secretary of Veterans Affairs in 1993.

This year we have selected eight of the nation's outstanding young volunteers to receive cash awards from this 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.

Please join me in welcoming DAV National Voluntary Services Director John Kleindienst to the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, John Kleindienst and Sara Gardner joined Commander Metcalf-Foster for the presentation, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Sara Gardner, a volunteer at the Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks, has donated more than 600 volunteer hours serving veterans over the past four years. From helping veterans at the front desk to assisting with wheelchair transportation and even translating Spanish, she's provided a valuable service to our nation's heroes.

Through her "Pledge to Patriotism" platform Sarah has addressed and educated over 20,000 young people and adults, alike, while recruiting 900 volunteers to assist her with veterans service projects.

Sara is a Distinguished High Honors graduate at the top of her class of 555 students. She will use her scholarship at Duke University where she plans to study law and then become an attorney, serving within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

MS. SARA GARDNER: Hello.

(Response of "Hello.")

MS. GARNER: It's such an honor to be standing before each and every single one of you here today—veterans, patriots, voices, and world changers. I'm so grateful to be the 2018 Jesse Brown Memorial Scholarship winner and I really thank each and every single one of you for this incredible honor.

First of all, I would like to thank all of you for your service. I want to thank you for your bravery, for your willingness to serve, and for your sacrifice. Thank you for ensuring that our veterans receive the care that they so greatly deserve. And thank you for empowering our veterans to lead lives of dignity and respect.

My journey began when I was eight years old with a flag etiquette speech. I spoke at a Purple Heart Ceremony at the Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks and I really had no idea what lie ahead.

I didn't realize that at that same hospital would be where I not only got to push wheelchairs and take vital signs but at that hospital would be where I met veterans who became some of my very best friends and who have taught me lessons more valuable than anything I will ever learn out of a textbook.

Two years later I spoke at a Flag Retirement Ceremony in a Harley Davidson parking lot when a Vietnam War veteran approached me. With a tear running down his cheek he simply kissed me on the forehead, said, "Thank you" and walked away.

In that moment I began to understand that I am fully capable of making a difference. The same flames that consumed that flag being retired are the ones that have ignited the passion for patriotism within my heart. Those flames are still burning today.

Two years ago I was motivated by the lack of patriotism in my school to ask my principal if we could have a Veterans' Day Assembly. He said, "No." But I chose to respectfully dissent, explaining that veterans do not ask to be recognized but it is the duty of public schools to train students to become well-informed citizens who can be leaders of tomorrow. He changed his mind and the Veterans' Day Assembly was a tremendous success.

I knew this when afterward a school custodian approached me and admitted that he was a veteran who had never been thanked for his service. This year's assembly was the second time an assembly occurred and it occurred with no opposition.

I am very grateful for volunteering for veterans, for meeting so many people who have taught me these lessons and who have defined patriotism like no other.

I am inspired by the words of Abraham Lincoln, "America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms it will be because we destroyed ourselves."

We must be committed to ensuring that we live in a world that unites us to be the good our Founding Fathers' intended, the principles our veterans have fought for, and, most importantly, the forthcoming that will become our legacy.

Standing in this room today I am so thankful and confident in the future of our nation because patriotism is present in this room. I am thankful for your organization and hope to continue to be further involved so that we can work together to make a difference and to ensure the prosperity of our nation, not only for us but for future generations.

Thank you so much for this incredible honor. The words “thank you” are sincere with gratitude and humility. And I am so thankful to be this scholarship recipient. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Sounds like the next leader to me. (Applause) 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 desire to assist in fulfilling our promises to those who have served.

It is now my pleasure to announce the winners of the 2018 George H. Seal Memorial Award.

The winner of this year's DAV George Seal Award is Army and Vietnam Veteran Angel “Louie” Pabey.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Angel “Louie” Pabey , a member of Chapter 80 in Crown Point, Indiana, has volunteered for eight years and has given more than 6,100 hours in service to his fellow veterans at the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center in Chicago.

He began as a driver for the Transportation Network before stepping up and taking over the hospital service coordinator duties. When he isn't on the road driving a veteran to a medical appointment or coordinating another veteran's trip to VA, you can find Louie fundraising and planning for new vans for all three of the locations he covers. (Applause)

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

MR. ANGEL “LOUIE” PABEY: First of all, I would like to say “thank you” to the DAV, the commanders, the national commanders and also my commander that I work along with. This is a prestigious award.

I never thought I would get here but I am thankful. And I appreciate it. Thank you to the selection committee and all the members of my coworkers and all that work alongside me, my drivers, the office personnel. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: For our next presentation I would like to ask Auxiliary National Commander Craig Johniken to join us at the podium.

(Whereupon, DAV Auxiliary Commander Johniken joined Commander Metcalf-Foster at the podium.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: This year's DAV Auxiliary George H. Seal Memorial Trophy winner is Diana Wong, an enthusiastic volunteer at the New Mexico VA Health Care System in Albuquerque. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Diana Wong, a member of DAV Auxiliary Unit 32 and DAV Chapter 32 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, began her volunteer work through the DAV Auxiliary 12 years ago and has amassed over 2,700 volunteer hours.

She served nine years in the Air Force before a diagnosis of cancer ended her military career. Now a three-time cancer survivor, Diana volunteers to give back to the care providers and her fellow veterans who have helped her along her journey. (Applause)

MS. DIANA WONG: Thank you. Hi.

(Response of “Hi.”)

MS. WONG: Isn't Reno beautiful? I have never been here before. It's very beautiful. I'd like to thank the DAV, DAVA, Department of New Mexico, my Unit and Chapter 32 in Albuquerque, my family and friends who always support me in everything I do, the National Headquarters for flying my sister Gerylne Valdez out here to be with me today from Indiana. It means the world to me.

I'd like to share a long-story-short, my condensed version. The end of 1990, beginning of Desert Storm, I was sent TDY from (Indistinguishable) Turkey Air Base Ground Defense Training in Fort Dix, New Jersey. Two weeks before graduation I became ill, found I had malignant tumors in my colon intestinal tract. Back then because of rollbacks if you had any major medical issues you had to get out.

So there I was. I had a career. Now I'm out. Didn't want to get out. Oh, my God, what do I do? Where do I go? Where do I go for help to get my benefits? Disgruntled, lost, alone, I decided I didn't want to have anything to do with any military organizations.

My testimony, as God would have it, as I wandered aimlessly I found myself in the VA hospital every two weeks, two months, for some medical issue. You'd think I would have learned after the second reoccurrence. It took a third reoccurrence to make this hard head of mine realize—God, are you telling me something? Are you leading me to that direction, down that path, the VA hospital?

So I started volunteering at the VA, military organizations, joined DAV and DAVA, started getting involved, helping my fellow brothers, sisters, comrades in getting their benefits so that they wouldn't have to feel alone, not knowing where to go.

I started giving back as a volunteer, making a difference. Since then I have been in remission for 20 years. (Applause) Not been a patient of the VA hospital for 28 years. I am honored and humbled to receive this award—not for myself but for all of you volunteers out there who give your precious time every day to assist and serve our veterans, our military men and women who have given their precious time to serve our country.

Because without volunteers doing what you do every day, not just in your units, chapters, communities, state, nationwide many military organizations, VA hospitals, homeless shelters, outreach programs, charities could not function, happen or exist.

So I thank you for all that you do as volunteers. I am graciously honored. God bless you all. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Diana, thank you so much.

Our next guest represents a company that goes above and beyond the call of duty to serve those who have served. The United States Automobile Association, better known as USAA, has been a stalwart 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 Senior Account Manager Military Affinity, Mr. J.D. Thornock. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: J.D. is an account manager at USAA responsible for supporting and developing relationships with middle- to large-scale military service organizations to drive enterprise growth and enhance a multi-channel member experience. He is responsible for multiple military affinity relationships, including DAV.

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 leaders, 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)

MR. J.D. THORNOCK: Thank you. Thank you for that. And good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. THORNOCK: Good morning, Reno. This is wonderful. And what a privilege it really is for me to be here on behalf of USAA, a company where our mission is to facilitate the financial security of the military community. It is wonderful to be here.

As a Marine and veteran myself, and like many of you, I was overwhelmed with the transition to civilian life after my time in the Corps. And although I was wounded in Afghanistan, I never really took the time to make sure my injuries were treated properly.

Ten years after I left the service a coworker heard my story and he personally introduced me to DAV. Six months after that conversation with an NSO I had a decision letter in-hand. I couldn't believe it.

I was humbled and truly grateful to know that somebody cared about me and took the time to make sure I was taken care of as a veteran should be. Truly, nobody does more for veterans than DAV. How fortunate it is that USAA has teamed up with DAV to continue to forward the mission.

As part of our partnership USAA is also the national series sponsor of the Annual DAV 5K. The 5Ks are such wonderful events held in cities all across the country. And it's great to see the communities and the cities get involved to show their support for the veterans and for DAV.

We love DAV. 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 will only continue to get better. Do we have the—so please, please accept this check donation of half-a-million to continue to forward the mission and better the lives of our veterans. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken as a ceremonial check was presented to Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess, followed by another round of applause.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: With DAV and USAA the future of veterans will only continue to get better. Thank you. Thank you so much, Mr. Thornock for your time here today and for USAA's generosity.

Our next guest is representing our first-ever 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.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 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 has spent the past 25 years serving at the highest levels of the Army and the Veterans Administration.

Mr. Pummill's tireless commitment to learning how to better serve American soldiers, veterans, and civilians can be seen in his educational background, including a Master of Science in National Security Strategy from National War College and a Master of Science in Military Arts and Science from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

He is currently assisting Veterans Evaluation Service in their mission to provide timely and accurate compensation and pension examinations to veterans. (Applause)

MR. DANNY PUMMILL: Good morning and I am honored and humbled to be allowed to be the first sponsor of your Opening Ceremonies here. On behalf of Veterans Evaluation Services I am proud and honored to be able to present a check to Disabled American Veterans for everything you do for our nation's veterans and for the families of our veterans.

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken as a ceremonial check was presented to Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess, followed by another round of applause.)

MR. PUMMILL: One more short presentation. Also on behalf of Veterans Evaluation Services for my fellow Army veteran here—we shared a little Hoo-ah when we first came out here—as a proud life member of DAV from Chapter 48, Prince William, Virginia—I have to throw out that plug—(Applause) I know how hard it is and I know how hard all the members of DAV work every day to serve our veterans and to take care of them.

The hardest positions are the leadership positions. The leaders give up their time, their families, everything to serve our nation's veterans. So with that Veterans Evaluation Services and the many veterans that work for us and veteran supporters would like to present a little token of our appreciation to Commander Metcalf-Foster for everything she has done her last year for DAV. (Applause)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken as an eagle statue was presented to Commander Metcalf-Foster, followed by another round of applause, after which Mr. Pummill withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. Our next guest and partner—Hankook Tire America Corporation—has been proud to support DAV “where the rubber meets the road,” literally. Last year, Hankook donated funds to sponsor six MSO stops. And they have expanded their partnership to sponsor 12 MSO stops this year.

I'd like to welcome Wes Boling to the stage. Wes serves as Hankook Tire's public relations manager. He oversees all public relations and internal communication initiatives on behalf of the company's American headquarters.

He also serves as the company's United States spokesperson and manages publicity related to the corporation's new tire production facility in Clarksville, Tennessee. Ladies and gentlemen, please put your hands together for Hankook and Mr. Wes Boling. (Applause)

MR. WES BOLING: Thank you. In the middle of the last century a young boy watched as valiant men and women fought to keep his country free. The nation was Korea and many of the soldiers were, of course, American. They saved his life and helped his country grow.

Nearly seven decades later that young boy had grown into the leader of one of the world's fastest-growing tire companies. And last October Mr. Sung Hwa Suh stood in front of a crowd to announce the opening of Hankook Tire's first-ever manufacturing plant in the United States.

He recognized colleagues. He—(Applause) Thank you. Yes. Very exciting for us. And as part of that celebration he recognized colleagues, he nodded to government officials and complimented his customers. But our then-CEO saved his highest praise for the soldiers he had never forgotten, for the DAV members in the room who represented the millions of veterans who had battled for freedom in his homeland and around the world.

“We are deeply honored to have your presence here,” Mr. Suh told them. “And we look forward to continuing to honor the service that you have made to your country and to ours.”

Hankook Tire is making bold moves in the United States. Between today and a year from now we will produce five million tires at our manufacturing facility in Clarksville, Tennessee, right down the road from Fort Campbell.

Why the U.S.? Well, we're here to grow our business. We're here to serve our customers. But, most importantly, we're here to build relationships. And there is no more valuable relationship than the one we have with the men and the women who have fought worldwide to serve the cause of liberty.

Last year Hankook helped DAV serve hundreds of veterans through mobile service office stops at tire dealerships around the country. And now in the fourth year of our partnership we're pleased to announce that we're doubling the number of MSO stops that we'll help coordinate this year. We are also

increasing our financial commitment because we believe in DAV's mission to serve those who have served us.

And so this morning we are honored to present DAV with our largest-ever donation—\$175,000. (Applause) And this donation, and our greater partnership, are tokens of gratitude on behalf of our employees across the United States, on behalf of our global leadership, and on behalf of that young boy who never forgot the sacrifice you made. Thank you. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: 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 franchised restaurant chain in 1921.

What many people may not know is that A&W served their first root beer float in 1919 during a welcome home parade for World War I veterans. You don't get much more All-American than that.

It seems very fitting that DAV and A&W, two great national institutions, founded within a couple of years 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 Monday, August 6th, 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 that you are there.

Ladies and gentlemen, for the second straight year let's raise a frosty mug for a very special guest from A&W. Please give a big round of applause for Bill Fry, vice-president of support services.

Bill has over 30 years of experience in the restaurant business and training, starting with his first job at a local hot dog stand in Newport Beach, California. Bill has been part of the A&W family on and off for almost 20 years, and it's the only brand he has ever loved. Let's give him a round of applause. (Applause)

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

MR. BILL FRY: Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster and the entire DAV team for inviting me to attend this year's convention. I know there is prepared remarks. You can see them on there. But I have two things I want to bring up that's off it, off of the topic.

We were sitting down in the front and they took all of the presenters and they said, "Go to the Green Room and we're going to do hair and makeup." (Laughter) And I've got to tell you, they owe me. (Laughter) It didn't—

And then we had one of those checks, you know, that you've been seeing, those big checks. Yesterday I got a little crazy. I was able to stick it in one of those giant slot machines. (Laughter) So I will owe you that. We'll get back to that. Okay, so back to the remarks. All right.

Anyway, I'm honored to be able to represent A&W today and I am going to share a special memory with you. This is really neat for me. My dad was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II. (Applause) Yes. Thanks. And both my parents passed away recently. And I know they'd be proud to see me standing up here with you today.

I grew up in an Italian household in South Philly, Pennsylvania. (Cheers) There. And every year for the Army-Navy game we had so many veterans—sorry, Navy only was allowed—and they spent the weekend with my family for the game. Usually about half of the vets went to the game and the others stayed and watched on our giant console black-and-white TV, cheering on the midshipmen like crazy.

And it wasn't until much later in life that I found out that the Army-Navy game wasn't considered a national holiday. (Laughter) And it was surprising.

And since we're in Reno it also reminded me that there was always a crap game popping up during those Army-Navy game days. Somebody always pulled out a pair of dice. And it wasn't until I was older that I found out that craps was played standing up at a table. I thought it was on your knees on the floor in the kitchen.

Anyway, I highly recommend that you throw a five down on the hard eight next time you walk by the craps table here in honor of all those vets and especially my dad.

But enough about me. (Applause) Thanks. You've just heard a little bit about the A&W history supporting our nation's veterans. And in addition to that first parade in 1919 our brand's big boom in the 1950s was built on the backs of returning World War II veterans who used their GI loans to open up A&W Restaurants across the country. Since 2013 we have raised \$650,000 in support of veteran-related charities.

Last year we were honored to present DAV with a check for \$100,000, (Applause)—thank you—money raised during our 2017 National Root Beer Float Day campaign. And this year our goal is to raise \$150,000. (Applause) Yes.

We are committed to our partnership in support of veterans. And to give you a taste of what National Root Beer Float Day is all about, hopefully, we've put together a short video that they're going to show you right now.

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

MR. FRY: There you go. I just caught a glimpse of myself on the screen here. I do look good so I'm sorry about the makeup people. (Laughter) Yes. I'm fine with this. This is a good look for me.

Okay, as you can see, you really can't have a bad day when you're enjoying an A&W root beer float. And that video is just a small sample of the joy that National Root Beer Float Day brings to our communities.

And as we prepare for this year's event we want you to know that we value our partnership with DAV and we are looking forward to another big check that I don't shove into a slot machine. But we're going to give you another big check presentation to your team once this event is over.

So go vets. Go Navy. And thank you pops for everything you've done for our family and for our country.

And one last thing. We want to welcome everyone to join us at 11:30 a.m. right in the back of this hall—right across the way here, just right here. You don't have to leave. And join us for a root beer float party at 11:30 a.m. right here in the back. Everybody there—

Don't ask me to make you one, by the way. I'm not going to do that. But there is a whole bunch of volunteers that will help you. It's coming up. That's at 11:30 but, really, thank you so much for letting us be part of DAV. We're going to raise a lot of money for you. Thank you and God bless everybody out there. Thank you. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Former gym rat turned entrepreneur, Tom Richard, leads the sales and marketing efforts at Gym Source, the nation's largest dealer of premium fitness equipment. By the age of 25 Tom was running a successful direct response marketing agency, until one of his customers, Gym Source, asked him to join their team.

Now he leads the sales and marketing efforts at Gym Source and is credited with establishing the new partnership between the DAV and Gym Source. Additionally, he is passionate about continuing to look forward to future programs developed for DAV and our nation's veterans.

This past Memorial Day while all of the other retailers focused on the big sales, Gym Source felt inspired to raise funds supporting DAV's mission. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Mr. Richard advanced to the podium amid a round of applause.)

MR. TOM RICHARD: Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster. My father is a Vietnam vet. And I was raised with a deep sense of patriotism. As I heard our scholarship winner talking earlier about bringing patriotism to our communities and making sure that these next generations have the same amount of patriotism that is exhibited in this room, deeply touches my heart and deeply moves Gym Source, the company that I work for.

That's one of the reasons that this past Memorial Day, while all the other retailers focused on big sale events Gym Source felt inspired to raise funds supporting DAV's mission.

I am here to excitedly announce that Gym Source will not only be continuing this partnership we are going to be expanding our partnership to further support the amazing work done by this important organization. (Applause)

This past Memorial Day weekend our 80 sales representatives, representing 35 stores on the East Coast, were able to raise \$45,000 over the four-day holiday weekend. (Applause) Thank you. And it is our great pleasure to be a part of the DAV's mission.

On behalf of everyone at Gym Source we look forward to bringing our communities, our customers, and our employees together to continue to raise money and awareness for the important work done here at DAV. Thank you. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: The Bugle Award was created in 2005 to recognize the outstanding contributions of the media in support of disabled veterans. In our over-communicated world so often the word "media" takes on a negative connotation. We think of television, tabloids and

sensationalism. We often forget the critical role of authors, journalists, and researchers that fight to bring the truth to light.

Our 2018 Bugle Award recipient embodies the highest standards of academia as well as a deeply rooted desire to tell a largely unknown story regarding several courageous DAV members.

University of Southern California's Doctor Steven J. Ross uncovered historical evidence of a spy ring that was started in 1933 by DAV life member Leon Lewis.

The world in the 1930s was a very different place. It was a time of the Great Depression. Nazi-ism had firmly taken root in Germany. And world powers were at a loss on how to stop Hitler's conquest of Europe.

In American, disabled veterans had every reason to feel disenfranchised and forgotten by their government. The nation they served had fallen through on many of the promises made to them before and after they returned from service.

The Nazi movement had a very real presence in our country in the thirties. Plans existed for Nazi sympathizers to target and recruit disabled veterans, just as Hitler had successfully done in Germany.

There were plots to hang Hollywood actors and prominent figures, including Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Charlie Chaplain, Louie B. Mayer, and Jack Warner. There were also plans to drive through Los Angeles and shoot as many Jewish residents as possible with machine guns, fumigate Jewish homes with cyanide, and blow up military installations and seize munitions from National Guard armories.

Leon Lewis knew American veterans, especially those who had reason to feel frustrated by the government, would be recruited by the Nazi movement. So Lewis looked to fellow DAV members to counter that threat.

Dr. Ross's book Hitler in Los Angeles, illustrates the unwavering patriotism of DAV members and tells their courageous and overlooked story. It is an account of the deadly risks they took to ensure the homeland remained secure during a scary and turbulent time.

Along the way, it highlights the concerted efforts DAV members like Leon Lewis and past National Commanders William Conley and Volney Mooney. The book was a Pulitzer finalist and has now been optioned by Silver Linings Playbook and American Beauty producer Bruce Cohen.

It is my distinct pleasure to honor Dr. Ross' work and present him the 2018 DAV Bugle Award. Dr. Ross.

(Whereupon, Dr. Ross advanced to the lectern amid a round of applause.)

DR. STEVEN J. ROSS: Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster. Oh, over here? (Laughter)

(Whereupon, Dr. Ross advanced to the podium to receive the award, at which time an official photograph was taken amid a round of applause.)

DR. ROSS: All right, now I guess it's the right time. (Laughter) I'm used to speaking for 40 to 50 minutes but I think I'll do it in two to three now.

Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster. And I am truly honored to be here. But really the honor belongs to the courageous men and women, the DAV veterans, who stood up on behalf of their nation.

In 1933 Western society was plunged into one of its darkest periods of history. Fascism ruled in Italy. Nazi-ism ruled in Germany. And in this country there was a lot of talk about what to do but very little action.

And when Nazi's held their first open meeting in Los Angeles in July 1933, DAV veteran and founding executive secretary of the Anti-Defamation League, Leon Lewis, knew something had to be done.

He went to Patriotic Call, which is where the DAV met, and he recruited four DAV vets and their wives, including William Conley who was then the National Commander of the DAV. And he asked them to go undercover and join every Nazi and Fascist group in Los Angeles, to rise to positions of leadership, and to tell them what they were plotting to do.

He turned to the four DAV veterans and their wives, not because they're fearless, but precisely because they had faced their fears in combat and they had gone beyond those fears. They acknowledged fear but it didn't stop them.

Over the course of time they realized that with no government authority being willing to step in and stop the rise of hate it was up to them. As citizens and as veterans they protected their country during World War I and now it was up to them to protect their country in equally dire times.

And I would say today it's time to sound the bugle once again. We've seen the rise of hate in America. And what I will tell you is Leon Lewis and the four men and women—actually eight all together—who joined him realized that they were able to stop hate without ever firing a gun. Without ever raising a weapon they foiled a whole series of plots for murder, espionage and blowing up military installations.

And I would say the lesson lives today that when we hear hate stop it. It is not American to hate one another because of one's race, one's religion, or one's country of origin. (Applause)

I've been going around the country since October speaking. And people say to me, "Who are the Leon Lewis' of our own time? Who is going to stand up to hate?" And I look around this room and I think this is it. It started with the DAV and it should continue today with the DAV.

When you hear hate, when you hear somebody saying something, stop them and simply say, "This is not how we talk in our country. This is not how we talk in America. We don't hate on one another. And we don't call for death or persecution of other people." Thank you so much for this award. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Dr. Ross withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much, Dr. Ross, for honoring our veterans.

Golden Corral was a trailblazing restaurant that was the first to nationally honor veterans with a free meal in conjunction with Veterans' Day right after the terrorist attacks on 9/11. Over the last 17 years DAV chapters and departments have benefited enormously through the Military Appreciation Night program.

In 2017 alone, DAV was able to reach out to more than 315,000 veterans who received free meals. We were able to raise more nearly \$1.4 million. And since the program's inception nearly 5.4 million free meals have been served to veterans and over \$14.3 million has been raised to support state and local programs. (Applause)

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 military members and injured veterans through a week-long summer camp.

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

To assist with 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 have raised \$334,000 to get kids to these camps. In recognition of your hard work, these funds will be matched by the national organization. (Applause) Yes.

I have a check for \$654,000 here today -- \$300,000 of these funds are the result of support from the DAV Charitable Service Trust, matched contributions that were collected or donated by our chapters and departments through DAV's Just B Kids scholarship program, and, of course, the support of DAV Auxiliary.

Combined, these funds will provide scholarships for more than 1,100 camp attendees. We'll now invite some of our special friends to the stage and send them to the bank with their special gift made possible by all of you.

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken as a ceremonial check was presented by Commander Metcalf-Foster, DAV Auxiliary Commander Johniken, and Charitable Service Trust President Richard Marbes to Lisa Brown and Paula Moran of Camp Corral, followed by another round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Representing our partners at Golden Corral is Paula Moran, Vice-President of National Marketing Media. Paula is the daughter of an Army veteran who served at Camp St. Barbara in Korea. Not only did her father serve in the Army but her great-grandfather and grandfather also served. Paula oversees the Military Appreciation Night program and Camp Corral fundraising efforts for Golden Corral.

Joining her is Lisa Brown who joined the Camp Corral team in 2017. After completing her master's degree in counseling at the University of San Diego, Lisa went into the field of higher education administration where she could bring the fun of summer camp to the college campus, directing programs such as freshman orientation and campus activities.

Lisa is the proud spouse of a colonel in the Army Reserve. As a military spouse, fundraising professional and a product of the camp experience, she is uniquely positioned to advocate for our kids. (Applause)

MS. LISA BROWN: Wow. This is amazing. DAV, thank you. The DAV Auxiliary, thank you. And the departments and chapters who have done so much on behalf of the kids from Camp Corral.

As I accept this donation and gladly take it to the bank I want to share with you a story that starts with one of your own. You can see him on the screens. He's a member of DAV. Francis Turner served in World War II.

In 1945, Francis was stationed at a supply depot in a small port in France. As an engineer his duty was to implement effective and efficient ways to get the right supplies to the right place during the war. Mr. Turner remembers December of 1945 when the 101st Airborne was surrounded in the Battle of the Bulge and were limited in medicine, food, and ammunition.

He tells me that arriving cargo was processed and en-route to the boys at Bastogne as fast as humanly possible. While the effort to hold off the Germans was clearly bigger than just one supply guy, Francis knew that the lives of his brothers-in-arms depended on his absolute best. And so he gave it. He didn't sleep. He didn't eat until the job was done.

This sense of responsibility that Francis had for the welfare of others has continued throughout his life. And even at 96 years old he has been able to channel that desire to serve as a member of DAV.

Francis is the DAV member who unselfishly gives of his time at his local Golden Corral Restaurant. During campaign season he hands out small American flags to the children. He teaches them about flag etiquette. And he raises money for Just B Kids on behalf of Camp Corral.

He is your model chapter member. He shows up every day with that smile on his face and a willingness to serve. Yet at his age, sitting at Golden Corral all day long is just becoming increasingly difficult. That's why for his 96th birthday his friends at Golden Corral decided to do something for him instead.

To his surprise when he arrived to take his shift at the table he was greeted by 20 well-wishers who had gathered for a birthday celebration. There they announced their plans to raise \$9,600 in his honor to fill a Camp Corral cabin with deserving children.

I had the opportunity last week to take Mr. Turner to Camp Corral location in Widener, Georgia, and he met his cabin full of kids. And what a time we had.

Mr. Turner was greeted with a standing ovation. And for the rest of the day while he was riding on the back of a golf cart Mr. Turner waved to the kids. And they waved back and they shouted, "Thank you, Mr. Turner." "We love you." "Thank you for your service." He was a Camp Corral celebrity. It was a rare moment for these kids to meet a World War II veteran.

One camper, named Amari, followed us around for most of the day asking questions and just wanting to be in this man's presence. You could tell that Amari was fascinated by Mr. Turner, his service to his country, and his commitment to kids just like him.

I remember Amari's first question to Mr. Turner. He leaned into that great-grandpa looking figure and he asked, "Were you young when you were in the war?" (Laughter) No one laughed harder than Mr. Turner.

Before Mr. Turner left camp, Amari gave this man a big hug. He said, "Thank you for giving me a chance to come to camp. You are a hero." It was a powerful moment. I wish that each of you could have been there to experience it, to feel that authenticity of that young child giving a disabled American veteran an unsolicited hug of gratitude.

But that's why I'm here today. You see the story is bigger than Mr. Turner. He did not raise money alone. The story is also about you. Today we celebrate the partnership between DAV, Golden Corral and Camp Corral.

But what can't be overlooked is that this partnership is truly and honestly forged by you—you and the Mr. Turners out there who are willing to give their absolute best to the cause in which they believe.

You make the magic of Camp Corral happen. These kids get a week away from their worries at home. These kids get to discover they're not alone. These kids get to feel supported and valued and loved because of you.

Because you were willing to sit at a table at Golden Corral. Because you were willing to go to a business and ask for a donation. Because you were willing to take the responsibility for the welfare of others.

Every moment at Camp is a gift for these kids. You have worked hard this past year to find the most effective and efficient ways to raise money for the cause. Like Mr. Turner, you know that the lives of today's military children depend on it.

On behalf of Amari and the 3,799 other children that are going to camp this summer, thank you. Please come visit me at our Camp Corral booth so that I can thank you personally and, like Amari did to Mr. Turner, to give you that hug that you so deserve. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Brown, Ms. Moran, and President Marbes withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. This past year has been busy for all of us. It has been a time of evolution. Our voice is increasingly prominent and prolific, while remaining the most trusted on Capitol Hill.

Our services continue to make the most relevant and direct impact on the lives of veterans. And we have developed new resources to ensure that we are reaching and assisting more than one million veterans every year in positive, life-changing ways. At the helm of our great ship is a thoughtful and diligent captain, a Navy veteran.

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.

Under his direction, we have grown as an organization and continue charting a clear path to success. For our mission and, more importantly, for the veterans, families and survivors we serve, Marc has been a caring and strategic leader.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome your DAV National Adjutant, Marc Burgess. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon Adjutant Burgess advanced to the lectern.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. Thank you, everyone. It is truly a great and humbling honor to serve as your National Adjutant.

It's been a tremendous year and the hard work we are doing around the country has been paying off in the lives we've improved for our nation's heroes. It is only through their sacrifices that our nation can enjoy the tremendous liberties and prosperity we can sometimes take for granted.

With appeals modernization efforts and caregiver benefit expansion we've come a long way this year in terms of recognizing those sacrifices. But there is more work to be done. And it is equally important for us to focus on defending the advancements we have made after nearly a century of service and advocacy.

We have charted a great deal of growth and progress for our organization in the past 12 months, while continuing DAV's unparalleled focus on service, legislative advocacy, membership, employment, and volunteerism.

With that, let's take a look at the work 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: I think we can all agree that this has been another banner year for DAV and for the men, women, families and survivors that we serve. We have had some major successes. And I believe, truly, the best is yet to come. We could simply not accomplish all we do without your hard work and your continued dedication.

Looking back on the past year, it's remarkable to see how much faith the veteran community places in our organization and in our mission. Veterans, their families and survivors, are the driving force behind every decision we make. And positive and fair outcomes must continue to be our focus for our next century of service and advocacy.

I want to share my gratitude to all of the men and women out in the field who make what we do possible. It's because of you we were able to help veterans and their families members obtain more than \$4 billion in new and retroactive benefits. It is why, as you just saw, we were able to provide our brothers and sisters in greatest need with more than a million dollars in support through our Disaster Relief Program.

It's why veterans are able to get to their hospital appointments and receive a special thank-you in VA facilities by volunteers who recognize their contributions. And it's why we stand out among other veterans' service organizations for the sheer volume of work we do and for the quality of services that we provide.

Another year of success is in the books. But I know all of you well enough to know that, that does not mean resting on our laurels. It means that we look to tomorrow and we ask, "What can we do better? How can we continue to improve what we do?"

I encourage you to remain active and engaged. This is one of our greatest strengths—in service, in advocacy, in volunteer work, and in our efforts to build our membership.

A strong member base is the foundation of DAV. And as you can see, we continue to grow. This network of community service and leadership is the framework that allows us to be the best in the business.

However, as men and women continue to raise their right hand and write a blank check to their country, up to and including their lives, we must continue to focus on outreach and bring these young veterans into our chapters.

Everything you do reflects credit upon our great organization. And I thank you for helping to build and preserve DAV's proud legacy of service and advocacy. You should all be extremely proud of your contributions to yet another incredible year.

Thank you, as well, for the opportunity you have given me to serve. And thank you, Commander, for your leadership and your service representing our great cause. Commander that concludes my report. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Marc. Thank you so much. The chair will entertain a motion to accept the National Adjutant's outstanding report. May I have a second.

MR. JOHNSON: Kirk Johnson, District 16, makes the motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. It's ordered. (Applause)

It is our distinct honor each and every year to recognize an individual who through both their tenacity and actions reflect DAV's commitment that no veteran should have to face the challenging road to recovery alone.

This year's recipient is one of our very own. She serves as the first junior vice-commander of DAV Chapter 58 in Midland, Texas, and served three-and-a-half years in the United States Army

Callie Rios' service is particularly unique when one considers her difficult personal journey. After being assaulted by a fellow soldier, she battled beyond betrayal, setting aside and transforming her own trauma to focus her energy on helping others.

She participates in Heroes in Heels, a PTSD group, a clinic for women veterans. She did this without hesitation and knowing full well the emotional toll it would take on her. The life-changing clinic resulted in three veterans seeking mental health treatment.

She also serves the local student veteran population, ensuring these men and women are set for success as they transition to life after the military.

Oh, and did I mention that she does this all while also holding the pivotal title of mother? Let's get to know her a little better.

(Whereupon, a video outlining Callie Rios' service was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Ladies and gentlemen, for her crucial work in helping other veterans overcome obstacles as well as her commitment to eliminating the stigma surrounding mental health and invisible injuries we're proud to introduce our 2018 Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year, Callie Rios. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Ms. Callie Rio advanced to the podium at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MS. CALLIE RIOS: I just wanted to say thank you to our Nashville Chapter, my state chapter and everybody else. I just like people. I'm not big on speeches so I'm just going to say thank you. But if anybody, you know, felt a piece of my story and they want to talk about it or whatever the case may be, I'll be here.

And I did want to add, because I've just recently, maybe because of this award people are opening up more towards me and we are always talking about sexual assault on women. But we can't forget that that's not a woman-specific event. There are also men out there that were affected by these same things.

So I just want to say thank you and let's have a good conference. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Rios withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, and congratulations, again, on a well-deserved honor.

I will now ask the National Adjutant to read DAV's Statement of Policy, the list of committee advisors who 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.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander.

"The 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 that these veterans encounter as a result of their disabilities.

"It, therefore, follows that we will not take 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 Metcalf-Foster's appointed Convention Committee Advisors: Credentials Committee, Mike Dobmeier and Doug Wells; General Resolutions and Membership, Shurhonda Love and Shawn Hope; Legislation and Veterans Rights, Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann; Constitution and Bylaws, Rob Reynolds and Ed Hartman; Employment, Jeff Hall, Jeremy Villanueva; Hospital and Voluntary Services, Adrian Atizado, John Kleindienst; and Nomination of National Officers, Joe Johnston and Al Church.

The Committee Advisors can pick up their Committee folders from the Resolutions Coordinating Office in the Shasta 2 Room located on the Executive Level.

And I do have a few other announcements. Unfortunately, Chief Judge Robert Davis was not able to attend due to circumstances beyond his control. Therefore, the Update on Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims seminar that was scheduled for this afternoon has been canceled. We apologize for any inconvenience.

However, at 2:00 the Service and Legislative Seminar, in which we'll welcome Department of Veterans Affairs Acting Secretary Peter O'Rourke and the House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Phil Roe—you won't want to miss that important discussion.

The National Commander's event will be here in the Grand Theater tonight at 7:30 p.m. And, remember, you must have a ticket to attend. And it is a great pleasure to let you know or let you in on a little surprise. As some of you may be aware, the legendary performer Frankie Valli is in town for a performance.

This evening he will be honoring our commander and your service with a special concert. Now, you will need a ticket to gain entry. The tickets are free. All you have to do is go to registration. There is a table at the back of the room and you can pick up your tickets. So Frankie Valli has graciously agreed to perform for us so let's make sure the room is full and every seat is taken. So stop by and get your tickets.

I would also like to thank Veterans Evaluation Services for their sponsorship and for being with us here today.

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 for your meeting. 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 available to you all. (Applause) We like our root beer floats. And we love A&W.

For Fun Night on Monday at 8 p.m. we will be treated again to The Lieutenant Dan Band which is being presented by our friends at TriWest.

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 9:00 a.m. And at that time we will hear reports from our headquarters Executive Directors and the Board of Directors' Treasurer. We will also honor employees, VA employees, volunteers and our top recruiters.

Also, if you intend to donate to the National Service Foundation—and we hope that you do—in the interest of time please fill out the form that is in your bags prior to making your way to the donation booth located in the Grand Salon Room on the Casino Level.

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 Donald Wright, Missouri, Chapter 2; Giovanni Tornacelli, California Chapter Number 23; and Leonard Long, New Jersey Chapter Number 42. Commander. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Marc. Ladies and gentlemen, please rise and I will ask Chaplin Dover to lead us in our closing prayer. (Three raps)

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Ladies, gentlemen, let us pray. Heavenly Creator, bless us as we go about our business to learn our business. Guide our hearts and minds 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 METCALF-FOSTER: The Convention stands in recess until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 11:13 o'clock, a.m. on Saturday, July 14, 2018.)

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FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

July 15, 2018

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The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 97th National Convention convened in the Summit Pavilion on the Casino Level of the Grand Sierra Casino and Resort, Reno, Nevada, on Sunday morning, July 15, 2018, and was called to order at 9:00 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster.

COMMANDER DELPHINE METCALF-FOSTER: 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 of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I will now ask our National Chaplain to lead us in prayer as we prepare to undertake this morning's business session.

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL 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. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. 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 in the Bylaws and do not require re-adoption.

I would like to call on the Credentials Committee for its report, Chairperson Warren Tobin.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARREN TOBIN: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Credentials was called to order for its first business session on July 14th, 2018, 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. I, Warren Tobin, was elected chairman and Brigitte Marker was elected as secretary.

Our registration at the present time is 1,023 delegates and 60 alternates, representing 44 Departments and 358 Chapters; there are 41 National Officers for a total vote count of 8,065. This is partial report for informational purposes only.

Comrade Commander, this concludes my report, the first report of the Convention Committee. Thank you.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Warren. At this time I would like to also introduce and recognize my National Chief-of-Staff Kirk Johnson; Officer-of-the-Day Rellon Powers; and Sergeant-at-Arms Lou Gysin. Thank you for your support. It has made my job much easier.

It is an honor and a pleasure to introduce the Executive Director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C., Garry Augustine.

The Lake County, Ohio, native enlisted in the United States Army in August of 1969. Following training Garry was assigned to the 198th Infantry Brigade in South Vietnam. He was severely wounded by a land mine explosion during a combat patrol on April 9, 1970.

His injuries resulted in the loss of use of his left hand and left foot, multiple shrapnel wounds to his body, and the loss of his spleen. Due to the extent of his injuries he was medically retired from the Army in December of 1972.

Garry went on to earn a bachelor's degree with honors from Ohio University in 1978 and then a master's degree in sociology from Cleveland State University in 1983—the same year he became a member of Chapter 42 in Mentor, Ohio.

Garry's DAV career began in 1988 as a Hospital Service Coordinator for the Department of Ohio. In October of that year he was hired as a National Service Officer trainee in Cleveland. Garry was appointed Executive Director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C., in August 2013.

He is DAV's principal spokesperson 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. Thanks to his leadership DAV has stayed in 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 in Washington, D.C., Garry Augustine. (Applause)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS GARRY AUGUSTINE: Good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS AUGUSTINE: National Commander Metcalf-Foster, National Adjutant Burgess, distinguished guests and delegates to the 97th DAV and Auxiliary National Convention, as executive director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C., I am honored to provide my annual report on DAV's progress and accomplishments in providing service and promoting better public policies to support ill and injured veterans, their families and survivors.

Let me begin by thanking DAV Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess for providing unflinching leadership, support and encouragement so critical to the many victories for veterans we have been able to achieve in recent years.

I also want to thank DAV Auxiliary National Commander Craig Johniken and National Adjutant Pat Kemper for standing right alongside us as we fight to honor and support the men and women who served.

Most importantly, though, I want to thank all of Team DAV—from our dedicated staffs in Washington and Cold Spring, to the more than one million members, families, friends, and supporters across the country, including all of you here today. Without your efforts, none of our successes would be possible. So please give yourself a well-earned round of applause. (Applause)

As I was preparing for this year's convention and reflecting back on my time in D.C., I realized that since becoming the executive director of our Washington Headquarters five years ago I've worked with seven different VA secretaries—three permanent and four acting.

And there have been almost as many leadership changes on the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees, not to mention at other veterans service organizations.

But regardless of who sits in those seats and fills those roles, our job remains constant: to promote the interests of ill and injured veterans, regardless of political turmoil in D.C. It's not about the person but our critical mission.

This reminds me of the words of one of our founding fathers, John Adams, who reflecting upon the leaders of his day said, "In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a Congress." (Laughter)

But the key to dealing with Congress is to understand not just the people but also how the politics works.

In addition to Adams I've found words of wisdom from some unlikely sources such as Marx's theory of politics—Groucho Marx, that is, who said: "Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedies." (Applause)

But seriously, I think that my favorite Marx—our founder, Judge Robert Marx—would agree that our job is to get Congress, VA and the Administration to focus on the right problems, and adopt the right solutions, no matter who is in charge. (Applause)

So even as Washington's political battles rage, I am pleased to report that over the past year we've made significant progress on DAV's critical priorities, most recently an historic victory for veteran caregivers, America's unsung heroes.

(Whereupon, the video "Unsung Heroes" was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS AUGUSTINE: While we celebrate this historic victory we know there are still some veterans and caregivers who are not eligible because the law doesn't include illnesses. Rest assured we have not forgotten you. DAV will continue our fight to ensure that all of America's unsung heroes are fully covered. (Applause)

But the VA Mission Act contained more than just the caregiver victory. It is the culmination of years of work to ensure that the VA health care system is modernized, strengthened and sustained for future generations.

DAV and other VSOs worked closely with the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees to promote our vision for improving veterans' health care and fight back radical proposals to downsize or even dismantle VA in the name of unfettered choice.

Now there has always been and always will be a need to use private community providers because VA can't be everywhere, but overall the VA must remain at the center of veterans' health care. (Applause)

So I'm pleased to report that the VA Mission Act includes two major reforms that, if properly implemented, could modernize and strengthen the VA health care system for decades to come.

First, the legislation will phase out the deeply flawed Veterans Choice Program and will replace it with new integrated networks of VA and community care providers with VA serving as the primary provider and coordinator of care.

Second, the VA Mission Act establishes a new infrastructure review process that, if properly executed, could provide VA with sustained, long-term investments necessary to modernize, rebuild, and maintain its health care infrastructure.

Although an early version of the legislation proposed a BRAC-like process, DAV and other VSOs blocked that idea and forced Congress to make dozens of changes. We demanded, and we got, language to ensure that infrastructure review will be done in an open and transparent manner. Most importantly, the law mandates that VSOs and veterans will be full participants as decisions are made about the future of our health care system. (Applause)

Of course, the VA Mission Act is not perfect. As House VA Chairman Phil Roe said, "I haven't seen a perfect bill be written yet." However, this carefully-crafted compromise represents a balanced approach to ensuring timely access to care while continuing to strengthen VA.

That's why DAV and 37 other major veterans' service organizations supported this legislation. And that's why it passed the House 347 to 70, passed the Senate 92 to 5, and was signed into law by the President last month. So while it's not perfect, after years of talking there is finally a clear path forward to reform veterans' health care. (Applause)

We are also continuing to make progress in our efforts so all women veterans can receive the health care services and benefits they have earned. (Applause) As many of you will recall, four years ago DAV released a special report on women veterans which documented the challenges they face during their transition from military to civilian life.

The report contained 27 major recommendations to improve the delivery of services and benefits to women veterans. Our report received tremendous coverage in the media and at three Congressional hearings, leading to more than two dozen bills being introduced.

I'm very pleased to report that, as of today, Congress, VA and other federal agencies have addressed, in whole or in part, all but 5 of the 27 recommendations made in our 2014 report. (Applause)

I can also announce today that DAV will be releasing a second women veterans' report this fall with over three dozen recommendations to support women who served.

It is really a special year for women at DAV. Not only do we have a strong woman commander at our highest post, but our Freedom Award recipient and Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year are also women warriors. (Applause)

But now is not the time to rest on our laurels. We must continue to lead the fight to ensure women veterans have equal access to the high-quality benefits and health care services they have earned. (Applause)

Another legislative victory from the past year is reform of the appeals system at VA. With strong grassroots support we helped push legislation through both the House and Senate last year. And shortly after concluding our convention in New Orleans the Appeals Modernization Act was signed into law.

Although the law doesn't take full effect until next February we worked closely with VA and the Board of Veterans' Appeals to allow veterans early access through the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program called RAMP.

In its first eight months, over 30,000 veterans opted into RAMP, resulting in over 8,000 new decisions in an average of 76 days, providing over \$28 million in new compensation payments. Of that, I'm proud to report, DAV represented over 1,300 veterans, helping them to receive over \$8.5 million in retroactive compensation benefits. (Applause)

And that's just a sliver of what our Service Department does. In 100 offices across the country DAV's service officers are on the front lines. Last year we interviewed over 300,000 veterans and their families and filed nearly 200,000 new claims for benefits. We obtained more than \$4.3 billion in new and retroactive benefits for them. In total, we represent over 1.1 million veterans, far more than any other veterans' service organization. (Applause) Hoo-yah.

And thanks to our training programs for national, department and chapter service officers, our new Case Management System, and our industry-leading iTRAK training system, DAV continues to set the standard in providing the highest-quality service to veterans.

Simply put, when it comes to helping veterans get their benefits, no one does more or does it better than DAV. (Applause) And when disaster strikes, DAV is there to help. Let's take a look.

(Whereupon, a video on DAV providing disaster relief was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS AUGUSTINE: Last year we provided more than \$1.3 million in direct aid to veterans in Puerto Rico and across the country after devastating storms and natural disasters.

Through a partnership with the PenFed Foundation we helped distribute almost \$500,000 to support ill and injured veterans who faced severe financial hardship.

But as impressive as these statistics are, it is the real-life stories of veterans who we help that best illustrate who we are and what we do. Here is one of those stories.

(Whereupon, a video of a formerly homeless veteran was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS AUGUSTINE: That story, and thousands more like it, are what define our success.

George Washington Carver once said that, "It is not the style of clothes one wears, neither the kind of automobile one drives, nor the amount of money one has in the bank that counts. These mean nothing. It is simply service that measures success." I couldn't agree more.

But for our successes in recent years we must never become complacent. As Mark Twain said, "Success is a journey, not a destination. It requires constant effort, vigilance and reevaluation." And so our journey continues.

There will be more victories. For years we've worked to ensure all Vietnam veterans who suffer from illnesses as a result of exposure to toxins are eligible for compensation. And I'm pleased to report that the House of Representatives just passed legislation that will, if approved by the Senate, provide long overdue justice to Blue Water Navy veterans. (Applause)

But there will also be challenges and dangers ahead. In the past year we have had to fight back proposals to reduce disability compensation payments by rounding down the annual Cost of Living Adjustment and eliminate individual unemployment benefits for thousands of older veterans. That's why we focused on revitalizing our Benefit Protection Teams.

As former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill observed, "All politics is local." He was right, you know. No matter how often we meet and talk to Congressional leaders in Washington, it is our local DAV members and leaders back home who truly move them.

Now, more than ever, we'll be counting on you, all of you, to continue standing with us to help veterans lead high-quality lives with dignity and respect.

Later this year, on November 11th, we will commemorate the 100th Anniversary of World War I, what President Woodrow Wilson called "The War to end all wars." Unfortunately, it was not to be. Twenty-five years later we were in the middle of a Second World War. Twenty-five years after that, the Vietnam War raged, and a Cold War got colder.

Twenty-five years later the Cold War had ended but there were new wars in the Persian Gulf and, later, Iraq and Afghanistan, where we still have troops in harm's way. That's why for nearly a century DAV has been dedicated to serving our fellow veterans. All of us here today are part of a great connected thread, from DAV's founding in 1920 to the convention here today. And that thread must continue.

Navy veteran, Senator and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who was cut down by an assassin's bullet 50 summers ago, once said, "Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events—and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation." Kennedy's words perfectly describe the DAV.

From Washington, D.C., to Cold Spring, Kentucky, to the 50 states and thousands of cities and towns across this great nation, all of us, DAV members, Auxiliary, family and supporters, are making history one day at a time through the acts of service we perform for America's heroes.

May God bless our continuing work for those who served. And may God bless the DAV. (Applause) Commander Metcalf-Foster, that concludes my report. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much, Garry. May I have a motion to accept Mr. Augustine's report? Mic 1.

MR. CHAD MULLINS: Mic 1. Chad Mullins, Virginia Chapter 10. I would make that motion to accept the eloquent report provided by Executive Director Garry Augustine.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Can I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. LeROY ACOSTA: Mic 2. LeRoy Acosta, DAV Department of California, San Diego Chapter 2, seconds.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion is carried. Thank you.

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 who was medically discharged in 1993.

A Minnesota native, he 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 Washington and Cold Spring.

A talented and selfless leader, Barry has earned the admiration of key leaders, critical associates and our members throughout the organization whose decisions influence veterans' lives.

As DAV continues to evolve and enhance the depth and scope of the services we offer our nation's veterans, Barry's tactical guidance and administration have dramatically enhanced the organization's reach.

He is DAV's Chief Financial Officer. And his responsibilities cover all National Headquarters' departments, including Membership, Voluntary Services, Employment, Communications, Accounting, Fundraising, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Direct Mail Services.

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BARRY JESINOSKI: Thank you, Commander. And thanks, Marc. Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: Over the last several years, under the direction of our national adjutant, we have been on a quest to modernize, improve, and invigorate our great institution.

There is much going on, as you are all well aware. And before I touch on some of the highlights from last year, it's important to me that I thank the many leaders here and in their communities nationwide who have inspired our transformation.

Our DAV is not an individual. It is not one person. It's a special community within the veterans' community. As such, though an individual can accomplish great things through DAV, the success of the whole is dependent on our abilities to work together and leverage our resources toward a common goal.

Of course, we who have been part of a unique team by serving in the military know this very well.

As we talk about a gradual evolution DAV is making, it's important for all to understand that any changes we are making are ultimately designed to support the whole of our mission. And that extends to you, our members on the frontlines who are DAV where you live.

In two years our organization will turn 100 years old. Over the course of the last century we have made changes, great and small, to welcome home new generations from wartime service.

The DAV that we know today would be nearly unrecognizable to the charter members of the Disabled American Veterans of the World War. And as we look to the next century we do so knowing that we need to continually evolve if we are to extend our mission to future generations.

One of my favorite books is titled Extreme Ownership, and it's written by two former Navy SEALs and combat veterans. It's a fantastic read that focuses on how leaders can apply lessons learned from hard-fought battles into everyday situations.

When you hear stories of extreme courage and the approach that our most elite warriors apply to their lives, it provides a very unique and inspiring perspective we can bring to our work with DAV.

The best leaders, according to the book, do not just take responsibility for their job; they take extreme ownership of everything that impacts their mission. The book challenges us as leaders to take nothing for granted when it comes to our success. If our team is to succeed, it is incumbent upon us to provide each member with the resources and guidance they need to fight and to win.

And leadership, according to these SEALs, is the single greatest factor in any team's performance. The leader's attitude, service to the team, and outlook set the tone. And every single one of you in here are truly leaders in DAV.

It's the leader's ultimate responsibility to understand the mission—and for me this has always been key—to effectively pass that information along to the rest of the team, up and down the chain.

DAV does not work when we are not all working together. The goal of DAV at the national level is ultimately to empower our advocates and our service providers at every level to accomplish our mission.

We are, I assure you, aware that nothing is as impactful to veterans, survivors, and their spouses, as the one-on-one work you do as a service officer, transportation network driver, or a hospital volunteer.

We know that what often fuels your participation in our mission is the reward that comes from a well-earned thank you, or when you see a reluctant frown turn into a smile. And you never know when you meet a veteran in need of help where his or her boots may have been. No video for that? On we go.

DAV continues to be the nationwide leader in providing volunteer assistance to support veterans. Last year DAV drivers spent 1.5 million hours logging 18.5 million miles in Ford vehicles. And that's just part of it. In hospitals our volunteers donated 1.4 million hours. And in the last decade, through the Local Veterans Assistance Program, volunteers accounted for more than 6 million hours of service.

While these numbers are unbelievable, we know from you that we are just scratching the surface in terms of the unmet needs of our aging, disabled veterans. To that end, we have launched and are continually working to develop and improve a new tool called VolunteerForVeterans.org.

We have heard from you who serve on the frontlines in our fight to keep our country's promise to veterans that there are certain needs you encounter that aren't served through our traditional volunteer programs.

And these needs—that can be as simple as a little help around the house or a night of respite for a caregiver who is otherwise working 24/7—can make a world of difference in the lives of struggling veterans and their families.

Some of the jobs we might address may be one-time projects that require several hands but make a huge impact, like this initiative that an Auxiliary unit spearheaded for the Forward March Campaign.

(Whereupon, a video on the Forward March Campaign was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: VolunteerForVeterans.org could be a game-changing resource that leverages technology to help as many or more veterans than we've ever reached before.

But for it to succeed, we need you folks, all of you, at the tip of the spear, to take extreme ownership of the tool and source it with opportunities and with volunteers. And we need your feedback and your experience with the site to get it where it needs to be to reach its full potential.

We're also taking a closer look at how we establish recruiting goals. We're looking at ways we can more effectively and efficiently recruit new DAV members. We're augmenting your work in the field with digital outreach.

But it's much more challenging for the national organization to recruit members than it is for department and chapter service officers and volunteers who are providing direct assistance. We want to help you make that happen.

But what we know from talking to you is that DAV means something a little different for nearly every member. Last year at convention we asked many of you a simple question—what does DAV mean to you?

(Whereupon, the video "What does DAV mean to you" was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: Recruiting isn't easy but it's easier when you reflect on the reasons why you joined and take the time to simply ask a prospective member if they would be willing to join.

In addition to sharing your personal DAV story, your knowledge of member advantages and our work to protect our benefits is crucial. To maintain our ranks at more than one million members we're going to need to make this a priority. And we need your commitment.

The more you know about DAV's services and initiatives, the easier it is to recruit. But, more importantly, your awareness of DAV programs makes you a better advocate for those that we serve.

One of the important areas where DAV has grown is our employment department. By simply sending veterans you know who are looking for work or who are underemployed to Jobs.DAV.org you can connect them with resources and events that can significantly change their lives and the lives of their families.

We are a national leader in this area. Last year with our partner at Recruit Military we hosted more than 140 career fairs. And we're sustaining that pace for 2018.

Not only are we connecting veterans with employers, we're doing more to prepare them to succeed.

(Whereupon, a video about DAV career fairs was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: Just another excellent production by our Communications staff. What an awesome crew, huh? (Applause)

It's difficult to imagine DAV's progress in this area when you consider that our employment program is barely four years old. As our expertise has grown, we've learned that it isn't just veterans who need help connecting with jobs.

The greatest hurdle a veteran may face in his or her job search may be the misconceptions employers have about hiring veterans—particularly those who were changed in their military service. For that reason we've developed the Veteran Advantage: DAV Guide to Hiring and Retaining Veterans with Disabilities.

The guide showcases the benefits, real and intangible, for adding veterans to a company's workforce. It catalogues success stories from leaders like Roush Enterprises, First Data, and Comcast/NBC/Universal. We've shared this already with you on our website and via social media. And we encourage you to pass it along to prospective employers where you live.

You will likely be hearing about it more in October when we, along with some of our featured partners, officially launch the guide in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The guide is just one way your DAV is working to enhance the services we provide veterans in need.

Our Victories for Veterans public service announcement campaign reached new highs last year. We updated the messages to include some new faces that probably aren't new to many of you here today.

(Whereupon, the video Victories for Veterans was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: And that's just one of the new messages. Past National Commander Armando Alberron headlines another message and shares his victory, which was receiving his benefits and education.

Our messages were featured prominently on Times Square in New York on Veterans' Day. We were thrilled to give the public there the opportunity to learn about DAV and create thank-you cards, which were then distributed to hospitalized veterans.

We hope these PSAs, which have been viewed more than any DAV message in the history of our organization, inspire you. More importantly, we hope they help you reach your goals to serve more veterans in your communities.

We're excited about our DAV 5K, the events scheduled in November for Atlanta; Boston; Cincinnati; Tulsa; Newport News, Virginia; and Kemah, Texas, which is near Houston. These events remain a special and unique way we can connect with the public and generate support for our mission.

Last year we asked some of the runners who they honored through their participation.

(Whereupon, a video of people saying why they were running the DAV 5K was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: One of the things DAV 5Ks remind us about is the sincere desire our fellow Americans have to honor the service and sacrifices of disabled veterans. Without their goodwill and trust in our integrity we would not be able to accomplish our mission.

VolunteerForVeterans.org is just one way we're using technology to empower the public to give back. In the lead up to Memorial Day we also launched the VictoriesForVeterans.org fitness challenge. This allows people to customize and create their own fundraisers to support our mission. Users can determine who many miles they want to go to help veterans achieve victories through DAV.

We also launched the iHelpVeterans.org site to challenge the public to make a promise to support veterans and educate them on the many ways they can give back.

But like VolunteerForVeterans.org, without our members taking ownership of these initiatives they cannot succeed. Our success is absolutely dependent upon you. We need you to take ownership of these initiatives. We need you to take ownership of these opportunities and to promote and support them where you live.

I want to thank you for all that you do. And I want to thank my directors and staff at DAV Headquarters for the work they perform to honor your service by serving you. It is a great privilege to work alongside so many talented and passionate people.

And, most importantly, I want to thank all of you, our member leaders who carry our banner and make the DAV a vital part of your communities. Your power over adversity and commitment to our cause inspire us to push constantly for victories.

May God bless you and your diligent contributions on behalf of our brothers and sisters who served. Commander, this concludes my report. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much, Barry, for that outstanding report. May I have a motion to accept Mr. Jesinoski's report? Mic 2.

MR. RICHARD VALDEZ: Richard Valdez from the great State of California, San Bernadino Chapter 12.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: And a second. Mic 1.

MS. SHANNON SANDER: Shannon Sander, Department of New York, Chapter 15, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All in favor signify by aye; opposed. The motion is carried. Thank you.

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 with Disabilities Program, or EBV.

The EBV offers cutting-edge experience and training in start-up 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 dignity and respect.

So it is only natural we lend our support to 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 DAV's true friends, Rich Fenstermacher, who was instrumental in helping to erect the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

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. This year's winner is Mr. Jared Wharton of Forward Operating Base Brewing Company. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Jared Wharton envisions a brewery and taproom outside of every American military installation, a place that represents the men and women of our military's past and present.

As the founder and president of Forward Operating Base Brewing Company he has been featured on Fox News as the Veterans' Day Business spotlight.

A veteran of the United States Army, Jared currently resides in DuPont, Washington.

(Whereupon, Mr. Wharton advanced to the podium to receive his award and for an official photograph, followed by a round of applause.)

MR. JARED WHARTON: I'd like to just take a moment to say thank you for trusting me with this award. And with that I've already been able to hire three additional veterans to the brewery, as well as two military spouses. And I want to promise to you that I will instill the same trust and respect that you have shown me to my employees and spouses, as well. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Jared, and congratulations. We wish you nothing but the best.

It is now my pleasure to recognize the Outstanding Local Veterans Employment Representative and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist recipients of 2018.

These awards recognize the commitment and compassion of two individuals who are dedicated to serving our nation's veterans. 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 join me on stage.

(Whereupon, Employment Director Jeff Hall joined Commander Metcalf-Foster on the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Jeff Fryer of the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission conducts outreach to employers to assist veterans in gaining meaningful and permanent employment.

He hosts two veterans' job clubs monthly and conducts seminars and training for resume writing, interview skills, dressing for success, networking, job searches, and much more.

By partnering with community organizations Jeff is able to network monthly with 300 employers and connect Oklahoma veterans with meaningful career opportunities. (Applause)

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

MR. JEFF FRYER: You'll have to excuse me. I've about lost my voice since I've been here. But I did have a couple of things that I did want to share.

Whenever I left the Army—I was a seven-year Army veteran—hoo-ah—for those Army vets in here. Whenever I left I had a lot of experience, a lot of education, more or less multiple degrees, if you will, but whenever I exceled I struggled to find a job. It took me almost a year to find something in my avenue, if you will.

So I knew that there was a problem with just kind of the whole system at that point. So I knew I had the skills or I knew I that I had the passion to change it; I just waited until I had the opportunity and that's when I was presented the opportunity to become a local veterans' employment representative.

And since then things have totally changed, I think, in Oklahoma. I've noticed that it needed to have a culture change was the big thing to educate employers on why hiring veterans, what the benefits are, what the incentives are, and just, you know, how much it can impact their personal business.

So what I always talk about to every veteran that I, or every employer that I meet is all veterans gave some, some veterans gave all. As employers it's our opportunity or our chance to give an opportunity to every one of those veterans. So I think in Oklahoma we're doing quite a big culture change.

And I would definitely say I've only been on the job a year-and-a-half. And in my first year-and-a-half we've already achieved this, me and my team. This is definitely not just a "me" thing. I've got my DVLPs. I've got my managers and everything that I'm teamed with. And there is definitely great things in store.

We've done a lot of great stuff but together with VSOs like DAV and a plethora of other ones that we have in Oklahoma there is definitely good things ahead for veterans when it comes to employment. And I'm really looking forward to it.

So thank you, DAV, for this opportunity and I appreciate everything that everybody has done. And for all the veterans in the room I deeply, deeply appreciate all of you service.

Whenever I was sitting on the side I kind of thought of, you know, the infinity war with the Marvel superheroes. And when I talk into this room all I could think of was, man, this is a room of superheroes right here. So I deeply appreciate it. Thank you all. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much, Jeff, and keep up the phenomenal work on behalf of our fellow veterans.

The 2018 Outstanding Disabled Veteran's Outreach Program Specialist is a deeply empathetic advocate for his fellow Florida veterans. This year's recipient is Samuel Denson. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Samuel Denson 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 Veterans Outreach Program Specialist award recipient is Samuel Denson who works as a jobs and benefits administrator.

A veteran of the United States Navy, Samuel was recognized in 2016 by Florida Governor Rick Scott as a recipient of the state's Veteran Service Medal.

He has provided over 23,800 total services to veterans, which included resume writing, job searches, employment help, housing, training, and clothing.

Last year he conducted over 350 job development seminars with employers and more than 1,200 employer visits to solicit more than 670 job orders for veteran job seekers. (Applause)

MR. SAMUEL DENSON: Good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. DENSON: I couldn't quite hear that. You all have a long night last night? Let's try that again. Good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. DENSON: All right, a lot better. To Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster, the national committee, honored guests, dignitaries, and all DAV attendees, I am honored, elated, yet humbled to receive this prestigious award. Thank you very much for bestowing this great honor upon me.

Congratulations to Mr. Jeff Fryer for receiving the L-VER of the year award.

Successful people do not walk alone in life. And they do not achieve success by themselves. I would like to take this opportunity thank the many people who have not only played a part in achieving this great honor but achieving success throughout my military and civilian careers.

First, my family who has accompanied me today—my spouse (indistinguishable), she is over here somewhere, if she would stand. Give her a hand.

(Whereupon, Mrs. Denson stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

MR. DENSON: My eldest son, William.

(Whereupon, William Denson stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

MR. DENSON: His daughter and my eldest granddaughter Cadance Rene who joins us from Germany.

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

MR. DENSON: My youngest son, Marquis, who could not join us today because of his work. His fiancé, Elisa, and their beautiful daughter, my youngest granddaughter, Olivia Grace, who resides in Orlando, Florida. They all are successful so I must work hard to keep up with them.

Also, I would like to thank my coworkers, organization, employers, and the veterans who believe in the advice and the direction that I provide for them to achieve their employment goals and objectives.

In addition I would like to thank the West Frasier Lumber Company and the (indistinguishable) Foundation, the homeless shelter for female veterans, for recommending me for this year's award.

A special thanks to the Florida Department of the DAV for nominating me for the national award. Please give a hand to our Florida delegation if they are in the house. (Applause)

And especially if we have any representatives from the Pensacola or the West Florida or the Panhandle area I'd like to give a shout out to them if they're in the house. Anybody from the West Coast of Florida? West Florida? We ask you all to visit our area to enjoy the southern hospitality and our beautiful white, sandy beaches.

In addition to receiving this prestigious award I also received the American Legion Florida Department and National D-VOP of the Year Awards. I want to thank both organizations for these great honors and recognition.

This year's award comes in my 15-year of service as a D-VOP. I mention these awards not to brag or boast but to illustrate that I approach my job with the same vigor and tenacity in my 15th year as I did in my first and second year of service.

When I departed on this trip my employment success rate was 92 percent for this program year, 22 percent higher than 2017. Like the Golden State Warriors, you could be looking at a back-to-back winner. I'm kidding. Just like Leonard Johnson in 1968, if nominated I would not accept. It is time for another deserving person to be recognized for their great effort in assisting our veterans with their employment goals.

Among this group gathered in this hall today are influencers and power brokers who advocate for veterans' issues locally, statewide and nationally, and we thank you.

In addition to advocating for veterans' issues we ask that you use your enormous influence to advocate for better pay for the D-VOPs and L-VER who provide service to our veterans.

Please go to your local workforce board around your state, your state legislators, your congress persons and the Department of Labor and advocate for better pay for our D-VOP and L-VER. Better pay will attract and retain high-quality personnel to fill these important positions.

I may not benefit from your effort but your effort may provide veterans an opportunity for a post-military career instead of temporary employment until they find they can obtain better paying opportunities.

Once again I would like to thank the DAV organization for this great honor. And in closing I would like to leave you with the philosophy that has defined my success and setback in life. It is the first stanza from my favorite poem, Road Not Taken, by Robert Frost.

"I shall be telling this with a sigh somewhere ages and ages hence, two roads diverged in a wood and I, I took the one less traveled by and that has made all the difference."

Thank you DAV. Enjoy the rest of your convention. And have a safe trip back home. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. Each year DAV recognizes companies that go out of their way to recruit and hire disabled veterans. It is my pleasure to announce the DAV Employer of the Year Awards for three outstanding organizations whose leaders recognize the value of hiring our veterans.

The 2018 DAV Small Employer of the Year Award goes to an incredible company that honors veterans and benefits from their contributions. Please welcome to the stage Air Force veteran, DAV Chapter 21, D.C. member, and JMA Solutions founder, president, and CEO, Janice Adams. (Applause) (Whereupon, Ms. Adams advanced to accept the DAV Outstanding Small Employer of the Year Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: JMA Solutions, a consulting firm based on our nation's capital, employs 26 veterans, including the president and CEO, as well as the executive leadership team, which accounts for 26 percent of the firm's employment.

JMA has a culture of giving back to the community. It regularly supports veteran-related charities and seeks out veteran-owned resources when submitting proposals for government contracts and new business.

JMA will be increasing their investments in recruiting, employing, and retaining veterans in their workforce. (Applause)

MS. JANICE ADAMS: Hello. (Applause) To the senior leadership of the DAV, to all the veterans, the spouses, the family members, the Auxiliary members and supporters, on behalf of my company I would like to thank you for this award. I'm truly honored to receive it.

As they said, I'm Jan Adams, president and CEO of JMA Solutions, a government consulting firm based out of Washington, D.C. And, but more importantly, I'm a 24-year Air Force service-disabled veteran and I'm proud –(Applause) And I'm proud to be here amongst you all today.

First I want to say thank you for your service to this fantastic country. Thank you for your outstanding support to veterans. And I really appreciate all that you have done, that you are doing, and that you are going to do. And thank you again for this wonderful award. I appreciate it. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Our 2018 DAV Midsized Employer of the Year has already garnered attention from being a veteran-friendly workplace. In 2015 the company was voted one of the top veteran-friendly businesses in the country by U.S. Veterans Magazine. They took home G.I. Jobs Top 100 Military Friendly Employer awards in 2010, 2011, and 2012.

Please welcome to the stage Robert Boman, vice-president of Human Resources at Airbus Helicopters Division North America.

(Whereupon, Mr. Boman advanced to the stage to accept the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Airbus Helicopters takes great pride in recruiting and hiring veterans. Currently, 20 percent of their 714 employees are veterans. Fifty-four of those are disabled.

It shared job openings with 102 veteran organizations last year. As a result, 14 of its last 66 new hires served honorably in uniform. Airbus employees are active in celebrations to honor veterans and have made hiring and retaining them an integral part of their corporate culture. (Applause)

MR. ROBERT BOMAN: Thank you. How many helicopter guys we got out there? (Cheers) All right. On behalf of Chris Emerson and Airbus, we are very honored for the award. We thank DAV for everything you do.

A little bit about airbus. We are about 10,000 strong globally, but in the United States about 750. We have a plant right in Grand Prairie, Texas, and one in Columbus, Mississippi. We're now up to 40 percent veteran status. So thank you for all you do to help us do our mission.

We're hiring. We'll continue to hire in the future. We're going to be building things that fly in Mobile, Alabama, so we will continue to look at veterans very hard and hire them and give them opportunities that they deserve.

Again, we appreciate all you do for us and we thank you for what you do for our veterans. Appreciate you. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: The 2018 DAV Large Employer of the Year is a household name for people in the health care industry. The company's ranks swell with veterans who enjoy meaningful employment with a company that understands and values their services and sacrifices.

I'll ask David Grams, senior vice-president of Operations at DaVita Healthcare Company to the stage to accept the DAV Outstanding Large Employer of the Year Award. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The 2018 Large Employer of the Year is the DaVita Healthcare Company from Denver, Colorado.

Last year alone the company hired 654 veterans in all areas of their business. It also held a first-of-its-kind national veteran interview day where over 250 interviews were conducted across the nation. Since 2009 DaVita has won 40 awards for veteran and spouse recruiting.

Its "DaVita Salutes" benefits program offers specialized benefits for veteran team members. Meanwhile, the company pays up to 100 percent of the salary for mobilized guard and reserve members while their DaVita Village Network provides up to \$5,000 for hardships the families of deployed members might face. (Applause)

MR. DAVID GRAMS: Good morning. Thank you very much on behalf of DaVita's over 50,000 team mates nationwide, serving over 200,000 patients befallen with kidney failure. I'm honored and humbled to be with you here today. I very much, on behalf of the senior leadership team and all of our team mates, appreciate this recognition.

The preamble did a good job of taking a little of my thunder but, you know, hiring veterans is good business. I participate a lot in the hiring efforts and it just gives me such a level of joy and satisfaction. Veterans identify very well with DaVita and our core values, specifically team, service, excellence, accountability and integrity.

Hiring vets is good business. Our veteran retention rate is over 10 percentage points higher than our general retention rate for team mates. And as was mentioned, we are very proud of the fact we were able to hire 654 protected veterans last year. (Applause) Thank you.

I'm sure there are a lot of other companies represented out here in the audience. I just, last year we did, in September, had a national veteran hiring day. We interviewed over 200 veterans on the same day. And the energy it brought to our organization was tremendous. So I would strongly advocate that other organizations consider doing the same thing.

I will leave you with just a thought. Gary and his team, we work closely with them in advocacy for you in Washington, D.C., on behalf of our patients; and they've been a tireless partner as we work to make sure veterans continue to have the access they need to, in our case, kidney care and specifically integrated kidney care in the future.

We've been involved in the effort for over seven or eight years across the multiple administrations and multiple VA secretaries. And the work our team does in collaboration with Garry, Garry has a great voice. He represents you all very well in Washington.

And we look forward to bringing more and new and integrated care to the veteran population we serve, which is over 6,000 veterans we provide care to nationwide. So thank you, again, to DAV for this honor. I hope you all have a great meeting. Have a good day. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: 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. Volunteers might perform yard work, help run errands, set up a computer system, clean out gutters, shovel snow, paint or perform home repairs—any task that might improve a veteran's life.

Since the program's inception, nearly 15,000 volunteers have donated over 6.1 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 and National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski to the stage for their assistance, please.

(Whereupon, Mr. Kleindienst and Executive Director Jesinoski joined Commander Metcalf-Foster on the stage.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Ladies and gentlemen, it is my extreme pleasure to recognize our top DAV state-level departments in the area of LVAP service.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division One Local Veterans' Assistance Program recipient is the Department of California, Past Department Commander Guy Anastasia with 559,025 hours. Here to accept the award is Department Adjutant Dan Contreras. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Contreras advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

CALIFORNIA ADJUTANT DANIEL CONTRERAS: Thank you for your hard work, California. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Two Local Veterans Assistance Program Winner is the Department of Oklahoma, Past Department Commander Linda Miller, with 221,366 hours. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Commander Miller advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

OKLAHOMA PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDER LINDA MILLER: Thank you, Oklahoma. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Three Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of Arkansas, Past Department Commander Richard T. Egan, with 33,036 hours. Here to receive the award is Department Adjutant John Donovan. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Donovan advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Four Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of Nevada, Past Department Commander Bill Dolan, with 33,642 hours. Here to bring home the award is Department Adjutant Richard Walker. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Walker advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Five Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of South Dakota, Past Department Commander Robert Hill with 21,704 hours. Here to receive the award is Department Adjutant Gene Murphy. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Murphy advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: We thank all of our volunteers in VA hospitals, our Transportation Network drivers, and participants of the Local Veterans Assistance Program for their compassionate service to the disabled veterans. Thank you for your helping hands and kind hearts. Please join me again in giving them a big hand for their service. (Applause)

DAV partners with thousands of passionate VA employees throughout the country on a daily basis to ensure veterans are getting the resources 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 present three remarkable VA staff members the National Commander's Outstanding VA Employee of the Year. These awards recognize their leadership, success, and compassion in support of our nation's ill and injured veterans.

I'd like to invite National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski and National Voluntary Service Director John Kleindienst to the stage for these presentations.

(Whereupon, Executive Director Jesinoski and Mr. Kleindienst joined Commander Metcalf-Foster on the stage.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee of the Year, Kirt Sickels.

(Whereupon, Mr. Sickels advanced to the stage to accept the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee this year is Kirt Sickels, director of the TEE Tournament, Training Exposure and Experience, hosted by DAV and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

A disabled Navy veteran and member of Chapter 6 in Dubuque, Iowa, Kirt founded the TEE Tournament as a local program. Now entering its 25th year, the event provides legally-blind and eligible disabled veterans an opportunity to develop new skills and strengthen their self-esteem through adaptive golf and rehabilitative events. It demonstrates that having a visual or physical disability may not be an obstacle to an active and rewarding life. (Applause)

MR. KIRT SICKELS: Thank you. Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. SICKELS: Come on. Did Frank take that much out of you guys last night? Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. SICKELS: All right. I'd like to say, again, good morning to our distinguished DAV leaders, our award winners, my fellow veterans and my fellow brother and sister DAV folks. I'm a lifetime member of Chapter 6. And I can honestly say that when I came to my first DAV meeting it was all—the "I" was left at the door—it was all about "we", what can we do. And that impressed me so much I knew I had to be a part of that organization.

It's my distinct honor to stand before you, such an incredible group of people, that are veterans and veteran supporters and spend their honest efforts and times to make our veterans, fellow veterans have a better life.

I was told to come up here and plug John and Ron about all their well doings and I found a plug but I'm not sure where they want me to put it. (Laughter) No, in all honesty they have been terrific partners with my event. And I can't say enough about what they do for our veterans and for what we do at the TEE Tournament.

So, again, I'm very humbled to be given this award. It's my distinct honor. And I very much appreciate this. This has been a passion for me for some 37 years now. And it started when I got out of the service.

My local hometown asked me to be a part of the fire department and EMS department. And it took a lot because I was a corpsman and didn't, you know I'd seen some things that I struggled with. But I figured I need to help my community so I got onboard. And my very first call was a veteran that committed suicide.

From that point on I said this is not going to happen on my watch. So it's all about opening doors, ladies and gentlemen, opening doors. (Applause) So when we go home from this convention this week, if we could all go home—because I have two friends that I'd like to tell you about just briefly, Lonnie Cunningham, a triple amputee.

He said to me once, he said, "Kirt, these events are life-changing. They mean everything to me. I spend 358 days a year waiting for that one week to come back and be a part of the TEE Tournament, be part of my fellow veterans where I'm not the guy that's looked at, stared at, I'm the guy that's part of the norm. And that sets me free."

So, please, when you go home after this event, convention, excuse me, open doors. Open doors for our fellow vets. I know I'm speaking to the choir here but, please, open those doors.

God bless all of you. God bless DAV. And God bless that open door. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Kirt, 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 Commander Metcalf-Foster on the stage.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the Outstanding Veterans Benefit Administration Employee of the Year, Pat Hall. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Hall advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The 2018 DAV National Commander's Award for Outstanding Department of Veterans Affairs Employee within the Veterans Benefits Administration is Pat Hall of the Cheyenne VA Medical Center in Wyoming.

Mr. Hall coaches 30 employees at the veterans' service center and fights to ensure that veterans receive accurate and timely claims decisions. His team was recognized by the VBA as the Number 1 performing office. A former Marine who takes the Corps motto "Semper Fidelis" to heart, he makes sure every veteran he serves receives justice for their sacrifices. (Applause)

MR. PAT HALL: Hi there. Good morning. Thanks for having me. I truly appreciate it. Thank you, DAV. Thank you to all you guys. It's a partnership and I know you guys are out there on the front lines for us. So we truly appreciate your work. We appreciate your efforts.

For many years I've worked with service officers and DAV has always been pretty darn top-notch. And you guys have helped me a long time ago when I was just fresh out of the Marines so I truly appreciate what you guys do.

God bless you all. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you for all you do for our veterans, Pat, and congratulations. I'll ask our Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine to return to the stage for the next recipient.

(Whereupon, Executive Director Augustine joined Commander Metcalf-Foster on the stage.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Honoring our fallen and supporting their survivors in their time of grief is a sacred and patriotic duty. Please welcome to the stage the 2018 VA National Cemetery Administration Employee of the Year, Rex Kern.

(Whereupon, Mr. Kern advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Rex Kern is a Navy veteran who is deeply passionate about honoring the lives and caring for the families of our departed brothers and sisters.

For more than a decade he's worked in the VA National Cemetery Administration. While overseeing both the Fort Rosecrans and Miramar National Cemeteries since March 6th, 2016, he ensures every veteran he honors is treated with the utmost respect and dignity. (Applause)

MR. REX KERN: Well, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. KERN: I can't tell you how awesome it is to be here, to be in front of such a tremendously great organization. DAV, at one time, in 2006, helped me get to where I am today as far as my disability claim so I can't thank all of you enough for what you do.

I'd like to thank the commander for allowing me to be here today. I'd also like to get a shout out to Denise Williams from Virginia who bought me a donut and coffee this morning. (Applause) It's acts of kindness like that, that make your organization great.

NCA goes back a long ways, to the Civil War where we had veterans who died from conflicts and we had to find places to bury them, so that's how the national cemeteries came about.

If you look in this room and you figure there's probably, what, 3,500 or so people, NCA employs only 1,800 people for 135 national cemeteries. And we handle hundreds if not thousands of burials every day for our veterans. And our veterans and their families is what we support because we support these families in a time of need that is not the best time in their life, the passing of a loved one.

So what I strive to do every day is make a difference. And that's what you all try to do, too, I'm sure, is try to make a difference every day for the veterans and the families you come in contact with. Whether it's a large difference or a small difference, it makes a difference and so that's what you all need to do.

At the NCA we have one time to do things and one time to do it right. So every service we have, every military honors we perform, every clergy we have, we know that we treat it like our own family. And that's exactly what you all are. Veterans, we are all one family. Through honor, dignity and respect for our vets and our families is what drives us to do what we do every day.

So, once again, I want to thank you all for doing what you do. I am very humbled to be here. And I'm very thankful for you all. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: The demographics within DAV's membership ranks are ever-changing. We are, sadly, seeing a decline among World War II and Korean War veterans as the needs

among our Vietnam-era veterans are growing. Meanwhile, we are welcoming home a new generation of warriors who have battled through multiple deployments in two wars.

Fortunately, we can be proud of the job that we do to bring in new members to ensure the legacy of our cause and strength of our voice in the nation's capital.

Our recruiting divisions and awards have changed a little bit this year. We have split the departments into divisions based on their respective state population, meaning Division 1 is our top ten populated states in the United States and Division 2 is comprised of the next ten most populated states in the country, so forth and so on. The percentage of goal obtained still determines the winning department.

For our first award I'll invite National Membership Director Doug Wells to the stage as we recognize our top division winners in recruiting for 2018.

(Whereupon, National Membership Director Doug Wells joined Commander Metcalf-Foster on the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 1 winner is the DAV Department of Massachusetts. Please give a round of applause for Past Department Commander Francis Whitty. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Whitty advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 2 winner is the DAV Department of Minnesota. Please give a warm welcome to Past Department Commander Robert Sadoris. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Sadoris advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 3 winner is the DAV Department of Wisconsin. Put your hands together for Past Department Commander Leonard Shier. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Shier advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: The Division 4 is the DAV Department of Hawaii. Let's offer a rousing Aloha to Department Commander Julian Crawford. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Department Commander Crawford advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 5 is the DAV Department of South Dakota. Please put your hands together for Past Department Commander Gaylord Helmbrecht. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Helmbrecht advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Our next award is the General Jonathan M. Wainwright Award. It is presented to the Department that closes the year with the largest increase in new members.

The winner is the DAV Department of Texas. (Applause) All right. I'll ask Department Commander Robert Simmons to the stage.

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Simmons advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

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 METCALF-FOSTER: 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 Minnesota, (Applause) represented by Past Department Commander Robert Sadoris. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Sadoris, advanced to the podium to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Judge Robert S. Marx Award is named after DAV's founder. Judge 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.

MR. ROBERT SADDORIS: I accept this award on behalf of every member of the Disabled American Veterans of Minnesota. What a wonderful state. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: No one is more likely to join DAV than the veterans who have experienced our assistance. Those who experience DAV's free services first-hand 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 the NSOs who go above and beyond the call to ensure the long-term health of our membership. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that I present the top recruiter from our NSO corps who remarkably recruited 278 veterans to join our ranks.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me and put your hands together for Michael Heights, the DAV National Service Officer of Saint Louis. (Applause)

(Whereupon, NSO Heights advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Our top recruiting member of the year is David Schaffner from DAV Chapter 137 of Garland, Texas. He recruited 120 new members. Receiving the award on David's behalf is Roland Paquette, last year's award winner who is also from the great State of Texas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Paquette advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: 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 their names into the Membership Recruiters Hall of Fame.

This year's inductees are Daniel Knabe who recruited 174 new members; Andrew Edwards who recruited 119 new members; Thomas Herrington who added 111 new members to DAV. (Applause)

This year's Hall of Fame recipients will be honored at the Membership Luncheon today at noon in Crystal Room 5 on the Casino Level.

Friends, please remember when you introduce a veteran to DAV you are providing a service both for them and your fellow veterans. But you never know who is going to join if you don't take that extra step and just ask them. Please keep up the good work in this area. It is crucial to our success.

Over the past few years, the DAV 5K race series has continued to grow and evolve. DAV 5Ks bring together thousands of veterans and supporters in various cities throughout the nation to raise awareness of the issues we face and generate support for our cause.

All teams participating and actively fundraising in the annual race series contribute tremendously to DAV's mission of creating Victories for Veterans and, therefore, we thank them. (Applause)

I'd like to invite Barry Jesinoski, who is ultimately responsible for this effort, up to the stage for this next presentation.

(Whereupon, Executive Director Jesinoski joined Commander Metcalf-Foster on stage.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: This past year the 5K run, walk, roll, and motorcycle ride added a new twist in the spirit of friendly competition, introducing the official DAV Member 5K Challenge. Winning the Top Member Fundraiser Award is our very own third junior vice-commander and my good friend, Andy Marshall, who raised an incredible \$7,260. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Third Junior Vice-Commander Marshall advanced to accept the award, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Our Top Member Team Captain Award goes to Johnathan Shepherd whose team raised an amazing \$16,150 to support DAV's mission through our 5K events. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you so much Andy and Johnathan as your support and motivation is extremely valuable to every veteran in this room and beyond.

As a reminder, the 2018 Challenge is now open to any DAV member. The fundraising deadline is November 30, 2018. Winners will have their airfare and hotel expenses covered to the 2019 convention, and you do not have to live in a 5K city to participate. To participate register online at DAV5K.org for the DAV 5K city closest to you.

I'd like to call on Board of Directors' Treasurer Al Reynolds for his report.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS TREASURER ALFRED REYNOLDS: National Commander Metcalf-Foster, fellow members of the National Executive Committee, DAV members and guests, good morning. (Response of "Good morning.")

BOARD OF DIRECTORS TREASURER REYNOLDS: Let me begin by recognizing those with whom I've served on the Board of Directors: Chairman David W. Riley, Alabama; Vice-Chairman Dennis R. Nixon, Texas; Secretary and National Adjutant Marc Burgess; Director and NEC First District Coleman Nee, Massachusetts; Director and Sixth District or, excuse me, NEC Sixth District, Idalis Marquez, Puerto Rico; and Director, NEC 15th District Jim Shuey, Nebraska.

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, 2018. DAV's total solicited support through that date was almost \$54 million. Direct mail contributions were just over \$35 million; bequests, a little more than \$10 million.

Under the Department Fundraising Program payouts to Departments in December 2017 and June 2018 totaled just about \$3 million. Since the program began in 1994, \$101 million have been distributed to Departments for their service programs.

The Board would like to thank all the Departments for their continued participation in these programs, and especially our members for their generosity.

As of June 2018, DAV received total support and revenue from all sources of roughly \$112 million. Also through June 2018, DAV had total expenditures of about \$111 million, of which \$88 million were for service programs which is nearly 80 percent of total expenses.

Over the same period fund-raising expenditures of \$18 million decreased by a little over 8 percent from 2017. Administrative outlays were close to \$5 million.

As of June 30th, 2018, the market value of our general fund long-term investment portfolio is almost \$382 million.

DAV's unrestricted net assets or net worth has increased from slightly over \$325 million at this time last year to in excess of \$330 million.

DAV has been investing in new areas of assistance to provide more service to more veterans. We're also devoting resources to new fund raising opportunities and will continue to use our resources wisely.

We are also pleased to report that June 30th, 2018, the Life Membership Fund Reserve was approximately \$57 million.

Commander, it is my privilege to present DAV's proposed 2019 Annual Budget for ratification by the Convention. At the May 23rd, 2018, meeting of the Board of Directors the Board was presented the 2019 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 they do which makes this report possible. Let me thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster, for the support I received in my role as the Board of Directors' Treasurer. It has been a privilege to hold this position.

Commander, this concludes my report to the National Convention, a report I feel honored to offer to our delegates. I thank you and I move for the adoption of my report and for the approval of the proposed 2019 annual budget. Thank you.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, AI, for your service and that very informative report. You have heard the motion. May I have a second to that motion?

MR. AL LABELLE: Mic 3, Al Labelle, delegate, Chapter 57, Department of Wisconsin, so moves.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: May I have a second to that motion?

PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDER DOLAN: PDC Bill Dolan, Department of Nevada seconds.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Thank you.

I would like 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. (Applause)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERT REYNOLDS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: Comrade Commander and delegates. The National Convention Committee on Constitution and Bylaws was called to order on July 14, 2018, 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 Jeremy Roberts 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 251, it is proposed that Article VIII of the Constitution be amended to remove the National Order of Trench Rats as an Auxiliary unit; Resolution Number 252, it is proposed that Article III, Section 3.12, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to require National District meetings take place on the day prior to the Opening Session of the National Convention;

Resolution Number 253, it is proposed that Article III, Section 3.12, Paragraph 2 of the Bylaws be amended to require the results of the election of the National Executive Committee members and alternates be reported to the Office of the National Adjutant by 10 a.m. of the day of the Opening Session of the Convention;

Resolution Number 254, it is proposed that Article IV, Section 4.2 of the Bylaws be amended to require the National Executive Committee to hold one meeting no earlier than a day preceding the convening of the National Convention and another to be held no later than the day following adjournment of the National Convention, with at least one additional meeting during the ensuing year;

Resolution Number 255, it is proposed that Article IV, Section 4.5 of the Bylaws be amended to delete the word "mail" in the title and allow the regular business of the organization requiring National Executive Committee consideration be transacted by the office of the National Adjutant by way of electronic or other methods;

Resolution Number 256, it is proposed that Article VI, Section 6.2, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to reduce the minimum number of new members required to charter a new chapter from 50 new members to 25; it is further proposed that Article VI, Section 6.2, Paragraph 2 be deleted in its entirety;

Resolution Number 257, it is proposed that Article X, Section 10.2, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to allow the national organization of the DAV Auxiliary to provide a financial report to the DAV national organization within 90 days after the close of their accounting year, which shall be January 1 through December 31;

Resolution Number 258, remove all references to the National Order of Trench Rats throughout the Bylaws and make any necessary housekeeping changes to include renumbering any pertinent sections.

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. Thank you.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Rob. 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?

ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. Join us for Fun Night tomorrow night at 8:00 p.m. 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 back to us here in Reno to perform.

Don't forget that today at 4 p.m. is the cutoff time for you to make reservations to attend the line officer dinner. Again, 4 p.m. is the cutoff to make your reservation for the line officer dinner on Tuesday night. Tickets will be needed to enter and we will have assigned seating.

Our regular business session 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, the National Service Foundation, and an update on our Memorial in Washington, D.C.

On Tuesday afternoon we will hold our final business session and conclude with nominations and election of our officers.

Also, if you wish to donate to the National Service Foundation, in the interest of time you are encouraged to fill out the form that you can find in your Convention bags prior to making your way to our donation booth located in the Grand Salon Room on the Casino Level.

There was a phone, a cell phone dropped last night at the Frankie Valli show, so anyone who has lost a cell phone if you are in the room come up to the stage here and if the person is not in the room and you know who lost a phone, have them go to Headquarters later in the week.

Candidate for national office John Polk has invited everyone to a Meet and Greet in a hospitality room Sunday from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. And that's located in the Summit Concierge Floor, Room 2655.

We're 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 see Membership Director Doug Wells up here on the stage when we adjourn.

And the today's winners are: Bill Dolan, Nevada 15; Gerald Crowley, Washington Number 5; and Garrett Hannis, Tennessee Number 24. Commander.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I'm going to go off script a moment. How many liked the concert last night. (Applause) All right. All right. It took me back some time but I remember every song. (Laughter)

Thank you, Marc. Ladies and gentlemen, please rise and I will ask Chaplain Dover to please lead us in our closing prayer.

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. Help us honor you in every action, word and deed. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: The Convention stands in recess until 8:30 a.m. Tuesday morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 10:57 o'clock, a.m., on Sunday, July 15, 2018.)

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National Service Offices Fiscal Year October 1, 2016–September 30, 2017

National Service Office	Total Awards	Total Benefits
USA	1,071,737	\$19,210,717,160
301 Boston	19,892	\$370,507,697
304 Providence	8,563	\$152,298,243
306 New York City	16,782	\$308,805,108
307 Buffalo	6,962	\$126,879,655
308 Hartford	7,940	\$134,645,271
309 Newark	9,299	\$157,625,376
310 Philadelphia	37,486	\$664,578,123
311 Pittsburgh	12,264	\$200,879,916
313 Baltimore	16,690	\$289,124,926
314 Roanoke	38,211	\$600,306,246
315 Huntington	5,025	\$114,105,079
316 Atlanta	22,831	\$415,899,249
317 St. Petersburg	63,011	\$1,085,933,946
318 Winston-Salem	42,059	\$749,754,466
319 Columbia	18,841	\$377,239,508
320 Nashville	25,282	\$456,018,716
321 New Orleans	10,346	\$187,923,694
322 Montgomery	19,755	\$363,634,729
323 Jackson	7,489	\$129,667,593
325 Cleveland	35,130	\$544,469,550
326 Indianapolis	18,624	\$272,940,144
327 Louisville	20,542	\$362,276,247
328 Chicago	16,033	\$255,544,801
329 Detroit	23,061	\$381,830,669
330 Milwaukee	32,156	\$518,859,396
331 St. Louis	24,239	\$385,681,251
333 Des Moines	7,417	\$105,023,311
334 Lincoln	4,360	\$70,439,505
335 St. Paul	54,699	\$849,647,674
339 Denver/Cheyenne	43,340	\$649,159,914
339 Denver	39,873	\$601,646,953
442 Cheyenne	3,467	\$48,296,396
340 Albuquerque	14,737	\$312,200,844
341 Salt Lake City	18,078	\$276,228,113
343 Oakland	23,134	\$398,795,049
344 Los Angeles	23,760	\$410,118,908
345 Phoenix	20,761	\$345,510,012
346 Seattle	39,994	\$616,704,643
347 Boise	6,941	\$98,105,668
348 Portland	7,626	\$139,288,231
349 Waco	44,966	\$822,319,611
350 Little Rock	12,566	\$260,691,602
351 Muskogee	25,142	\$461,410,994
354 Reno	12,693	\$227,839,590
355 San Juan	7,905	\$177,739,314
358 Manila	1,300	\$34,159,934
362 Houston	42,870	\$808,511,607
372 Washington	3,176	\$42,714,381
373 Manchester	5,156	\$92,572,154
376 St. Louis RMC	210	\$3,527,034
377 San Diego	44,260	\$631,007,675
402 Togus	6,170	\$128,709,204
405 White River Junction	2,226	\$44,063,724
436 Fort Harrison	2,838	\$46,105,805
437 Fargo	6,689	\$90,680,101
438 Sioux Falls	4,425	\$68,856,121
452 Wichita	8,000	\$129,476,831
459 Honolulu	9,740	\$161,672,914
460 Wilmington	1,946	\$31,884,453
463 Anchorage	5,989	\$83,359,513
Other	80	\$1,097,014
101 Washington CO	72	\$936,462

Disabled American Veterans

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2017, and
Independent Auditors' Report

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, 2017, 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 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, 2017, 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.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

April 9, 2018

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS
CASH	\$ 6,128,898	LIABILITIES:
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	4,947,930	Accounts payable
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	48,303	Accrued expenses
SOLICITATION MATERIALS	1,676,069	Pension liability
PREPAID EXPENSES	5,383,381	Postretirement benefit obligation
INVESTMENTS	405,205,801	Other liabilities
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT — Net	7,918,762	Deferred dues and service fees collected in advance
OTHER ASSETS	383,000	Deferred revenue
LIFE MEMBERSHIP:		Life membership:
Cash	2,137,951	Accounts payable
Accounts Receivable	445	Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues
Investments	<u>51,497,674</u>	
TOTAL	<u>\$ 485,328,214</u>	Total liabilities
		UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS
		143,592,189
		<u>341,736,025</u>
		<u>\$ 485,328,214</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017

SUPPORT AND REVENUE:

Support:	
Contributions	\$ 108,186,529
Contributed services and facilities — primarily services	47,929,003
Contributed media and materials — primarily media	<u>88,454,604</u>
Total support	<u>244,570,136</u>
Revenue:	
Membership dues and fees	6,951,769
Income from investments — net	8,799,735
List royalties	566,549
Miscellaneous revenue	<u>891,955</u>
Total revenue	<u>17,210,008</u>
Realized investment gains	<u>11,385,959</u>
Total support and revenue	<u>273,166,103</u>

EXPENSES:

Program services:	
Service program	41,799,165
Employment program	1,449,858
Legislative program	2,033,071
Voluntary service program	48,031,268
State services and disaster relief	5,986,607
Communications program	8,821,191
Public Service Announcement program, primarily contributed media	89,675,009
Membership program	6,915,659
Public awareness outreach	<u>29,675,039</u>
Total program services	<u>234,386,867</u>
Supporting services:	
Fundraising costs	36,361,054
Administrative and general	<u>9,200,508</u>
Total supporting services	<u>45,561,562</u>
Total expenses	<u>279,948,429</u>

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION/(DEPRECIATION) AND BENEFIT OBLIGATION ADJUSTMENT	(6,782,326)
CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION/(DEPRECIATION) OF INVESTMENTS	33,188,221
PENSION LIABILITY AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT OBLIGATION ADJUSTMENT	<u>(2,483,906)</u>
CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	23,921,989
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS — Beginning of year	<u>317,814,036</u>
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS — End of year	<u>\$ 341,736,025</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

**STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**

	Services Program	Employment Program	Legislative Program	Voluntary Services Program	State Services and Disaster Relief	Communications Program	Public Service and Amateur Program	Membership Program	Public Awareness Outreach	Total Public Services	Fundraising Costs	Administrative General	Total Support Services	Total
Salaries	\$ 24,063,141	\$ 362,324	\$ 873,793	\$ 334,635	\$	\$ 1,071,615	\$	\$ 1,313,578	\$ 228,208	\$ 28,297,294	\$ 3,432,008	\$ 6,100,146	\$ 5,532,154	\$ 37,799,448
Employee benefits	6,075,210	96,370	212,854	97,475		203,794		348,378	63,582	7,097,663	1,036,744	1,467,958	2,504,702	9,602,365
Payroll taxes	1,896,074	26,341	60,012	45,359		81,586		88,677	17,731	2,139,018	273,561	438,174	731,735	42,599,753
Professional fees				389,972						4,552,944			4,552,944	48,352,707
FSC & Transport Network Grants				810,405						389,972			389,972	810,405
Winter Sports Clinic				65,508		15,000		50		810,405			810,405	65,508
Columbia Trust				28,401	861,338					962,897			962,897	1,386,296
Disaster relief				1,859,220						1,859,220			1,859,220	3,245,516
Disaster relief program				3,757,759						3,757,759			3,757,759	7,003,275
Scholarships				57,500						57,500			57,500	57,500
Expenses of national convention				240,605	120	106,539	27,881	755,670	681,348	755,670	195,681	141,190	356,871	2,848,234
Travel, training, and relocation	1,822,416	68,785	129,066					67,954	28,177	2,111,363			2,111,363	4,959,598
Facilities	2,671,889									2,671,889			2,671,889	5,631,487
Printing and media and materials	890			9,695		215	88,095,765	282,215	111,909	89,007,415	12,789,544	404,548	13,194,092	103,201,509
Postage and shipping	564,588	4,013	2,427	48,682	524	1,080,012	1,136	915,741	103,226	1,643,843	1,451,778	1,060,462	2,512,240	4,156,083
Equipment rental and maintenance	476,700	3,092	12,401	68,054	5,605	56,124	5,605	134,597	45,386	1,034,645	173,897	160,773	334,670	1,369,315
Supplies	603,013	48,891	66,841	43,248	163	68,851	23,755	1,292	4,973	120,545	3,479	200,839	204,318	324,863
Insurance	979,914	1,746	1,746	420		14,200		1,292		13,491			13,491	148,356
Telephone	5,490	2,833	5,624	1,370		10,727	1,370	38,890	71,26	789,765	20,564	232,307	459,473	1,189,176
Project expenses	720,714					62				720,714			720,714	1,910,890
Project costs		730,000			3,489	2,896,924		39,992	235,122	3,895,527	2,302,087	37,453	2,429,540	6,325,067
Printing of magazine				1,357		857,612		185,263	1,130	857,612	39,216,671	409,613	39,626,384	87,242,767
Cost of mailing materials	22,386		1,425			103,399				314,960		307,796	307,796	488,758
Heat, light, water, and power	150,962									150,962		150,962	150,962	339,720
Security service	74,465							125		74,590		74,590	74,590	164,180
Insurance	715,254			62,982		16,457		7,939	768	827,244	120,856	663,282	788,138	1,611,442
Lease of property and equipment	114,927	2,366	2,236			3,062				120,545	26,626	126,322	152,948	305,496
Legal fees	84,473	62,709	73,066	3,911		1,571,809	1,520,867	10,966	462,584	3,853,881	1,876,544	1,390,438	5,244,319	9,098,199
Professional fees	140,657			7,777		170,542		74,462		346,351		874,054	892,772	1,239,123
Technology services	65,093					665		111,664		8,062		1,088,503	1,066,565	1,230,850
Other expenses	1,110,423			248,840		672,628		1,949,232	28,154,479	32,079,212	(38,868,617)	(3,789,392)	(3,789,392)	28,290,820
Allocation from (to) other departments														
Total	\$ 41,709,165	\$ 1,449,858	\$ 2,033,071	\$ 48,031,268	\$ 5,586,607	\$ 8,821,191	\$ 89,675,009	\$ 6,915,659	\$ 29,675,039	\$ 234,386,867	\$ 36,361,054	\$ 9,200,508	\$ 45,561,562	\$ 279,948,429

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in unrestricted net assets	\$ 23,921,989
Adjustments to reconcile change in unrestricted net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Noncash investment contributions	(483,859)
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	(37,122,140)
Pension liability and other postretirement benefit obligation adjustment	2,483,906
Depreciation	1,611,342
Impairment of property and equipment	2,473,779
Realized investment gains	(13,908,493)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:	
Accounts receivable	(2,566,541)
Interest and dividends receivable	10,183
Solicitation materials	(479,483)
Prepaid expenses	(1,167,525)
Other assets	(134,000)
Accounts payable	5,451,385
Accrued expenses and other	(1,907,820)
Other liabilities	595,728
Deferred dues and service fees collected in advance	41,559
Deferred revenue	535,337
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	<u>1,225,204</u>
Net cash used by operating activities	<u>(19,419,449)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Payments for property and equipment	(1,660,903)
Proceeds from the sale of property and equipment	98,385
Purchases of investments	(87,353,730)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	<u>104,441,874</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities	<u>15,525,626</u>
NET DECREASE IN CASH	(3,893,823)
CASH — Beginning of year	<u>12,160,672</u>
CASH — End of year	<u>\$ 8,266,849</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017

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; and
- 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 March 2017, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) 2017-08, Receivables - Nonrefundable Fees and Other Costs (Subtopic 310-20): Premium Amortization on Purchased Callable Debt Securities. ASU 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 2017-08 is for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2019. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it will not have a material impact on DAV's financial position, cash flows or results of operations.

In January 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-01, Financial Instruments Overall (Subtopic 825-10) — Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities. ASU 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. The ASU also

amends certain disclosure requirements associated with the fair value of financial instruments. The effective date of ASU 2016-01 is for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2018. The ASU has not yet been adopted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact to the financial statements.

In February 2016, the FASB issued ASU 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 twelve 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 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 other parts are to be applied using a prospective approach. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In August 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-14, Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities. Adoption of FASB ASU 2016-14 will result in significant changes to financial reporting and disclosure for not-for-profit entities. FASB believes the update will improve not-for-profit entities' financial statements and provide more useful information to donors, grantors, creditors, and other financial statement users. Specifically, the ASU modifies the net asset classification requirements and disclosure requirements related to liquidity, financial performance, and cash flows. The standard is effective for annual financial statements issued for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2017, with application applied retrospectively.

In May 2014, the FASB issued ASU 2014-09, Revenue from Contracts with Customers. ASU 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 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 will not have a material impact on DAV's financial position, cash flows or results of operations.

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.

Solicitation Materials — Inventories are carried at the lower of cost or market, generally determined on the first-in, first-out basis.

Property and Equipment — Property and equipment are stated at cost, less accumulated depreciation, and at December 31, 2017, are composed of the following:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
Land and improvements	\$ 1,015,314	\$ 501,826	\$ 513,488
Buildings and improvements	11,464,005	9,299,951	2,164,054
Machinery and other equipment	27,289,219	22,474,982	4,814,237
Construction in process	<u>426,983</u>	<u></u>	<u>426,983</u>
Total	<u>\$40,195,521</u>	<u>\$32,276,759</u>	<u>\$ 7,918,762</u>

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 unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support depending on the existence and 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 unrestricted net assets if the restriction expires in the reporting period in which the support is recognized. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the gift.

Accounts Receivable — Amounts recorded as accounts receivable are reduced to their net realizable value, as appropriate.

Contributed Services and Facilities — DAV operates extensive programs through which volunteers contribute many hours of service to veterans. The 1,874,715 hours that are donated to DAV’s Nationwide 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 \$24.14 developed by Independent Sector, an organization that provides oversight to nonprofit organizations in America, the value of these hours contributed to the DAV Transportation Network and LVAP program is \$45,255,614. 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 \$88.4 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 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 Joint Costs — In 2017, DAV incurred joint costs of \$55,546,202 for informational materials and activities that included fundraising appeals. Of those costs, \$28,154,479 was allocated to public awareness outreach (program services) and \$27,391,723 was 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 2017 in the reserve for future distribution of life membership dues are summarized below:

Balance — January 1, 2017	<u>\$ 52,088,768</u>
Additions:	
Membership dues received	5,117,703
Earnings on invested assets — net	1,192,605
Gain on sale of investments	<u>2,522,534</u>
Total additions	<u>8,832,842</u>
Distribution of membership dues:	
National headquarters	6,993,328
Local chapters	2,160,385
State departments	2,266,885
Other expense	<u>120,959</u>
Total distribution of membership dues	<u>11,541,557</u>
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	<u>3,933,919</u>
Balance — December 31, 2017	<u>\$ 53,313,972</u>

Life membership net earnings on invested assets of \$1,192,605 are comprised of gross interest and dividends of \$1,218,670 — net of investment fees paid of \$26,065.

4. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

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 includes money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

The cost and fair value of general fund investments in securities and the net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) at December 31, 2017, are summarized below:

	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation)
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,638,454	\$ 3,638,454	\$
Certificates of Deposit	1,479,728	1,486,204	6,476
U.S. Government agency notes	1,375,000	1,341,125	(33,875)
U.S. Government securities	109,601	109,640	39
Municipal bonds	3,012,940	2,986,005	(26,935)
Common stocks	13,563,457	21,130,374	7,566,917
Mutual bond funds	124,637,560	124,164,242	(473,318)
Mutual equity funds/ETFs	<u>180,549,822</u>	<u>250,349,757</u>	<u>69,799,935</u>
Total	<u>\$ 328,366,562</u>	<u>\$ 405,205,801</u>	<u>\$ 76,839,239</u>

The General fund income from investments — net, \$8,799,735, is composed of gross interest and dividend income of \$9,026,644, reduced by investment management and custody fees of \$226,909.

The cost and fair value of life membership fund investments in securities and the net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) at December 31, 2017, are summarized below:

	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation)
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 116,551	\$ 116,551	\$
Common stocks	1,594,100	2,474,224	880,124
Mutual bond funds	13,701,691	13,608,937	(92,754)
Mutual equity funds/ETFs	<u>25,856,393</u>	<u>35,297,962</u>	<u>9,441,569</u>
Total	<u>\$ 41,268,735</u>	<u>\$ 51,497,674</u>	<u>\$ 10,228,939</u>

As of December 31, 2017, the amount of securities in the general fund or life membership fund in a continuous unrealized loss position for a duration of greater than twelve months is not material.

5. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC 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.

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 2017.

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 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 general fund, life fund and pension plan assets recorded at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at December 31, 2017.

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 the DAV's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

U.S. Government securities (U.S. 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, categorized as Level 2, are valued at fair value, which approximates amortized cost.

U.S. 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, 2017, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurement Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,638,454	\$	\$ 3,638,454
Certificates of Deposit		1,486,204	1,486,204
U.S. Government agency notes		1,341,125	1,341,125
Municipal bonds		2,986,005	2,986,005
U.S. Government securities	109,640		109,640
Common stocks	21,130,374		21,130,374
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	124,164,242		124,164,242
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	154,858,828		154,858,828
International equity funds	88,017,409		88,017,409
Real estate equity funds	<u>7,473,520</u>		<u>7,473,520</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>374,513,999</u>		<u>374,513,999</u>
Total general fund assets	<u>\$399,392,467</u>	<u>\$ 5,813,334</u>	<u>\$405,205,801</u>

The major categories of life membership fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2017, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurement Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 116,551	\$	\$ 116,551
Common stocks	2,474,224		2,474,224
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	13,608,937		13,608,937
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	20,384,482		20,384,482
International equity funds	13,388,068		13,388,068
Real estate equity funds	<u>1,525,412</u>		<u>1,525,412</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>48,906,899</u>		<u>48,906,899</u>
Total life membership fund assets	<u>\$51,497,674</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$51,497,674</u>

6. 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 2017, 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 healthcare 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.

Effective January 1, 2017, the self-funded Medicare Access and Limited plans were eliminated. Instead, DAV has offered these 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 the December 31, 2017 measurement date is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Accumulated benefit obligation	<u>\$ 68,190,912</u>	<u>\$</u>
Projected benefit obligation	\$ 76,268,794	
Accumulated postretirement benefit obligation (APBO)		\$ 52,326,224
Fair value of plan assets	<u>(61,294,591)</u>	<u></u>
Unfunded status recognized	<u>\$ 14,974,203</u>	<u>\$ 52,326,224</u>

Summarized information of the plans for the year ended December 31, 2017, is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Components of net periodic benefit cost:		
Service cost	\$ 2,581,420	\$ 1,458,515
Interest cost	2,167,089	1,662,869
Expected return on assets	(3,231,209)	
Amortization of net loss	1,132,922	763,911
Amortization of prior service cost (benefits)	<u>31,964</u>	<u>(4,156,585)</u>
Net periodic benefit cost (benefits)	<u>\$ 2,682,186</u>	<u>\$ (271,290)</u>
Components of pension and postretirement benefit obligation adjustment:		
Amortization of prior service cost (benefit)	\$ 31,964	\$ (4,156,585)
Amortization of net loss	1,132,922	763,911
Actuarial net gain (loss) during the year	<u>528,397</u>	<u>(784,515)</u>
Pension and postretirement benefit obligation adjustment	<u>\$ 1,693,283</u>	<u>\$ (4,177,189)</u>

Amounts not yet recognized as a component of periodic pension cost at December 31, 2017, are as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Prior service cost (benefit)	\$ 159,819	\$ (43,629,943)
Net actuarial loss	<u>17,351,935</u>	<u>16,985,426</u>
Amounts recognized as reduction (increase) in unrestricted net assets	<u>\$ 17,511,754</u>	<u>\$ (26,644,517)</u>

The estimated net actuarial loss and prior service cost for the pension plan that will be amortized from unrestricted net assets and into net periodic benefit cost in 2018 are \$873,770 and \$31,964, respectively. The estimated net actuarial loss and prior service benefit for the postretirement plan that will be amortized from unrestricted net assets and into net periodic benefit cost in 2018 will result in a cost of \$916,665 and gain of \$4,156,585, respectively.

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
For the year ended December 31, 2017:		
Benefit expense (net periodic pension benefit cost of \$2,682,186 offset by \$31,650 reimbursed by DAVA)	\$ 2,650,536	\$ (271,290)
Actual return /(loss) on plan assets	7,733,141	
Employer contribution	2,578,000	1,497,255
Plan participants' contributions		58,887
Benefits paid	1,955,290	1,556,142

Weighted-average rate assumptions used for the December 31 valuation:

For year-end benefit obligation:		
Discount rate	3.46 %	3.61 %
Rate of compensation increase	3.00 %	3.00 %

For the year end benefit obligation, the RP-2014 Healthy Fully Generational Mortality Table with Scale MP-2017 was utilized.

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
For annual benefit cost:		
Discount rate	3.93 %	4.11 %
Rate of compensation increase	3.50 %	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 Scale MP-2016 was utilized.

For 2017, DAV changed its method of determining service and interest costs for the pension and other postretirement benefit plans from the single weighted-average discount rate approach to specific spot rates along the yield curve, which management has concluded is a more precise estimate. Prior to this change in methodology, DAV measured service and interest costs utilizing a single weighted-average discount rate derived from the yield curve used to measure the plan obligation. DAV has accounted for this change as a change in accounting estimate and, accordingly, has accounted for it on a prospective basis. This change does not impact the benefit obligation and did not have a material impact on 2017 results.

The APBO and related benefit cost are determined through the application of relevant actuarial assumptions. DAV anticipates the increase in its healthcare cost-trend rate to slow from 7.5 % in 2017 to 4.5% in 2024, after which the trend rate is expected to stabilize.

DAV expects to contribute \$2.8 million to its pension plan in 2018.

The DAV's pension plan investment allocation at December 31, 2017, is as follows:

Asset Category	Percentage of Plan Assets
Equity based securities	58 %
Fixed-income securities	28
Real Assets	6
Alternative	3
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>5</u>
 Total	 <u>100 %</u>

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 5. The major categories of pension plan financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2017, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Money market funds	\$ 2,845,770	\$	\$ 2,845,770
U.S. Government securities	2,278,142		2,278,142
U.S. Government agency notes		794,231	794,231
Municipal bonds		413,247	413,247
Corporate bonds		6,580,707	6,580,707
Common stocks			
Real Assets	2,579,346		2,579,346
Equity Based Securities	<u>9,909,408</u>		<u>9,909,408</u>
Total Common Stocks	<u>12,488,754</u>		<u>12,488,754</u>
Mutual funds/ETFs			
Equity based securities	25,632,532		25,632,532
Fixed Income	7,406,910		7,406,910
Real Assets	956,135		956,135
Alternative	<u>1,898,163</u>		<u>1,898,163</u>
Total Mutual Funds/ETFs	<u>35,893,740</u>		<u>35,893,740</u>
Total pension plan assets	<u>\$ 53,506,406</u>	<u>\$ 7,788,185</u>	<u>\$ 61,294,591</u>

In selecting the expected rate of return on plan assets, the 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
2018	\$3,371,602
2019	2,487,514
2020	3,151,018
2021	3,918,621
2022	3,837,895
2023–2027	27,046,034

Effective January 1, 2017, DAV no longer has a self-funded prescription drug program in place that qualifies for the Part D subsidy. DAV now 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
2018	\$ 2,209,988
2019	2,168,938
2020	2,122,078
2021	2,191,112
2022	2,195,537
2023–2027	12,622,659

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 2017 were \$2,668,631 and are included in employee benefits expense in the accompanying statement of functional expenses.

7. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

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, 2017, net assets of the Foundation were \$138,551,552. During 2017, DAV personnel assisted the Foundation on a limited basis in administering its business operations and fundraising program. For these services, DAV charged the Foundation \$110,260. DAV provides the Foundation with the use of facilities, equipment and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2017, DAV contributed \$65,508 to The Columbia Trust, a temporarily restricted fund established by the Foundation to provide funds for the service programs of needy DAV state departments and local chapters. Additionally in 2017, DAV contributed \$174,991 to The Columbia Trust for Designated contributions to assist in meeting the transportation needs of veterans.

In 2017, the Foundation appropriated the following in support of DAV programs and services:

- \$250,000 - National Service Office Structured and Continuing Training Program
- \$123,387 - National Service Office Scanners and Webcams with accessories
- \$60,000 - National Service Office Furniture and Equipment Fund
- \$41,761 - National Service Office Copier Fund
- \$25,000 - National Service Office Reference Manuals

At December 31, 2017, the Foundation owed \$134,752 to DAV, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) 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, 2017, net assets of the Trust were \$27,323,112. 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 \$189,749. DAV provides the Trust with the use of facilities, equipment and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2017, the Trust appropriated the following in support of DAV programs and services:

- \$1,400,000 - DAV Employment Initiative
- \$447,641 - Assistance to disabled veterans and their families
- \$303,637 - National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic
- \$300,000 - DAV “Just B Kids” Scholarship
- \$200,000 - Transportation Network
- \$45,000 - Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program
- \$36,250 - DAV 5k Program
- \$5,000 - National Service Officer Programs-other

At December 31, 2017, the Trust owed \$471,983 to DAV, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary — DAV provides services to 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, 2017, net assets of DAVA were \$7,614,170. 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 \$9,095 in 2017.

Certain costs are paid by DAV on behalf of DAVA. In addition, DAV collects contributions on behalf of DAVA. At December 31, 2017, DAVA owed DAV the net of such costs less contributions of \$122,682, 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, 2017, DAV owed approximately \$15,795 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 (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, 2017, net assets of the DVLMF were \$64,254. During 2017, 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.

8. COMMITMENT AND CONTINGENCIES

DAV executed an irrevocable standby letter of credit for \$1.3 million on June 30, 2015 that expired July 1, 2016. It was renewed and expired July 1, 2017. No funds were drawn down and it was not renewed.

9. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2017 but before April 9, 2018, 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	Flynn, Jesse	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
	Rhilinger, Michael	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	56
2	Sander, George	Delegate	NEW YORK	15
	Gibney, William	Alternate	NEW YORK	38
3	Garrett, Edward	Delegate	VERMONT	4
	Conca, Alan	Alternate	RHODE ISLAND	21
4	Martir, Philip	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	14
	Watts, Michael	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	14
5	McElroy, William	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
	Jiga, Carlos	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Sabree, Joan	Delegate	MARYLAND	36
	Nichols, Wiley	Alternate	D.C.	3
7	Ayala, Thomas	Delegate	FLORIDA	1
	Rose, Laymond	Alternate	FLORIDA	16
8	Sensat, Davis	Delegate	LOUISIANA	17
	Tatum, Willie	Alternate	ALABAMA	61
9	Bynum, Jarvis	Delegate	NORTH CAROLINA	20
	Gibson, Linda	Alternate	NORTH CAROLINA	46
10	Lee, Rolly	Delegate	MICHIGAN	129
	Benzing, Ben	Alternate	MICHIGAN	18
11	Habern, Robert	Delegate	OHIO	54
	Liebhaber, Ralph	Alternate	OHIO	9
12	Walkowski, Kevin	Delegate	WISCONSIN	34
	Hill, Larry	Alternate	WISCONSIN	27
13	Kuhn, Roger	Delegate	INDIANA	3
	Rice, John	Alternate	KENTUCKY	89
14	Tobin, Warren	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	31
	Benson, Stephen	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	2
15	Oliver, Jennifer	Delegate	IOWA	20
	Ortiz, Blas	Alternate	KANSAS	3
16	Polzin, Leigh	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	73
	Schievelbein, Michael	Delegate	COLORADO	7
17	Mitchell, Edward	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	5
	Billy, Lorrie	Delegate	ARIZONA	26
18	Cooper, Lori	Alternate	ARIZONA	20
	Marker, Brigitte	Delegate	OREGON	12
19	Turner, Glenn	Alternate	OREGON	20
	French, Robert	Delegate	TEXAS	41
20	Roebuck, Jerry	Alternate	TEXAS	128
	Brown, Vici	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	43
21	Acosta, Paulino	Alternate	ARKANSAS	7
	Kaminsky, Paul	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

Committee on General Resolutions and Membership

Advisor: Shawn Hope and Shurhonda Love

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Egan, William	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	57
	Zilka, Michael	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	56
2	Fredericks, Rachel	Delegate	NEW YORK	38
	McGowan, Timothy	Alternate	NEW YORK	135
3	Andrade, Kenneth	Delegate	RHODE ISLAND	21
	Zibrida, Michael	Alternate	RHODE ISLAND	21
4	Werlich, Ronald	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	47
	Maeby, Ronnie	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	2
5	Yost, Jeremy	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
	Arnold, Philip	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
6	Hurley, Dennis	Delegate	WEST VIRGINIA	56
	Russell, Rodrick	Alternate	D.C.	3
7	Johnson, Jack	Delegate	FLORIDA	150
	Whiteside, Afua	Alternate	FLORIDA	42
8	Windham, Raybon	Alternate	MISSISSIPPI	11
9	Lozano, Manuel	Delegate	GEORGIA	28
	Harris, James	Alternate	GEORGIA	91
10	Benson, Wayne	Delegate	MICHIGAN	18
	Hughes, Albert	Alternate	MICHIGAN	1
11	Gidden, William	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Manning, Fred	Alternate	OHIO	15
12	Weber, Thomas	Delegate	WISCONSIN	17
	Couture, Kenneth	Alternate	ILLINOIS	42
13	Ashe, David	Delegate	INDIANA	19
	Frauendorfer, Christine	Alternate	INDIANA	42
14	Saddoris, Robert	Delegate	MINNESOTA	7
	Colling, Bradley	Alternate	SOUTH DAKOTA	3
15	Jackman, Michael	Delegate	NEBRASKA	47
	Dolenz, Thomas	Alternate	MISSOURI	1
16	Raba, Mariana	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	6
17	Prescott, Gary	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	5
	Bruettig, Richard	Alternate	COLORADO	7
18	Cooper, Kevin	Delegate	ARIZONA	20
	Samuel, Redell	Alternate	NEVADA	15
19	Crary, Walter	Delegate	ALASKA	2
	Wentz, David	Alternate	OREGON	6
20	Garcia, Jose	Delegate	TEXAS	14
	Fox, Janie	Alternate	TEXAS	128
21	Halford, Jerletta	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	9
	Vance, Craig	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	66

Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights

Advisor: Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Whitty, Francis	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
	Boyd, David	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	29
2	Montes, Diane	Delegate	NEW YORK	120
	McKinnis, Linda	Alternate	NEW YORK	38
3	Schatz, Richard	Delegate	RHODE ISLAND	12
	Guldner, Robert	Alternate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
4	Valente, Ignazio	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	15
	Long, Leonard	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	42
5	Cudworth, Robert	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	1
	Ulinski, James	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	25
6	Proconier, James	Delegate	VIRGINIA	10
7	Linden, Albert	Delegate	FLORIDA	90
	Owens, Clifton	Alternate	FLORIDA	4
8	Hanas, Garrett	Alternate	TENNESSEE	24
9	Wilner, Brian	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	44
	Robinson, William	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	1
10	Dempsey, James	Delegate	MICHIGAN	13
	Barenbrugge, Ricky	Alternate	MICHIGAN	19
11	Plahovinsak, John	Delegate	OHIO	63
	Cunningham, Thomas	Alternate	OHIO	3
12	Labelle, Al	Delegate	WISCONSIN	57
	Huckaby, Eric	Alternate	ILLINOIS	17
13	Kaminski, Robert	Delegate	KENTUCKY	8
	Bratcher, Thomas	Alternate	INDIANA	27
14	Dilks, Trent	Delegate	MINNESOTA	12
	Ross, Scott	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	2
15	Brooks, Ricky	Delegate	MISSOURI	11
	Jakub, James	Alternate	NEBRASKA	20
16	Wilson, Gerald	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	154
17	Dasing, Kevin	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	38
	Dingler, Tillery	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	33
18	Parocua, Ramiro	Delegate	NEVADA	12
	Smith, Aunjel	Alternate	ARIZONA	20
19	Cousino, Thomas	Delegate	OREGON	1
	Garcia, Dena	Alternate	WASHINGTON	5
20	Gamble, Larry	Delegate	TEXAS	194
	Hardaway, Lincoln	Alternate	TEXAS	128
21	Pandos, Ronald	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	9
	Dunning, William	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	32
99	O'Connell, Dennis	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

Committee on Constitution and Bylaws

Advisor: Edward Hartman

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Olson, Debora	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	85
	Vallia, Michael	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	24
2	Barradas, Shannon	Delegate	NEW YORK	15
	Conklin, Richard	Alternate	NEW YORK	135
3	Brunelle, Richard	Delegate	MAINE	19
	Fournier, Richard	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Kopley, James	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	41
	Wischmann, Herman	Alternate	DELAWARE	1
5	Noel, Kevin	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	8
	Brooker, Michael	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	8
6	Reynolds, Robert	Delegate	VIRGINIA	10
	Eaves, Georgia	Alternate	D.C.	14
7	Grooten, William	Delegate	FLORIDA	123
	Kirk, Lisa	Alternate	FLORIDA	133
8	Causey, Mason	Delegate	LOUISIANA	20
	Grower, John	Alternate	MISSISSIPPI	5
9	Roberts, Jeremy	Delegate	NORTH CAROLINA	16
	Alston, James	Alternate	NORTH CAROLINA	21
10	Schulz, Thomas	Delegate	MICHIGAN	20
	Teasley, Kevin	Alternate	MICHIGAN	1
11	Robertson, Reynolds	Delegate	OHIO	63
	Bailey, James	Alternate	OHIO	117
12	Keene, Zachary	Delegate	ILLINOIS	47
	Kempainen, Matthew	Alternate	WISCONSIN	3
13	Bunting, Randy	Delegate	KENTUCKY	173
	Ewing, Lee	Alternate	KENTUCKY	89
14	Helmbrecht, Gaylord	Delegate	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
	Jarvis, Richard	Alternate	MINNESOTA	12
15	Hicks, Kenneth	Delegate	MISSOURI	2
	Jakub, Jamie	Alternate	NEBRASKA	20
16	Valdez, Richard	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	12
	Brager, Jeffrey	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	1
17	Grieb, Andrew	Delegate	COLORADO	21
	Hogue, Richard	Alternate	COLORADO	21
18	Jeter, Barbara	Delegate	ARIZONA	8
	Ruvalcaba, Maria	Alternate	NEVADA	1
19	Young, Bruce	Delegate	OREGON	1
	Bacon, Gregory	Alternate	IDAHO	9
20	Jimenez, Joel	Delegate	TEXAS	41
	Montgomery, Lillie	Alternate	TEXAS	128
21	Black, Douglas	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	88
	Oliver, Danny	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	88
99	Pope, Leonard	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

Committee on Employment

Advisor: Jeffrey Hall and LeRoy Acosta

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Patterson, William	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	45
	Fitzgerald, David	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	90
2	Pennell, Joseph	Delegate	NEW YORK	158
	Rivera, Israel	Alternate	NEW YORK	118
3	Boisvert, Ernest	Delegate	RHODE ISLAND	12
	Mortellaro, Nicholas	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Walker, Michael	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	24
	Roth, Edward	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	24
5	Gerhart, Ralph	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
	Stensland, Ronald	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
6	Perez-Cabrera, Carlos	Delegate	PUERTO RICO	4
	Nichols, Wiley	Alternate	D.C.	3
7	Bueno, Eduard	Delegate	FLORIDA	4
	Mohan, Catherine	Alternate	FLORIDA	13
8	Deatherage, James	Delegate	TENNESSEE	20
	Morgan, Jerry	Alternate	ALABAMA	7
9	Jackson, Doris	Delegate	GEORGIA	92
	Hill, Sadie	Alternate	GEORGIA	6
10	Tucker, Lolita	Delegate	MICHIGAN	114
	Tillman, Kwan	Alternate	MICHIGAN	119
11	Gerhart, Andrew	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Shaw, Michael	Alternate	OHIO	42
12	Kiggen, Elizabeth	Delegate	ILLINOIS	1
	Helgeson, Rodney	Alternate	WISCONSIN	27
13	Vaccari, Richard	Delegate	KENTUCKY	89
	Hernandez, Peter	Alternate	KENTUCKY	8
14	Hall, Joseph	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	3
	Turnwall, Dick	Alternate	SOUTH DAKOTA	11
15	Thornburg, Audie	Delegate	IOWA	20
	Owens, Eric	Alternate	KANSAS	4
16	Dykens, Richard	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	19
	McCarey, Shirrell	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	12
17	Schow, Terry	Delegate	UTAH	4
	McGinnis, Carmen	Alternate	COLORADO	7
18	Bourn, Delvin	Delegate	NEVADA	12
	Schuenke, Michael	Alternate	NEVADA	12
19	Clark, Tal	Delegate	OREGON	1
	Niemi, Amber	Alternate	OREGON	1
20	Crozier, Kevin	Delegate	TEXAS	5
	Franklin, Anita	Alternate	TEXAS	128
21	Brown, Clinton	Delegate	ARKANSAS	7
	Turrel, Brandy	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	7

Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services

Advisor: Adrian Atizado and John Kleindienst

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Dubey, Paul	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	46
	Follis, James	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	85
2	Ingram, Thomas	Delegate	NEW YORK	28
	Gorton, Roy	Alternate	NEW YORK	158
3	Nicodemus, Robert	Delegate	VERMONT	3
	Welch, Jesse	Alternate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
4	Walsh, Elizabeth	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	15
	Butler, Donald	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	12
5	Sulpizio, Lawrence	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
	Butler, Jesse	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	25
6	Madison, Cynthia	Delegate	VIRGINIA	27
	Clark, Charles	Alternate	MARYLAND	15
7	Keckler, Mary Ann	Delegate	FLORIDA	67
	Perez, Liza	Alternate	FLORIDA	13
8	Mercer, John	Delegate	LOUISIANA	2
	Durand, Barney	Alternate	LOUISIANA	7
9	Long, Larry	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	4
	Roberts, Joyce	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	4
10	Gonzales, Beth	Delegate	MICHIGAN	102
	Zielke, Jason	Alternate	MICHIGAN	114
11	Mitchell, Arlinda	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Webber, Paul	Alternate	OHIO	2
12	Alexander, Tim	Delegate	ILLINOIS	90
	Shier, Leonard	Alternate	WISCONSIN	52
13	Johnson, Penny	Delegate	INDIANA	52
	Harbin, Seneca	Alternate	INDIANA	60
14	Wells, Eric	Delegate	MONTANA	17
	Wiebesick, Roger	Alternate	MINNESOTA	38
15	Jakub, Krista	Delegate	NEBRASKA	20
	Grant, David	Alternate	IOWA	20
16	Johnson, Kirk	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	85
	Maddox, Clyde	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	28
17	Francis, Cynthia	Delegate	COLORADO	11
	Mitchell, Elaine	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	5
18	Burks, William	Delegate	ARIZONA	26
	Donberger, Mark	Alternate	NEVADA	7
19	Janus, Wanda	Delegate	OREGON	1
	Mondragon, Claudia	Alternate	OREGON	12
20	Tieman, David	Delegate	TEXAS	194
	Moreland, Harold	Alternate	TEXAS	17
21	Smith, Joseph	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	32
	Adams, William	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	32
99	Hogan, James	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

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
	Mantilla, Samuel	Alternate	NEW YORK	92
3	Jernigan, Shawn	Delegate	MAINE	6
	McKinney, Darrell	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Pescatore, Richard	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	5
	Walker, Johnnie	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	44
5	Kauffman, Joseph	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	25
	Hassinger, Jason	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Parker, Glynn	Delegate	MARYLAND	4
	Cruz, Jose	Alternate	PUERTO RICO	4
7	Tyson, Wallace	Delegate	FLORIDA	11
	Wolfe, Kenneth	Alternate	FLORIDA	101
8	Calhoun, Leamon	Delegate	TENNESSEE	20
	Hermann, Hilmer	Alternate	LOUISIANA	50
9	Jones, Paul	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	72
	Maddox, Christopher	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	12
10	Cutler, Jo Linda	Delegate	MICHIGAN	20
	Shepherd, Frank	Alternate	MICHIGAN	7
11	Hanneman, Dennis	Delegate	OHIO	77
	Dibble, Timothy	Alternate	OHIO	39
12	Hert, Michael	Delegate	WISCONSIN	17
	Reynolds, Alfred	Alternate	ILLINOIS	17
13	Fivecoate, Gerald	Delegate	INDIANA	28
	Greer, DeAndre	Alternate	INDIANA	3
14	Murphy, Eugene	Delegate	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
	Litzinger, Joseph	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	2
15	Helms, Cody	Delegate	KANSAS	27
	McDonald, Anna	Alternate	MISSOURI	2
16	Powers, Frederick	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	20
	Vogel, Ronald	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	20
17	Lucus, Gary	Delegate	WYOMING	11
	Rohn, Bonnie	Alternate	COLORADO	41
18	Dolan, Bill	Delegate	NEVADA	15
	Greenwood, Frank	Alternate	NEVADA	1
19	Gavin, JoAnn	Delegate	WASHINGTON	5
	Hack, Saranna	Alternate	ALASKA	2
20	Spence, Percy	Delegate	TEXAS	17
	Paquette, Roland	Alternate	TEXAS	20
21	Miller, Linda	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	29
	Donovan, John	Alternate	ARKANSAS	10
99	Lester, Ronnie	Delegate	BLIND NO DEPT	1

Columbia Trust Advisory Board

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Vicini, William	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	6
	Follis, James	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	85
2	Sioss, Donald	Delegate	NEW YORK	76
	Pennell, Joseph	Alternate	NEW YORK	158
3	Fournier, Richard	Delegate	MAINE	1
	Nicodemus, Robert	Alternate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
4	Clynch, James	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	12
	Church, Albert	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	5
5	Kelly, Lawrence	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	3
6	Dawson, Michael	Delegate	WEST VIRGINIA	18
7	Chicollo, Frank	Delegate	FLORIDA	4
	Zecman, Charles	Alternate	FLORIDA	123
8	Carver, Johnnie	Delegate	TENNESSEE	94
	Deatherage, James	Alternate	TENNESSEE	20
9	Solomon, Robert	Delegate	GEORGIA	1
	Jimmerson, Burl	Alternate	GEORGIA	33
10	Lee, Rolly	Delegate	MICHIGAN	129
	Benson, Wayne	Alternate	MICHIGAN	18
11	Bertschy, Robert	Delegate	OHIO	47
	Hanneman, Dennis	Alternate	OHIO	77
12	Reynolds, Alfred	Delegate	ILLINOIS	17
13	Coley, William	Delegate	INDIANA	72
	Peek, Donald	Alternate	INDIANA	52
14	Hall, Joseph	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	3
15	Salladay, Chris	Delegate	IOWA	6
16	Valdez, Richard	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	12
17	Watson, Floyd	Delegate	WYOMING	2
18	Cox, Ronald	Delegate	ARIZONA	26
19	Royse, Sarah	Delegate	OREGON	5
20	Garcia, Jose	Delegate	TEXAS	14
	Delgado, Robert	Alternate	TEXAS	233
21	Vance, Craig	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	66

National Executive Committee

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Nee, Coleman	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
	Bennett, Helen	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	35
2	Robinson, Keith	Delegate	NEW YORK	15
	Ingram, Thomas	Alternate	NEW YORK	28
3	Nicodemus, Robert	Delegate	VERMONT	3
	Boisvert, Ernest	Alternate	RHODE ISLAND	12
4	Flynn, Benjamin	Delegate	DELAWARE	1
	Clynn, James	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	12
5	Blow, Samuel	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
	Iacavazzi, Michael	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	1
6	Cox, Robert	Delegate	VIRGINIA	60
	Dawson, Michael	Alternate	WEST VIRGINIA	18
7	Raber, John	Delegate	FLORIDA	18
	Johnson, Jack	Alternate	FLORIDA	150
8	Bratton, Jerry	Delegate	MISSISSIPPI	48
	Davis, Carroll	Alternate	MISSISSIPPI	11
9	Lynch, Tincie	Delegate	GEORGIA	91
	Bledsoe, Robert	Alternate	GEORGIA	18
10	Dempsey, James	Delegate	MICHIGAN	13
	Hughes, Albert	Alternate	MICHIGAN	1
11	Uetterling, David	Delegate	OHIO	36
	Stith, Michael	Alternate	OHIO	35
12	Walkowski, Kevin	Delegate	WISCONSIN	34
	Helgeson, Rodney	Alternate	WISCONSIN	27
13	Hall, George	Delegate	KENTUCKY	169
	Bunting, Randy	Alternate	KENTUCKY	89
14	Tobin, Warren	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	31
	Hall, Joseph	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	3
15	Shuey, James	Delegate	NEBRASKA	7
	Thornburg, David	Alternate	IOWA	20
16	Johnson, Kirk	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	85
	Valdez, Richard	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	12
17	Jackson, Paul	Delegate	COLORADO	7
	Talley, Timothy	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	6
18	Crawford, Julian	Delegate	HAWAII	1
	Hohman, Glenn	Alternate	ARIZONA	14
19	Dixon, Harvey	Delegate	IDAHO	22
	Sellers, Robert	Alternate	IDAHO	6
20	Parker, Thomas	Delegate	TEXAS	3
	Edwards, Charles	Alternate	TEXAS	128
21	Oliver, Danny	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	88
	Donovan, John	Alternate	ARKANSAS	10

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION

July 17, 2018

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The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 97th National Convention convened in the Summit Pavilion on the Casino Level of the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, Nevada, on Tuesday morning, July 17, 2018, and was called to order at 8:28 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster.

COMMANDER DELPHINE METCALF-FOSTER: The convention will please come to order. As a reminder to everyone, please silence your cell phones and portable devices. (Three raps) Please join me in the Pledge of the Allegiance to our flag.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to call on Chaplain Dover to lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we come into your presence this day with thankful hearts 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.")

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: (One rap) Thank you. I would like to remind each of you that 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. Upon being so recognized the delegate must state their name, chapter number, and the state they represent.

I would like to call on the Credentials Committee Chairman Warren Tobin for a report.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TOBIN: Comrade Commander and delegates, the Credentials Committee met this morning in Nevada 4-5 at the Grand Sierra Resort, Reno, Nevada. Roll call showed 1,055 delegates and 60 alternates have registered. This includes 44 departments and 368 chapters registered. There are 41 national officers, 19 national executive committee members, and 14 past national commanders currently registered for a total of 8,262 votes.

This partial report is for informational purposes only and it reflects the registration at the close of business at 5:00 o'clock p.m. July 16th, 2018. This completes the partial report of the Credentials Committee, Commander.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: This is a reminder that registration will close this morning at 10:00 a.m.

At this time I would like to call upon Chairman Rob Reynolds for the final report on the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERT REYNOLDS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: Comrade Commander and delegates, 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 251, it is proposed that Article VIII of the Constitution be amended to remove the National Order of Trench Rats as an Auxiliary unit;

Resolution Number 252, it is proposed that Article III, Section 3.12, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to require National District meetings take place on the day prior to the Opening Session of the National Convention;

Resolution Number 253, it is proposed that Article III, Section 3.12, Paragraph 2 of the Bylaws be amended to require the results of the election of National Executive Committee members and alternates be reported to the Office of the National Adjutant by 10 a.m. of the day of the Opening Session of the Convention;

Resolution Number 254, it is proposed that Article IV, Section 4.2 of the Bylaws be amended to require the National Executive Committee to hold one meeting no earlier than a day preceding

the convening of the National Convention and another to be held no later than the day following adjournment of the National Convention, with at least one additional meeting during the ensuing year;

Resolution Number 255, it is proposed that Article IV, Section 4.5 of the Bylaws be amended to delete the word "mail" in the title and allow the regular business of the organization requiring National Executive Committee consideration to be transacted by the office of the National Adjutant by way of electronic or other methods;

Resolution Number 256, it is proposed that Article VI, Section 6.2, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to reduce the minimum number of new members required to charter a new chapter from 50 new members to 25; it is further proposed that Article VI, Section 6.2, Paragraph 2 be deleted in its entirety;

Resolution Number 257, it is proposed that Article X, Section 10.2, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws be amended to allow the national organization of the DAV Auxiliary to provide a financial report to the DAV national organization within 90 days after the close of their accounting year, which shall be January 1 through December 31;

Resolution Number 258, remove all references to the National Order of Trench Rats throughout the Bylaws and make any necessary housekeeping changes to include renumbering any pertinent sections.

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.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MR. JEREMY ROBERTS: Mic 1.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Mic 1.

MR. ROBERTS: Madam Commander, Jeremy Roberts, Chapter 16, North Carolina. I second that motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion is carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: Thank you.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. Next, I would like to call on Chairman Terry Schow for the report of the Committee on Employment.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TERRY SCHOW: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SCHOW: First I'd like to thank District 17 for allowing me to represent them on this Committee and the national staff, as well, for giving me the high honor of serving as chair on the Committee, as well.

Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Employment was called to order on July 14th by the Committee advisors Jeremy Villanueva and Jeff Hall—the great Jeff Hall.

The first order of business the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary; Terry Schow, was elected as chairman and Kevin Crosure 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 10, support meaningful accountability measures, but with due process for employees of the VA; Number 20, provide educational benefits for dependents of service-connected veterans rated 80 percent or more disabled;

Number 26, require the U.S. Congress to create and fund without a corresponding reduction of funding to the VA or DoD jobs program similar to the works progress administration works projects administration which guarantees federal employment to persons being discharged from military service under other than dishonorable conditions;

Number 72, support veteran preference in public employment; Number 162, eliminate the delimiting date for eligible spouses and surviving spouses for benefits provided under Chapter 35, Title 38 of the United States Code;

Number 182, support extension of a period of employment services under vocational rehabilitation and employment services; Number 190, provide adequate funding and permanency for veterans' employment and/or training programs; Number 191, increase staffing levels of the VA vocational rehabilitation and employment services;

Number 192, remove requirements that VA compensation to service-connected veterans is counted as income for purposes of federal financial aid determination; Number 193, support legislation to provide a reasonable transition period for service-disabled veterans' small businesses to retain federal protected status following the death of the disabled veteran owner;

Number 298, support licensure and certification of active-duty service personnel; Number 299, support legislation to extend the duration of vocational rehabilitation benefits beyond 48 months; Number 300, create an economic opportunity administration within the Department of Veterans' Affairs;

Number 301, support prompt payment of contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned businesses; Number 302, support fraud prevention controls over service-disabled veteran-owned small business programs; Number 303, support verification improvements for veteran-owned businesses within the VA;

Number 304, monitor the mandatory transition GPS program; Number 305, support legislation to exempt veterans rated as permanently and totally disabled due to service-connected disabilities from federal taxes on forgiveness of student loan indebtedness;

Number 306, support legislation enhancing government-wide goals for participation by small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans; Number 308—excuse me, Number 307, oppose using D-VOP/LVR personnel to work with or process assistance programs unrelated to veterans;

Number 308, eliminate annual employment verification questionnaire by veterans in receipt of individual unemployability benefits; Number 309, support outreach and employment of women veterans;

Number 310, eliminate the 12-year rule to request the VA Voc-Rehab benefits under Chapter 31, leaving the date to apply for that benefit open-ended; Number 311, protect veterans from employment discrimination when receiving health care for service-connected conditions.

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. 010

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 the VA as an employer of choice for the best and brightest.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 020
PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS OF SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS RATED 80 PERCENT 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 percent and 90 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 percent or more.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 026
REQUIRE THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO CREATE AND FUND, WITHOUT A CORRESPONDING REDUCTION OF FUNDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, A JOBS PROGRAM SIMILAR TO THE WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION/WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION, WHICH GUARANTEES FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT TO PERSONS BEING DISCHARGED FROM MILITARY SERVICE, UNDER OTHER THAN DISHONORABLE CONDITIONS.

WHEREAS, the federal government set a precedent with the creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), later renamed the Work Projects Administration (WPA), to complete major public works projects before World War II; and

WHEREAS, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 WPA, which guarantees federal employment to persons being discharged from military service under other than dishonorable conditions.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 072
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 percent 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 re-employment 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 162
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 182
SUPPORT EXTENSION OF A PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, §3105, states the period of a vocational rehabilitation program for a veteran may not exceed 48 months; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, §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 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; to ensure that service-connected veterans receive the services necessary to obtain and maintain suitable employment; DAV Department of Virginia supports an extension up to 24 months for counseling and placement and post-placement services.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 190
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, seeks and supports adequate funding and permanency for all veterans employment and training programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 191
INCREASE 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 timeframes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports strengthening of the VA's 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. 192
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 (FAFSA) 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 193
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 percent 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 VA) allows for a 10-year transition period to the surviving spouse of a 100 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 298
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 299 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 300
CREATE AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ADMINISTRATION
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

WHEREAS, veterans programs have become more complex over the years, and 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 301
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, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 302
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 303
SUPPORT VERIFICATION IMPROVEMENTS FOR VETERAN-OWNED
BUSINESSES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the historical high unemployment rate of returning veterans and the current state of the economy present a career challenge for former military personnel, resulting in high levels of unemployment; and

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, recommends the VA simplify its verification process for SDVOSBs and VOSBs interested in participating in the VA's Veterans First Contracting Program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 304
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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; 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. 305

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXEMPT A VETERAN RATED AS PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED DUE TO SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES FROM FEDERAL TAXES ON FORGIVENESS OF STUDENT LOAN INDEBTEDNESS

WHEREAS, veterans rated permanently and totally disabled due to service-connected disabilities are entitled under existing laws to have the principal of their outstanding federally insured student loans forgiven; and

WHEREAS, these veterans are not among those exempted from paying taxes on the amount of the student loan debt that is forgiven; and

WHEREAS, these disabled veterans are placed at a significant economic disadvantage based on the limitations imposed upon them by the wounds, illnesses and injuries incurred during the performance of their military duties, placing an unreasonable burden on them and their families to pay taxes on forgiven federal loans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports the enactment of legislation that would exempt from taxes the amount forgiven for federal student loans to veterans rated as permanently and totally disabled.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 306

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 percent 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 (VOSBs) and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses SDVOSBs, 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 page (VIP) lists businesses that are 51 percent or more owned by veterans and is the only one within the federal government; and

WHEREAS, 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 percent 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 percent—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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, calls on all government agencies to meet the set-aside goal of not less than 3 percent 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 percent, 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. 307

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 308

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 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 VA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 309

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 underrepresentation of, women veterans in career employment.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 310

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 311

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 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, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, urges Congress to extend protection under FMLA to encompass the medical care needs of veterans with service-connected disabilities.

* * *

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MR. MICHAEL SHANKEY: Mic 2. Michael Shankey, Black Mountain Chapter 12, Henderson, Nevada, 1 second.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All in favor; opposed—In accordance with Rule 9 now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions that you wish to read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Thank you.

COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT CHAIRMAN SCHOW: Thank you.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to call upon Chairman Jim Procunier for the report on the Committee on Legislation and Veterans' Rights.

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JIM PROCUNIER: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROCUNIER: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Legislation and Veterans' Rights was called to order on July 15th, 2018, by advisors Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann.

The first order of business was the election of convention chair 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.

002, oppose any recommendation by any commission or any other source to reduce to eliminate benefits for disabled veterans; 003, oppose all attempts to change the basis of the Department of Veterans' Affairs Rating Schedule from the Average Impairments of Earnings Capacity standard;

004, support legislation that requires the VA to consider private medical evidence provided by licensed private health care providers; 014, support legislation to remove the prohibition against concurrent receipt of SBP and DIC; 015, support meaningful appeals processing reform;

029, oppose reduction, taxation, or elimination of veterans' benefits; 030, expand POW presumptions; 031, support legislation to provide for realistic cost-of-living allowances; 032, support legislation to exclude veterans' disability compensation from countable income for the purposes of eligibility for benefits and services from other government programs;

033, support legislation that service in the waters offshore of Vietnam establishes a presumption of exposure to Agent Orange; 036, support legislation to reduce the ten-year rule for dependency and indemnity compensation; 037, support legislation to provide a temporary total disability compensation rating for an amputee veteran while a new prosthetic device is developed and delivered;

038, support legislation to award special monthly compensation at R-1 to veterans with anatomical loss or loss of the use of three extremities; 039, support interest payments for Department of Veterans' Affairs Retroactive Awards of one year or more;

040, support legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life; 041, remove the delimiting date for Persian Gulf War veterans; 042, support oversight of VA practices in evaluating disability compensation for residuals of the military sexual trauma;

043, support legislation authorizing the presumption of service connection for all radiogenic disease and eliminate dose exposure estimate requirements; 044, support legislation to allow all veterans to recover amounts withheld as tax on disability severance pay;

046, oppose subjecting disability compensation and DIC to means testing; 047, oppose the long-term round-down of COLAs in veteran's benefits; 048, support legislation that would exempt the benefits paid to war-time service-connected disabled veterans from the PayGo/CutGo provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act;

049, amend the law to provide ten-year protection for service-connected disability ratings; 050, oppose regional dispersion of the Board of Veterans' Appeals; 051, support legislation to cap attorneys' fees for benefits counseling and claims services before the VA;

052, support legislation to require the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims to decide each of the appellant's Assignments of Error; 053, extend eligibility for mortgage protection life insurance for 100 percent service-connected veterans;

054, support an increase in the Department of Veterans' Affairs Burial Allowance for service-connected veterans and provide automatic annual adjustments; 055, increase benefit rate for the Home Improvement and Structural Alterations Grant, known as the HISA Grant;

090, support legislation to provide for service-connection for disabling connections resulting from toxic and environmental exposures; 098, 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;

103, support legislation to increase disability compensation; 104, support legislation to remove the prohibition against concurrent receipt of longevity retired pay and veterans' disability compensation for all longevity retired veterans;

105, support legislation to provide for presumptive service-connection for tinnitus and hearing loss; 106, support legislation providing that special separation benefits payments not be withheld from the VA Disability Compensation payments;

107, consider the treatment of presumptive service-connection conditions as a claim for VA compensation; 108, oppose lump sum payments for service-connected disabilities; 109, support a more liberal view of Other Than Honorable Discharge for the purpose of eligibility for VA benefits and health care services;

111, oppose the imposition of time limits for filing disability compensation claims; 112, support sufficient, timely, and predictable funding for all VA programs, benefits and services; 148, oppose any change that would redefine service-connected disability or restrict the conditions or circumstances under which it may be established;

167, support elimination of the link between chronicity and continuity with the chronic diseases listed in 38 CFR, Section 3.309; 168 support the elimination of the 30-day requirement for diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune;

169, provide for compensable rating for hearing-impaired veterans required to use a hearing aid; 171, support waiving additional amounts of debt created by VA's lack of timely action; 172, support reforms related to the recovery of debts by the VA;

173, support legislation for the VA to provide child care services or assistance to veterans attending VA health care, VA benefits programs; VA educational programs; VA employment services; VA homeless programs; and VA rehabilitative programs;

174, support legislation that recognizes presumptive service connection for hypertension, bladder cancer, hyperthyroidism and Parkinson-like tremors as related to exposure to Agent Orange or herbicides; 175, support legislation to increase maximum valuation for service-connected headaches;

176, oppose change of definition of a "herbicide agent" for the purposes of establishing service-connection for disabilities related to herbicide exposure; 185, support legislation to include children in legal custody as VA dependents;

199, support legislation for presumptive service connection for diseases related to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune; 200, support legislation authorizing presumptive service connection based on herbicide exposure for military personnel that served at air bases in Thailand during the Vietnam War;

201, support legislation authorizing presumptive service connection for diseases and illnesses based on contaminants on the sub-surface exposure of military personnel, civilian personnel, and family member who were stationed or employed at Fort McClellan, Alabama; (Applause)

238, support legislation to improve the VA Fiduciary Program; 259, support a change in regulatory requirements for temporary total disability ratings; 260, support legislation for immediate, onsite finalization for grants at the Board of Veterans' Appeals;

261, compensate Persian Gulf veterans suffering from illnesses circumstantially linked to their service in the Persian Gulf War; (Applause) 262, amend the VA Ratings Schedule for rating disabilities for mental disorders; 263, amend provision regarding eligibility for automotive adaptive equipment to include any veteran whose service-connected disability inhibits his or her ability to safely operate a motor vehicle;

264, 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; 265, provide an open period to apply for service-disabled veterans' insurance;

266, support legislation to reduce premiums for service disabled veterans' insurance to be more consistent with life expectancy; 267, support legislation to provide for a waiver of premiums for supplemental service disabled veterans insurance; and the last one, 268, increase the face value of service-disabled veterans' insurance.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights. 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. 002

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 003

OPPOSE ALL ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE THE BASIS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RATING SCHEDULE FROM THE “AVERAGE IMPAIRMENTS OF EARNINGS 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes any attempt to change or modify the VASRD, or the statute and regulations underlying it, which would change the long-standing, accepted and successful policy that ratings shall be based, as far as practicable, upon the average impairments of earning capacity.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 004
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 014
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST
CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN PAYMENTS
AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, the 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 015
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 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 029
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, vigorously opposes reduction, taxation or elimination of veterans benefits.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 030
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 031
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 percentage 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to provide a realistic cost-of-living allowance for our nation's disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 032
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, seeks legislation to exclude veterans disability compensation from countable income for purposes of eligibility for benefits or services under other government programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 033
SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT SERVICE IN THE WATERS
OFFSHORE VIETNAM ESTABLISHES A PRESUMPTION
OF EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE

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 dispersion, deposition of and human exposure to dioxins were not limited to areas directly sprayed, inasmuch as it is acknowledged that the chemical was carried away from the areas of application by canals, rivers and streams, and that airborne particulates were carried by wind drift; and

WHEREAS, Congress has provided that, for purposes of establishment or presumption of service connection for a disability or death related to herbicide exposure, a veteran who, during active military, naval or air service, must have "served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, [and] shall be presumed to have been exposed during such service to [a] herbicide agent . . . unless there is affirmative evidence to establish that the veteran was not exposed to any such agent" during that service; and

WHEREAS, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, § 3.3.7(a)(6)(iii) notes, "Service in the Republic of Vietnam" includes service in the waters offshore; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs has arbitrarily interpreted "served in the Republic of Vietnam" to mean only service on the landmass of Vietnam and not in offshore waters within its national boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the exclusion of territorial seas or waters from the term "Republic of Vietnam" is contrary to the plain and unqualified language of current law and illogical insofar as its premise is that herbicides could be carried away from the area of application across any expanse of land, but not to such waters; and

WHEREAS, various illnesses have been linked to and are presumed to be due to exposure to these herbicide agents; and

WHEREAS, veterans who served on ships no more distant from the spraying of these herbicides than many who served on land are arbitrarily and unjustly denied benefits of the presumption of exposure, and thereby are ineligible for presumption of service connection for herbicide-related disabilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to expressly provide that the phrase "served in the Republic of Vietnam" includes service in the territorial waters offshore.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 036
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to reduce the 10-year rule for DIC qualification to a more reasonable period of time.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 037
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 038
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 039
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 040
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 percent of compensation rates be enacted; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 041
SUPPORT REINSTATEMENT OF REASONABLE PRESUMPTIVE PERIOD
FOR UNDIAGNOSED ILLNESSES IN GULF WAR VETERANS

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, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), §3.317(i), 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 percent 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 the "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 ensure that benefits and services are available when those conditions ultimately manifest; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, urges Congress to support legislation to remove the delimiting date for disabilities as a result of active-duty service in the Southwest Asia theater of operations.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 042
SUPPORT OVERSIGHT OF THE 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 percent of men serving and 20 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 043
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, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, §3.311, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 the 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. 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, strongly supports legislation which would allow all veterans to recover taxes from their disability severance pay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 046
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes any proposal to means test disability compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 047
OPPOSE LONG-TERM ROUNDING DOWN 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 (COLA) 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes long-term rounding down COLAs for veterans disability compensation, and compensation to their dependents and survivors.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 048
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 050

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, categorically opposes any decentralization of the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 051

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 052
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 053
EXTEND ELIGIBILITY FOR VETERANS' MORTGAGE 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend VMLI to service-connected veterans who are rated as permanently and totally disabled.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 054
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 nonservice-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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 055
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, calls for a reasonable increase in HISA benefits for veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 090
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 098
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 103
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 104
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 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to repeal the offset between military longevity retired pay and VA disability compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 105
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 106
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to clarify that SSB payments are not disability payments and therefore should not be recouped from VA disability compensation payments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 107
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 108
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 re-evaluation 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 re-evaluating 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes any change in law to provide for lump-sum payments of Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 109
SUPPORT A MORE LIBERAL REVIEW OF OTHER THAN
HONORABLE DISCHARGES IN CASES OF PTSD, TBI, MST 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 (VHA) 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 and MST or other trauma contributed to their administrative discharges characterized as other than honorable.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 111 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 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes any change in law to limit the time for filing compensation claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 112 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 (VBA), 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 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 148
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes changes in current law so as to redefine and restrict the conditions under which service connection may be established.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 167
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 title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), section 3.309(a); 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 nonadversarial nature of the Department of Veterans Affairs claims system; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports the enactment of legislation to establish service connection for a disease not specifically listed in 38 CFR, section 3.309(a), using chronicity or continuity of symptomatology.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 168
SUPPORT THE ELIMINATION OF THE 30-DAY REQUIREMENT
FOR DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINANTS
IN THE WATER SUPPLY AT CAMP LEJEUNE

WHEREAS, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), §3.307(a)(7)(i), 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 two 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 169
PROVIDE FOR A COMPENSABLE RATING FOR HEARING-IMPAIRED
VETERANS REQUIRED TO USE HEARING AIDS**

WHEREAS, a significantly high number of veterans with hearing impairments have a zero percent or noncompensable rating for high-frequency hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, most veterans who have such a rating with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) experience significant difficulties with such hearing loss in ordinary daily living; and

WHEREAS, the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities provides a compensable rating of 10 percent for other minor disabilities, such as a partial loss of one finger, mild skin conditions, tender scars; and

WHEREAS, the VA should recognize those veterans who are impacted by high-frequency hearing loss; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, supports the VA granting veterans with high-frequency hearing loss a compensable rating (10 percent) when it has been medically determined that the veteran requires and has been issued a hearing amplification device.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 171
ESTABLISH AN AUTOMATIC WAIVER OF OVERPAYMENTS AND
DEBTS WHERE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
RECEIVED THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WITHIN 90 DAYS**

WHEREAS, when a veteran receives Drill Pay and VA Compensation, or dissolves a marriage or removes a dependent from their benefits, this will create an overpayment and potential debt within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, when a veteran submits the Notice of Waiver of VA Compensation per Drill Pay or provides proper documentation of divorce, death or request to remove a dependent, in a timely manner, but the VA takes several months in processing and notifying the veteran, thus creating a significant overpayment or debt which results in a financial hardship on the veteran; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, supports legislation to enact an automatic waiver of the overpayment and debt if the VA takes over 90 days to process the Notice of Waiver of Compensation for Drill Pay and to process any changes to dependency; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 90 days would start on the date the VA received the Notice of Waiver of Compensation for Drill Pay and any information to change dependency status; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this includes any dependency information that is shared or submitted to any VA facility, to include medical centers, clinics and national cemeteries.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 172
SUPPORT REFORMS RELATING TO RECOVERY OF DEBTS
BY 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 percent 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.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 173
SUPPORT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)
PROVIDING CHILD CARE SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE TO VETERANS
ATTENDING VA HEALTH CARE, VA BENEFITS PROGRAMS, VA EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS, VA EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, VA HOMELESS PROGRAMS,
AND VA REHABILITATIVE 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 A health care treatment and complete training, rehabilitative, and education programs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 174
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to add bladder cancer, hypertension, hypothyroidism and Parkinson's-like symptoms to the presumptive list in title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, section 3.309(e).

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 175 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 percent for a single condition, or a combination of 70 percent with one of them being at least 40 percent; and

WHEREAS, at present, a veteran with the highest schedular rating for headaches, 50 percent, must be shown to have a very frequent completely prostrating and prolonged attack productive of severe economic inadaptability as stated at title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, section 4.124a, diagnostic code 8100; and

WHEREAS, a veteran currently in receipt of the maximum 50 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, proposes that the VA amend its regulations to increase the maximum evaluation for an individual with migraine headaches from the current 50 percent evaluation to a 60 percent rating to more appropriately address the industrial impairment attributable to that level of disability.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 176 OPPOSE CHANGE OF DEFINITION OF A HERBICIDE AGENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF ESTABLISHING SERVICE CONNECTION FOR DISABILITIES RELATED TO HERBICIDE EXPOSURE

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, §1116, 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, title 38, United States Code, §1116, states that for the purposes of establishing service connection for a disability or death resulting from exposure to an 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 an 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 an 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 title 38, United States Code, §1116, to 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 of Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the Administration's proposal is inconsistent with known herbicide use outside of 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes any change of definition of herbicides that would limit service connection only to those veterans physically in Vietnam.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 185
**SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCLUDE CHILDREN IN LEGAL CUSTODY AS A
DEPENDENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PURPOSES**

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, § 101 (4)(A), in part, defines dependent child as a person under the age of 18 years, or who before attaining the age of eighteen, became permanently incapable of education, 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 the VA purposes; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 199
**SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 200
**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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 201
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 based 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 (TCE), polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), pesticides, explosives, heavy metals (Pb), unexploded ordnance (UXO), radioactive sources and non-stockpile-chemical materials; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 IOM Report recognizes that both the groundwater and soil were contaminated by those noted above; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Care Administration (VHA) 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 polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from the Monsanto plant in the neighboring town; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 238
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 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, the Department of Justice (www.justice.gov/elderjustice/va-benefits-fraud-0) is giving out wrong information to veterans of VA fiduciary abuse, such as referring veterans to VA OIG; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 259
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 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 260 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 261 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 Illnesses 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 veterans 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 the 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. 262 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 amnesic 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 263 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 264
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 percent 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 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to increase the automobile grant level to an amount representing 80 percent 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 265
PROVIDE AN OPEN PERIOD TO APPLY FOR
SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans are 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, many eligible veterans, due to financial difficulties and problems associated with readjustment to civilian life, do not apply for this insurance within the two-year eligibility period; and

WHEREAS, many of these service-connected disabled veterans are now prepared and can afford to purchase this insurance but are not able to purchase comparable insurance coverage in the private sector; and

WHEREAS, precedent has been established to extend previously closed eligibility periods for certain other VA benefits and services, including insurance; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, seeks the enactment of legislation that would authorize an open period for eligible service-connected disabled veterans to apply for coverage under the S-DVI program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 266

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REDUCE PREMIUMS FOR SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT LIFE EXPECTANCY

WHEREAS, the United States government provides life insurance to service members because the increased hazards of military service make them an unacceptable risk for the commercial insurance market; and

WHEREAS, coverage for service members may be continued after service under policies issued or programs overseen by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the extra hazard costs of insuring veterans in poorer health by reason of service-connected disabilities should be borne by the government; and

WHEREAS, Congress created the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (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, because life expectancy has improved since the inception of the S-DVI program, premiums based on the higher mortality rates of 1941 no longer fulfill congressional intent to provide life insurance to service-connected disabled veterans at standard rates; and

WHEREAS, because service-connected disabled veterans are paying premiums higher than today's standard rates, they are, in effect, subsidizing insurance coverage for their own service-connected disabilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, supports legislation to amend section 1922, title 38, United States Code, to provide that S-DVI premiums will be based on current mortality tables.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 267

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR WAIVER OF PREMIUMS FOR SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE

WHEREAS, section 1922A(a), title 38, United States Code, provides for supplemental Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) for totally disabled veterans in an amount not to exceed \$20,000; and

WHEREAS, section 1922A(d), title 38, United States Code, provides that "no waiver of premiums shall be made in the case of any person for supplemental insurance granted under this section"; and

WHEREAS, such prohibition of premium waiver is based on the Servicemen's Indemnity Act of 1951, which states in part, "[t]he amount of insurance placed in force hereunder . . . at the time of the insured's application for waiver hereunder, may not exceed \$10,000" (section 1912(d), title 38, United States Code); and

WHEREAS, such denial of waiver on Supplemental S-DVI for totally disabled veterans constitutes an inequity based on prior established standards; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, supports legislation to allow for waiver of premiums for any supplemental S-DVI for totally disabled veterans that may be authorized by future legislation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the criteria for total disability waiver of premiums, as mandated in section 1912, title 38, United States Code, be maintained.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 268

INCREASE THE FACE VALUE OF SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS LIFE INSURANCE

WHEREAS, certain veterans are eligible for National Service Life Insurance under section 1922, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, honorably discharged veterans released from active military duty on or after April 25, 1951, found by the Department of Veterans Affairs to be suffering from a disability or disabilities for

which a compensable evaluation would be payable, shall, upon application, be granted insurance by the United States government under section 1922(a), title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, this insurance is nonparticipating with no dividends payable; and

WHEREAS, many of these veterans are uninsurable by private insurance companies as a result of their service-connected disabilities; 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 (S-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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, supports amendment of section 1922(a), title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum amount of insurance coverage available under S-DVI.

* * *

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MR. LABELLE: Mic 1.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Mic 1.

MR. LABELLE: Ai Labelle, Delegate, Chapter 57, Department of Wisconsin, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: 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. So ordered.

I would like to call upon Chairman Kirk Johnson for the report on the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services.

HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KIRK JOHNSON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services was called to order on July the 15th, 2018, by the Committee Advisors Adrian Atizado and John Kleindienst.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. I, Kirk Johnson, was elected the chairman and Wanda Janus 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.

Number 6, support legislation to require the President, Vice-President and members of Congress to receive health care exclusively from the VA; (Applause) 007, support State Veterans' Home program; 008, improve timely reimbursements by VA for purchased care and protect veterans from debt collection and adverse credit reporting associated with such care;

009, support sufficient resources for VA to improve health care for veterans living in rural and remote areas; 017, support legislation to provide comprehensive support services for caregivers of severely-wounded, injured and ill veterans from all eras;

018, provide comprehensive dental care to all service-connected veterans; 019, support enhanced medical services and benefits for women veterans; (Applause) 022, support VA medical and prosthetic research programs; 023, support VA research into effectiveness of medical cannabis for service-connected disabled veterans; (Applause)

024, require the Secretary of VA to increase efficiency in the recruitment, hiring and credentialing of certain health care professionals undergoing separation from the Armed Forces; 65, support legislation to create Rehabilitative Special Event office within VHA;

66, support new models of care within the VA for veterans with dementia; 69, improve the care and benefits for the veterans exposed to military toxic and environmental hazards; 75, establish urgent care benefits to improve emergency care benefits;

76, increase capacity at VA facilities by operating extended hours and weekends; 77, ensure VA clinical appeal process protects veterans; 84, encourage VA to process voluntary applications in a timely manner; 85, enhance long-term services and supports to service-connected veterans;

117, support legislation to extend eligibility of qualifying veterans' adult child for CHAMP VA; 118, ensure timely access to quality VA health care and medical services; 119, adequately fund and sustain the successful Readjustment Counseling Service of the VA and its highly effective Vet Center program;

120, oppose means testing service-connected veterans for VA health care; 121, support humane consistent pain management programs in the veterans' health care system; 122, support programs to provide psychological support and mental health counseling services to family members of veterans suffering from post-deployment mental health challenges or other service-connected conditions;

123, oppose third-party payments for service-connected disabilities; 125, strengthen, reform and sustain the VA health care system; 126, support legislation to authorize scholarships for new mental health practitioners in exchange for agreements to serve veterans in the VA facilities;

129, support effective recruitment, retention and development of the VA health care system workforce; 130, reduce VA medication copayment equal to or less than the lowest charged by private-sector commercial outlets; 137, apply a consistent, coordinated care policy in the VA for traveling veterans;

138, repeal beneficiary travel deductibles for service-connected disabled veterans and increase reimbursement rates; 224, support the rights and benefits earned by service-connected Native American and Alaska native veterans;

225, require the veterans' attending VA physician to provide a medical opinion with regard to the claims of VA disability compensation benefits when requested; 227, support top-priority access for service-connected veterans within the VA health care system;

276, support legislation to eliminate or reduce VA and DoD health care copayments for service-connected disabled veterans; 277, support the provisions of comprehensive VA health care services to enrolled veterans; 278, oppose any restrictions on eligibility of military retired veterans to receive care in DoD or VA health care systems;

279, support consistent, reasonable access for service and guide dogs in VA facilities; 280, enhance CHAMP VA benefits and services; 281, support modernizing VA health care infrastructure; 282, support enhanced treatment for military sexual trauma;

283, urge the VA to support comprehensive research on health effectiveness of children of male Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange; 284, improve the care provided to veterans with service-connected disabilities affecting the ability to procreate through assist reproductive technology;

285, provide easy and equitable access to VA transportation benefits and services; 286, provide beneficiary travel benefits for unscheduled acute and urgent care from VA; 287, support sufficient resource for poly-trauma units at VA medical centers;

288, support sufficient funding for VA prosthetics and sensory aid service and timely delivery for prosthetic items; 289, support consistent reasonable access for power-driven mobility devices; 290, support legislation to improve VA program designed to prevent and treat substance abuse disorders in veterans;

291, support sustained and sufficient funding to improve services for homeless veterans; 292, require assistive technology training for VA staff who work—as you were—to rehabilitate blind and visually-impaired veterans; 293, support program improvements and enhance resources for veteran mental health programs;

294, oppose weakening, diminishing or dismantling the VA health care system; 295, support legislation to establish a comprehensive program for traumatic brain injury rehabilitation; 296, encourage the VA to submit candidate for the George H. Seal Memorial Award Program;

297, encourage VA to submit candidate for the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship program; 312, extend appreciation to the VA Sierra Nevada health care system for the success of the 97th DAV National Convention.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee of Hospital 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 006
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; 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

THEFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 007
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 more than 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 percent 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 percent 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 percent of the cost to construct, expand, rehabilitate or repair a State Home, with states required to cover a minimum of 35 percent 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, the State Veterans Home program is recognized as the lowest cost among all institutional nursing care alternatives used by the VA; 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 VA in meeting the health care needs of aging veterans; 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 which studies show have a positive impact on the quality of care, improve veterans social interactions, and enhance staff engagement, reducing staff turnover; and

WHEREAS, the evidence also suggests 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 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 VA per diem payment to State Homes of not more than 50 percent of the national average cost of providing care in a State Veterans Home, as authorized by law.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 008

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, the VA has numerous and complex community care authorities through which veterans may receive care at non-Department facilities; and

WHEREAS, veterans who are treated by private providers under any of the VA's authorizations should not be under any financial obligation to defray the full costs of such referred care; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the use of purchased care has increased rapidly and now accounts for nearly 16 percent of overall VA medical care expenditures; and

WHEREAS, the VA's administrative processes and resource allocation have not kept pace with the necessity of prompt payments to a growing number of private providers who treat veterans under these community care authorities; and

WHEREAS, in innumerable cases service-connected veterans have been billed directly for the full cost of care 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 private providers when VA payment is delinquent, providers are referring such delinquent 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, urges the VA to improve its administrative practices to promptly pay private providers for care to veterans under any VA purchased care authorization; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to enact legislation to properly protect veterans' credit ratings and delay collections actions in cases in which veterans, including service-disabled veterans, are being adversely affected because of delayed reimbursement to private providers.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 009

SUPPORT SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR VETERANS LIVING IN RURAL OR REMOTE AREAS

WHEREAS, 44 percent of today's active-duty military service members and tomorrow's veteran population list rural communities as their homes of record; and

WHEREAS, approximately 33 percent of veterans enrolled for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care are classified by the VA as veterans living in rural or highly rural areas; and

WHEREAS, after serving our nation, veterans should not have their health care needs neglected by the VA because they choose to live in rural and remote areas far from major VA health care facilities; and

WHEREAS; Public Law 109–461 authorized the VA to establish the Veterans Health Administration Office of Rural Health to promulgate policies, best practices and innovations to improve services to veterans who reside in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, both houses of Congress on numerous occasions have attempted with legislation to address unmet health care needs of veterans who make their homes in rural and remote areas; and

WHEREAS, beginning in fiscal year 2009, Congress has provided the VA \$250 million annually in funding to support enhancements to rural health care; and

WHEREAS, the VA has funded nearly 600 projects and programs, authorized new mobile rural clinics in Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs), appointed “Rural Health Consultants” in each of the VA’s 18 VISNs, and is conducting regularly scheduled meetings of the VA’s Rural Veterans Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the VA receives no congressional appropriations dedicated to support establishment of rural community-based outpatient clinics but must manage those additional expenses from within available Medical Services appropriations provided by Congress; and

WHEREAS, the VA has established and is operating over 1,050 community-based outpatient centers and clinics, of which nearly half are located in areas considered by the VA to be rural or highly rural; and

WHEREAS, the VA must ensure the numbers of its Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers in rural and highly rural areas are sufficient to meet the demands for counseling of rural veterans in need of psychological readjustment after serving in combat deployments; and

WHEREAS, the VA cannot cost-effectively justify establishing additional remote facilities in areas with sparse veteran populations given current circumstances, and therefore should be empowered by Congress to award grants from designated rural appropriations to selected providers in those circumstances where providing direct VA care is impracticable; and

WHEREAS, historically, the VA has had difficulty securing sufficient funding through the congressional discretionary budget and appropriations process to ensure basic and adequate access for the care of sick and disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, Congress has enacted Public Law 111–81, the purpose of which is to secure advance appropriations for the delivery of VA health care services, including services in rural areas; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, fully supports the right of rural veterans to be served by the VA, including through rural health grants in certain circumstances, but insists that funding for additional rural care and outreach be sustained and not be the cause of reductions in highly specialized VA medical programs needed for the care of sick and disabled service-connected veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV insists that if Congress intends to continue to provide enhanced VA health care access to rural veterans, Congress must include appropriations for that specific purpose in advance appropriations acts.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 017
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, often with little to no relief; and

WHEREAS, families or other individuals caring for severely wounded, injured and ill veterans shoulder a great and lifelong burden as home and institutional caregivers and attendants, often 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, DAV commissioned a veterans caregiver survey and report published in 2017 which describes that family caregivers of veterans have been in this role on average for nearly 10 years, and that nearly one-third of family caregiver provide eight or more hours of care each day, of which over 12 percent provide 16 or more hours of care a day; and

WHEREAS, the DAV report confirmed that despite a government that provides some services to support family caregivers of veterans, over 80 percent 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 percent 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 another 50 percent in the future; 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, Public Law 111–163 requires the VA to establish two distinct and unequal caregiver assistance programs where eligibility is based primarily on whether the veteran is injured or ill rather than the needs of the veteran and caregiver; and

WHEREAS, in equity and fairness, caregivers of all severely disabled veterans should be 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, calls on the VA dedicate appropriate resources and support needed to timely implement, and for congressional oversight of, the expansion of the Comprehensive Family Caregiver Support program required by Public Law 115–182; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress to ensure the VA receives the resources needed to timely and equitably provide comprehensive supports and services to caregivers of all veterans severely injured, wounded or ill from military service; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation that would improve and expand access to comprehensive caregiver support services, including but not limited to financial support, adequate health and homemaker services, respite, education and training, and other necessary relief, to caregivers of veterans from all eras of 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 018
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 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide outpatient dental care to all enrolled service-connected disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 019 SUPPORT ENHANCED MEDICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, the number of women serving in our military and veterans population continues to grow, with women now comprising 10 percent of all veterans and 16 percent 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 percent 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 waiting 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 022 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 the 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 percent 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 the 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 eradications and 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. 023
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 29 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; and 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 024
REQUIRE THE SECRETARY 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 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 065
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 the 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 066
SUPPORT NEW MODELS OF CARE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR VETERANS WITH DEMENTIA

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, which 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 069
IMPROVE THE CARE AND BENEFITS FOR VETERANS EXPOSED
TO MILITARY TOXIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

WHEREAS, veterans of all military conflicts from the World Wars to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been exposed to environmental hazards and man-made toxins, including cold and other adverse weather conditions; mustard gas; herbicides; pesticides; chemical, biological and radiological agents; "burn pits"; and other combat and military occupational exposures; and

WHEREAS, returning from war, some veterans subsequently suffer disabling conditions and symptoms of illnesses that may be difficult to medically diagnose, and not be immediately identified as consequential to such dangerous exposures; and

WHEREAS, research conducted by the National Institutes of Health, the Departments of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Affairs (VA), and other federal departments and agencies has focused on associations linking toxic and environmental exposures with subsequent health status of veterans (and in the case of Vietnam veterans, some of their children); and

WHEREAS, sustained funding for such research is necessary to ensure veterans receive high-quality health care services and adequate compensatory benefits to which they are entitled due to diseases or injuries incurred from hazardous military exposures; and

WHEREAS, in studies mandated by Congress in public law, the National Academy of Sciences continues to review and evaluate scientific literature to determine whether associations exist that connect a variety of military exposures and certain physical disorders within populations of veterans; and

WHEREAS, effective evidence-based medicine to treat individual patients with acute or chronic diseases must rely on scientifically valid biomedical research and peer-reviewed literature; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, urges Congress to actively oversee its established mechanism of delegation to the National Academy of Sciences and the VA to determine validations of, and develop equitable compensation policy for, environmentally exposed veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to provide adequate funding for research to identify all disabling conditions and effective screening and treatment for such disabilities that may have been caused by exposure to environmental hazards and man-made toxins while individuals served in the armed forces of the United States; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges greater collaboration between DoD and the VA to share necessary deployment, health and exposure data from military operations and deployments, in order to timely and adequately address the subsequent health concerns of disabled veterans, whatever the causes of those disabilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV intends to closely monitor programs of care within the Veterans Health Administration to ensure veterans disabled by exposure to environmental hazards and man-made toxins receive effective, high-quality health care, and that the biomedical research and development programs of the Department are fully addressing their needs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 075 ESTABLISH URGENT CARE BENEFIT AND IMPROVE ADMINISTRATION OF 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 appropriate access to and coverage for urgent and emergent care; and

WHEREAS, VA is not authorized to reimburse veterans for urgent care, which is typically lower cost than emergency treatment, and encourages health care in the appropriate setting; and

WHEREAS, emergency treatment 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, many denied claims are the result of inconsistent application of the “prudent layperson” standard from claim to claim and confusion among veterans about whether they are eligible to receive emergency treatment through community care providers; and

WHEREAS, denied VA claims from inconsistent application of reimbursement policies have resulted in billions of dollars becoming the liability of veterans, resulting in serious financial challenges for thousands of individuals; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to include urgent and emergency care as part of the VA’s medical benefits package; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation that would 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 reimbursement to veterans who have received emergency care at non-VA facilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 076
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 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, chronic staffing challenges work against extended operating hours, adversely affecting patients from receiving health care on a timely basis; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, urges 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. 077
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), which use capitated payment models for which there are incentives to conserve resources; 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 the VA's 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 084
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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 085
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 elderly veteran population; and

WHEREAS, today tens of thousands of service-connected veterans 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 noninstitutional LTSS and required such services be provided to any veteran for a service-connected disability and to any veteran who is service-connected 50 percent 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 percent 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 noninstitutional approaches in providing LTSS, thereby relegating LTSS to a "second tier" of health care service and expectations within the VA system; 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; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to expand the comprehensive program of LTSS for service-connected disabled veterans irrespective of their disability ratings, and urges the VA, in conjunction with key stakeholders, including other federal agencies and the states, to develop a strategic LTSS plan to invigorate and re-engineer VA-operated, purchased and subsidized LTSS.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 117
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 118
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 7 million veteran patients waiting long periods and driving farther for primary, specialty and dental care appointments; 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 veterans in VA facilities nationwide; 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 from the VA health care system.

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RESOLUTION NO. 119
ADEQUATELY FUND AND SUSTAIN THE SUCCESSFUL READJUSTMENT
COUNSELING SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
AND ITS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE 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 about 300 locations nationwide, have proven to be a most useful and effective tool to assist veterans of all eras whose experiences range from combat to military sexual trauma, and to certain family members; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers provide cost-effective and highly beneficial services, including counseling for PTSD and other readjustment challenges, marriage and family counseling, and family bereavement counseling beneficial to recovery; and

WHEREAS, the Vet Center program has been most 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 now 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, commends the work of the Readjustment Counseling Service and of its Vet Centers of the VA, and encourages the Vet Centers to maintain their level of excellence in caring for combat veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the President, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Congress of the United States to ensure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for the Readjustment Counseling Service, to enable its Vet Centers to continue innovating, expanding and extending their rehabilitative and readjustment services, including in more rural communities, to veterans of past, present and future military service, and to their family members when necessary to aid in the recovery of veterans suffering the latent effects of combat exposure.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 120
OPPOSE MEANS TESTING SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS FOR
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS, Public Law 104–262 requires zero percent 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 zero percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 zero percent service-connected disabled veterans in Priority Group 3.

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RESOLUTION NO. 121
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, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 122
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 for the purpose of authorizing a wide array of support, care and counseling services for personal caregivers of severely injured or ill 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 percent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 123 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

RESOLUTION NO. 125
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 percent of all physicians in the United States—nearly 29,000 nurses and in excess of 30,000 other health professionals; and

WHEREAS, the VA's 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 United States 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-value 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 126

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 129

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 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system and across numerous critical positions impedes service-connected disabled veterans who rely on the VA to receive timely, high-quality, veteran-centric medical care; and

WHEREAS, section 7412 of title 38, United States Code, requires the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) to determine and report on the top five occupations of Veterans Health Administration (VHA)

personnel covered under title 38, United States Code, section 7401, 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: Medical Officer, Nurse, Psychologist, Physician Assistant, Physical Therapist and Medical Technologist and these six occupations are identified because the Psychologist and Physician Assistant positions tied for the third position, and the Physical Therapist and Medical Technologist positions tied for the fifth position; and

WHEREAS, VA nurses were one of the most critically needed positions at VA facilities across the country the past two years, and, according to a September VA OIG report, the VA hired 8,528 nurses in fiscal year 2015 but lost 4,966 that same year and missed opportunities to retain more than half of the nurses who left; 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 234,421 in 2017, to meet the medical care needs of service-connected disabled veterans the VA has identified at least 35,000 vacancies throughout the VA as of January 2018; and

WHEREAS, there is a nationwide shortage of qualified doctors, nurses and specialists particularly in rural areas because the VA must compete with 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, with 13 percent of potential hires dropping out of the process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 130
REDUCE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICATION
COPAYMENTS EQUAL TO, OR LESS THAN, THE LOWEST
CHARGED BY PRIVATE-SECTOR COMMERCIAL OUTLETS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has periodically increased medication copayments from the original charge of \$2.00 to the current copayment 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 copayments 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 copayments 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 copayments for the same medications; and

WHEREAS, VA medication copayments 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 copayment debts; and

WHEREAS, although DAV adamantly opposes health care and medication copayments for military retirees and veterans, DAV believes the VA should not charge veterans required copayments that exceed copayments charged by large commercial pharmaceutical sources, and should not charge copayments 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation that will reduce the amount of medication copayments 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 copayments that exceed the retail cost of these drugs sold in VCS retail stores.

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RESOLUTION NO. 137
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 are being 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; and
NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 138
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 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 percent 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

WHEREAS, the VA should not need to choose between providing direct medical care services to sick and disabled veterans or providing adequate beneficiary travel payments so that veterans can gain access to their medical appointments for treatment; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 224

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 VA facilities, where poverty, lack of transportation and poor roads put great hardships on Native American veterans who need and have earned Department of Veterans Affairs (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 (IHS) 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 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 Memoranda of Understanding; and

WHEREAS, due to lack of implementation, tribal governments do not have broad knowledge of the existence of, or commitments in, the Memoranda 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, urges the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of Health and Human Services to ensure the Memoranda of Understanding between the VA and IHS is 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 225
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 (DBQs) 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 227
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 saturation of available 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 276
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ELIMINATE OR REDUCE DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HEALTH CARE
COPAYMENTS 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 unequalled 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 for 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, copayments 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 copayment 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 copayments, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 277
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, in the past, because of restricted 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 the 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 telemedicine 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 278

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes any action to restrict health care eligibility for military medically retired veterans in either the DoD or the VA health care systems.

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RESOLUTION NO. 279
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 280
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 whom the VA rated 100 percent 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 percent 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 percent 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 dental care, institutional and home-based long-term care, and vision are not routinely covered under CHAMPVA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to make the CHAMPVA program more comprehensive, including dental and vision care, institutional and home-based long-term care, and eliminate the copayments 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 281 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'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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 DAV urges Congress to continue to provide appropriated funding sufficient to fulfill the needs for infrastructure identified through the strategic capital planning process.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 282

SUPPORT ENHANCED TREATMENT FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

WHEREAS, the fiscal year (FY) 2016 Department of Defense Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) annual report on sexual assault in the military included 6,769 reports of sexual assault across the military services, representing a less than 9.7 percent increase from the 6,172 reports made in FY 2016; and

WHEREAS, the 2015 RAND Military Workplace Study, with results in the SAPRO report, estimates that 20,200 service members experience sexual assaults each year in the military services; and

WHEREAS, the continued 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 percent of women and 1 percent 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, over 76 percent 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; and

WHEREAS, based on VA clinical determinations, some veterans 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, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, calls on the VA to ensure all MST survivors gain open access to the specialized treatment programs and services they need to fully recover from sexual trauma that occurred in military service; 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 283
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, 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, 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 offsprings’ lives and other high-quality research; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to conduct comprehensive research, including those recommended by NAM, to determine the level of association between herbicide exposure and birth defects and other conditions of children of male Vietnam veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 284
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 (IEDs) have significantly increased genitourinary (GU) trauma; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 12 percent of war injuries involve some kind of genitourinary trauma; and WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DoD) Joint Theater Trauma Registry reports that of the highest percentage of trauma admissions were GU injuries (the largest report of GU injuries during any military conflict); more than half were within child-bearing age, were injured due to explosions; 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, wounded and ill veterans have made great sacrifices in the protection of the nation and deserve opportunities to rebuild their lives to a level of normalcy that includes the ability to create a family if they desire to do so; and

WHEREAS, veterans who, due to their military service are unable to procreate and require reproductive assistance, have already paid a price greater than any monetary assessment and have earned the right to have a family, it is incumbent on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to make them whole to every extent possible; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 285
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 286
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, the 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 pre-scheduled encounter thus limiting travel benefits for service-connected veterans; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 287
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 (TBIs) and polytrauma; and

WHEREAS, catastrophically injured veterans are treated at five Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers (PRCs), located in Tampa, Richmond, Minneapolis, San Antonio and Palo Alto, for intensive care and long-term restoration and rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, 86 Polytrauma Support Clinic Teams located in VA medical centers across the country 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-to-moderate TBI or polytrauma injury; and

WHEREAS, according to the VA’s website, Polytrauma Network Sites offer continued medical care and rehabilitation and are located in each Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN): PNS are located in Boston, San Juan, Syracuse, Bronx, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Augusta, Lexington, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Hines, St. Louis, Houston, Dallas, Tucson, Denver, Seattle and West Los Angeles, as well as being co-located within the PRCs in Richmond, Tampa, Minneapolis, Palo Alto and San Antonio; 39 Polytrauma Points of Contact are located in Alaska, Hawaii and the Philippines, and are in locations without specialized rehabilitation teams; and

WHEREAS, veterans spend long periods at PRCs recovering from their injuries and receiving patient-centered care in these specialized polytrauma centers and PNS; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to request and allocate sufficient resources for polytrauma centers and PNS 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 288
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 prostheses 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, the VA provides care to over 50,000 veterans with limb loss; 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; and

WHEREAS, PSAS is nearing completion of reformation and reorganization of its procurement policies, procedures and administrative processes, intended 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 timely delivery of prosthetic, orthotic and other items to many veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA should work to reduce bureaucratic policies and develop a streamlined, faster and more simplified process for procuring prosthetic items, and develop systems that eliminate communication barriers between PSAS and the Office of Acquisition and Logistics, 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, seeks to ensure PSAS is provided sufficient funding from Congress and the Administration, enabling the program to deliver high-quality prosthetic items to all enrolled veterans needing such items and the specialized corresponding care and support; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to fulfill its goal of maximum recovery and independent living for our highest-priority veterans; to adopt procurement policies 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 289 SUPPORT CONSISTENT REASONABLE ACCESS FOR POWER-DRIVEN MOBILITY DEVICES

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of disabled veterans face daily challenges with mobility as a result of their military service; and

WHEREAS, individuals with mobility, circulatory, respiratory or neurological disabilities use many kinds of devices for mobility; and

WHEREAS, a number of power-driven mobility devices are available to assist individuals with mobility, and an individual's access to public places is protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended; and

WHEREAS, regulations based on ADA allowing access with wheelchairs and other power-driven mobility devices are not widely acknowledged and can present difficulties for individuals seeking access to public areas; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy is not clear on whether or not it permits power-driven mobility devices in its facilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, urges that the VA carry out its policies to permit reasonable access to VA facilities by veterans using power-driven mobility devices consistently throughout the system.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 290 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, 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 percent of VA outpatients reported hazardous use of alcohol and 22 percent reported full alcohol abuse, but only 31 percent of the respondents reported being counseled about alcohol use; and

WHEREAS, substance-use disorders are associated with family instability, decreased worker productivity and declining health status; and

WHEREAS, veterans of the Afghanistan/Iraq War 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, a study of VA health care users shows that more than 11 percent of Afghanistan/Iraq War veterans have been diagnosed with an alcohol-use disorder, a drug-use disorder or both, and VA data show that almost 22 percent of Afghanistan/Iraq War veterans with PTSD also have a substance-use disorder; and

WHEREAS, the VA offers 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 effective integrated treatment programs for veterans with co-morbid mental health and substance-use disorder conditions, regardless of their place of residence.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 291 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 face unique challenges that increase their susceptibility to 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, according to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) serves less than half of the homeless veteran population, making the over 2,100 community-based homeless programs necessary to fill the gaps as they collaborate with federal, state and local government agencies; and

WHEREAS, other federal, state, and local public agencies—notably housing agencies and health departments—need to improve coordination with the VA to address affordable housing, health care and supportive services needs of these vulnerable veterans; and

WHEREAS, with greater numbers of women serving in military deployments, and with women veterans being more likely to have experienced sexual assault than women in the general population, and who are more likely than male veterans to be single parents, new and more comprehensive housing and child care services are needed; and

WHEREAS, the VA's 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, a December 2014 audit conducted by the VA Inspector General found that 27 percent of homeless and at-risk veterans who called the Veterans Health Administration's National Call Center for Homeless Veterans for help were unable to reach counselors; and

WHEREAS, in the next 10 years, it is projected that significant increases in services over current levels will be needed to serve aging Vietnam veterans, women veterans and combat veterans of the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq; 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, the 2015 Point-in-Time count, a "snapshot" of homelessness on a given night in America, shows that homelessness among veterans is down 46 percent since 2009; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 for veterans in homeless programs where possible, and improving its outreach efforts to help ensure homeless veterans gain access to the VA's specialized health and benefits programs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge Congress to continue to authorize and appropriate funds for competitive grants to community-based and public organizations including the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide health and supportive services to homeless veterans placed in permanent housing.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 292
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 293
SUPPORT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCED RESOURCES FOR
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, current research findings indicate that war veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq are at higher risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other post-deployment mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reports that veterans of these wars have sought care for a wide range of medical and psychological conditions, including mental health conditions, such as adjustment disorder, anxiety, depression, PTSD and the effects of substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, as of January 2017, the VA reported that of the 1,964,534 separated Afghanistan/Iraq War veterans, 1,218,857 have obtained VA health care since fiscal year (FY) 2002, a total of 708,062 unique patients have received a diagnosis of a mental disorder, and 393,139 of the enrolled Afghanistan/Iraq War veterans were diagnosed with PTSD (not including PTSD data from the VA's Vet Centers, those not enrolled in VA health care or those only diagnosed with an adjustment reaction); and

WHEREAS, in FY 2015, more than 1.6 million veterans received specialized mental health care from the VA, a number that has steadily risen from over 900,000 in FY 2006; and

WHEREAS, the VA provides 49,315 outpatient mental health appointments a day, and has increased the number of outpatient mental health encounters or treatment visits, from 10.5 million in 2005 to 20.8 million in 2015—a 97 percent increase.; and

WHEREAS, since 2012, the VA has added 2,444 mental health full-time equivalent employees and hired over 1,100 peer specialists and apprentices, bringing the number of Veterans Health Administration's total mental health full-time equivalent employees to 21,158, providing direct inpatient and outpatient mental health care; 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 VA substance-use disorder programs of all kinds, including inpatient detoxification and 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 VA has 300 Vet Centers located in every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam and Puerto Rico, and has a fleet of 80 Mobile Vet Centers that are designed to extend the reach of Vet Center services through focused outreach, we are concerned that VA staffing should also be increased in existing centers to ensure all veterans—including previous generations of war veterans—who need help at VA Vet Centers can gain ready access to readjustment services; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DoD) and the 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; and

WHEREAS, suicide is a concern in the military services and veteran population, but especially among wartime service members and veterans, with an average of 20 veterans a day committing suicide in 2014, 65 percent of all veterans were 50 or older; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that veterans are 21 percent 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 highest suicide rates occur among veterans who do not participate in the VA's mental health programs; and

WHEREAS, DoD and the VA are responsible for screening and evaluating all service members returning from deployments and ensuring they understand what services are available for post-deployment readjustment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 294 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, the Department of Veterans Affairs (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 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 or state-of-the-art technology, equipment and facilities, the VA Medical and Prosthetic Research program provides a vital service and investment for veterans in developing 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 with 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 noninstitutional 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 the VA to furnish medical care has increased year over 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 the VA's community care programs, improving and expanding existing programs and authorities, and developing a long-term plan to realign and modernize the VA's health care infrastructure without additional funds for the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, substantial funding increases for community care is 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 United States 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 295 SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY REHABILITATION

WHEREAS, traumatic brain injury (TBI) has been called the signature wound of veterans serving in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, blast injuries from improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that shake or compress the brain within the skull often cause devastating and permanent damage to brain tissue; and

WHEREAS, veterans with severe TBI and polytrauma will require extensive rehabilitation and lifelong personal and clinical support, including neurological, medical and psychiatric services, and physical, psycho-social, occupational and vocational therapies, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has a care management team for every severely ill or injured Afghanistan/Iraq War veteran, which consists of, at a minimum, a program manager, a clinical case manager and a transition patient advocate in order to facilitate a comprehensive care plan for the veteran and their family during the initial care and long-term rehabilitation of these patients; and

WHEREAS, we remain concerned about capacity and whether the VA has the resources and staff necessary to provide intensive rehabilitation services; treat the chronic physical, emotional and behavioral problems that would be benefited by long-term therapeutic residential facilities; and fully support families and caregivers of these seriously brain-injured veterans; and

WHEREAS, TBI can also be caused without any apparent physical injuries when a veteran is in the vicinity of an IED detonation; and

WHEREAS, veterans suffering from the milder form of TBI may experience a variety of symptoms, including headaches, irritability, sleep disorders, memory problems and depression; and

WHEREAS, emerging literature strongly suggests 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 the VA have not developed systemic and proven methodologies to identify, treat, document and monitor individuals who sustain mild-to-moderate TBI, in particular those with the mild version; and

WHEREAS, a 2008 RAND Corporation study recommended "a substantial, coordinated and strategic research effort" to close the significant existing gaps in knowledge in understanding the prevalence, prognosis, effective treatment and costs of addressing needs of veterans with TBI; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 the VA's Office of Research and Development held a state-of-the-art meeting/ summit of leaders in the field of TBI for the purposes of highlighting advances that have been achieved over the past seven years and to discuss future research and clinical directions to improve the health of veterans suffering from TBI; and

WHEREAS, veterans with TBI and polytrauma benefit from the joint Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, a collaboration that provides clinical care, education and research for active-duty personnel and veterans with TBI; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation that would require the VA and DoD to coordinate efforts to address mild and moderate TBI and concussive injuries, and establish a comprehensive rehabilitation program, including establishment of therapeutic residential facilities, and deployment of standardized protocols utilizing appropriately formed clinical assessment techniques to recognize and treat neurological and behavioral consequences of all levels of TBI and all generations of veterans who suffer the lingering effects from earlier injuries; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges that any TBI studies or research undertaken by the VA and DoD for the current generation of TBI-injured veterans include older veterans of past military conflicts who may have suffered similar injuries that went undetected, undiagnosed and untreated.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 296

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 donate 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 297
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 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. 312
EXTEND APPRECIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS SIERRA NEVADA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FOR THE
SUCCESS OF THE 97TH DAV NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the cooperation and professionalism extended by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical personnel to the delegates and guests of the 97th 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 Sierra Nevada VA Health Care System, staffed and maintained a high-quality outpatient clinic and prosthetic service within the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino; and

WHEREAS, the medical care and prosthetic services rendered to the delegates to this 97th National Convention were extended in a highly compassionate and professional manner; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Sierra Nevada VA Health Care System for the professional and skillful health care delivered to the delegates to this 97th National Convention and for contributing to the overall success of this Convention.

* * *

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. JOHNNIE CARVER: Mic 2, Johnnie Carver, Chapter 94, Department of Tennessee, second the motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: 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 aye; opposed. So ordered.

I would like to call upon Chairman Rachel Fredericks for the report on the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership.

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RACHEL FREDERICKS: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on General Resolutions was called to order on July 14th, 2018, by the Committee Advisors Shurhonda Love and Scott Hope.

The first order of business was to elect a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. I, Rachel Fredericks, was elected as chairman. And Jeremy Yost was elected as secretary.

The Committee proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For purposes of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolutions.

005, extend military commissary and exchange privileges and space-available air travel to 30 percent or higher service-connected disabled veterans separated from service prior to October of 1949; 057, seek the immediate release of any Americans who may still be held captive following any war, and the return of the remains of any Americans who died during these wars;

058, encourage all disabled veterans to become registered voters and vote; 059, support the construction of a courthouse for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; 060, oppose any authorization of use of members of the Armed Forces for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent;

061, condemn public desecration of the flag of the United States; 17—(Applause) 178, support legislation to protect honorably discharged non-citizen veterans from deportation while applying for citizenship; (Applause) 240, support legislation to extend U.S. Citizenship to honorably discharged veterans at the time of discharge; (Applause)

269, support for defense of the POW/MIA Accounting Agency; 270, extend commissary and exchange privileges to service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents; 271, support the continued growth of Veterans' Treatment Courts for the justice-involved veterans;

272, support former POW slave labor claims against Japanese firms; 273, provide weekend burials at National Cemeteries; 274, extend space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans;

275, support movements to renew the prisoner-of-war/missing-in-action discussions; 313, appreciation to all who are responsible for the success of the 97th National Convention;

314, appreciation to the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino for the success of the 97th National Convention; 315, appreciation to the National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster. (Applause) According to tradition I will now read Resolution 315, Appreciation to National Commander Metcalf-Foster in its entirety.

Resolution 315: Expressing Appreciation to National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster:

"WHEREAS, DAV National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster of Vallejo, California, served honorably in the United States Army; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Metcalf-Foster's military career included service in the U.S. Army Reserve, 689th Quartermaster Unit, the 6253rd Hospital Unit, and the 6211th Transportation Unit, Letterman Army Medical Center; and

"WHEREAS, she was injured in January 1991 while serving in Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm and was retired from the Army Reserves with the rank of First Sergeant in 1996;

"WHEREAS, her service to the DAV began as a life member of Chapter 21 in Vallejo, California, as the only female commander for the Department of California in 2004; and

"WHEREAS, she also served as the chairman for the DAV Department of California's Resolution Committee and completed a four-year appointment as a member of the Secretary of Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee on Women Veterans in November 2015; and

"WHEREAS, she serves on the First Data Military Advisory Council and is a member of the DAV Department of California Claims and Services Committee; and

"WHEREAS, the membership of the Disabled American Veterans unanimously elected Metcalf-Foster as the first woman to lead the more than one million member organization during the 2017 National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana;

"WHEREAS, she has shown outstanding compassion and leadership during her year as National Commander, visiting disaster sites, reserve officers' training corps, leadership symposia; the VA summits, all while advancing the DAV's mission; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Metcalf-Foster worked tirelessly through her tenure to safeguard veterans' care and benefits, assisting veterans in finding meaningful employment, and seeking fair treatment of women veterans; and

"WHEREAS, she spoke candidly during her year as National Commander about the challenges she had when her late husband, Jimmy, a Korean War veteran, became ill with dementia; and

"WHEREAS, she has advocated passionately on behalf of family caregivers of all veterans of all eras to ensure they are duly recognized and receive the support they need to continue their role as caregivers, culminating in the passage in May 2018 of the VA Mission Act;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14th through 17th, 2018, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Metcalf-Foster for her sacrifices, selfless service, professionalism, and dedication to her fellow wounded, ill and injured veterans, their families, survivors, and the DAV during her year as DAV National Commander; and

"THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the DAV also salutes and extends our sincere appreciation to Commander Metcalf-Foster's family for their steadfast support and sacrifices during her 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. 005
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 percent or more disabling and who retained at least a 30 percent evaluation for a period of five years from the date of separation from active duty.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 057
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 servicemen 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 MIA 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 058
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 059
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 30 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 060
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, opposes any rule or provision that would authorize use of service members for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 061
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, condemns any individual or group who at any time publicly and willfully desecrates the flag of the United States.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 178
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 (INA) 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 United States citizens through military service and less than half 43.8 percent of noncitizen service members naturalize while on active duty; and

WHEREAS, 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 veterans who may become subject to deportation post-service; and

WHEREAS, 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 veterans arrested for veteran-specific, nonviolent 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports the enactment of legislation to protect honorably discharged noncitizen veterans from deportation while completing a program through a Veterans Treatment Court or similar program; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV Department of Virginia supports the enactment of legislation to protect honorably discharged noncitizen veterans from deportation while filing and awaiting a decision on their application for United States citizenship.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 240 SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND U.S. 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; are a permanent resident when they apply; are able to read, write, and speak basic English; have a knowledge of United States history and government (civics); and have continuously resided in the United States for at least five years and have been physically present in the United States 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, were attached to the principals of the Constitution, and had a favorable disposition toward the good order and happiness of the United States; and 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.

WHEREAS, later, a 1944 statute (58 Stat. 885) also eliminated the requirement for proof of lawful entry to the United 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; and 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 269 SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE POW/MIA 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 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 prisoner-of-war/missing-in-action 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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. 270 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 are 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports legislation to extend commissary privileges to service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 271 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 (TBI), 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, 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports the continued growth of the Veterans Treatment Courts throughout our nation; 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. 272 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, 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 that 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 that DAV insists Congress and the Administration work with all parties involved to ensure the continuation of the POW visitation program to Japan; 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 that 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. 273 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, the 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, seeks legislation that would authorize weekend burials for service-connected veterans at cemeteries operated by the NCA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 274
EXTEND SPACE-AVAILABLE AIR TRAVEL ABOARD MILITARY
AIRCRAFT TO SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS ENTITLED TO
RECEIVE COMPENSATION AT THE 100 PERCENT RATE

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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, seeks the enactment of legislation that would extend space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to all service-connected veterans entitled to receive compensation at the 100 percent rate to the same extent and under the same conditions as is currently provided to retired military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 275
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 Reno, Nevada, July 14–17, 2018, supports renewing and expanding direct bilateral humanitarian efforts for the purpose of restoring and improving United States agreements and processes with counterpart nations required to account as fully as possible for unreturned American military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 313
APPRECIATION TO ALL WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
SUCCESS OF THE 97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the success of the 97th DAV National Convention convened in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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. William Dolan; 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 Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, 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 Reno, Nevada, 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 William Dolan, and his entire Committee for providing personalized assistance to our friends and delegates during our Convention stay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 314
APPRECIATION TO GRAND SIERRA RESORT AND CASINO FOR
THE SUCCESS OF THE 97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the excellent service and ambience of the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino contributed greatly to the success of the 97th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans convened in Reno, Nevada; 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 97th National Convention a truly memorable experience; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, expresses its deepest appreciation for the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino and to its entire staff for their friendly, personalized attention which helped make the 97th National Convention a resounding success.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 315
EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO NATIONAL
COMMANDER DELPHINE METCALF-FOSTER

WHEREAS, DAV National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster, of Vallejo, California, served honorably in the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, Commander Metcalf-Foster's military career included service with the U.S. Army Reserve, 689th Quartermaster Unit, 6253rd Hospital Unit and 6211th Transportation Unit, Letterman Army Medical Center; and

WHEREAS, she was injured in January 1991 while serving in Saudi Arabia in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and was retired from the Army Reserves with the rank of first sergeant in 1996; and

WHEREAS, her service to the DAV began as a life member of Chapter 21 in Vallejo, California, and as the only female commander for the Department of California in 2004; and

WHEREAS, She also served as Chairman for the DAV Department of California's Resolution Committee and completed a four-year appointment as a member of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Women Veterans in November 2015; and

WHEREAS, she serves on the First Data Military Advisory Council and is a member of the DAV Department of California Claims and Service Committee; and

WHEREAS, the membership of DAV unanimously elected Ms. Metcalf-Foster as the first woman to lead the more than one million member organization during the 2017 National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, she has shown outstanding compassion and leadership during her year as National Commander, visiting disaster sites, Reserve Officers' Training Corps students, leadership symposia, and VA summits, all while advancing DAV's mission; and

WHEREAS, Commander Metcalf-Foster worked tirelessly throughout her tenure to safeguard veterans' care and benefits, assisting veterans in finding meaningful employment and seeking fair treatment of women veterans; and

WHEREAS, she spoke candidly during her year as National Commander about the challenges she had when her late husband Jimmie, a Korean War veteran, became ill with dementia; and

WHEREAS, she has advocated passionately on behalf of family caregivers of veterans of all eras to ensure they are duly recognized and receive the support they need to continue their role as caregivers, culminating in the passage in May 2018 of the VA MISSION Act; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, July 14-17, 2018, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Metcalf-Foster for her sacrifices, selfless service, professionalism and dedication to her fellow wounded, ill and injured veterans, their families, survivors, and the DAV during her year as DAV National Commander; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DAV also salutes and extends our sincere appreciation to Commander Metcalf-Foster's family for their steadfast support and sacrifices during her year as DAV National Commander.

* * *

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: You heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 1.

MR. JOE PINELLA: Joe Pinella, Chapter 158 of the Department of New York seconds.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish to read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

It is now my honor and privilege to introduce the President of the DAV's Charitable Service Trust, Richard Marbes.

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.

Please give a warm welcome to a revered leader and don't forget to click with Dick. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Past National Commander Dick Marbes served in DAV's highest elected position from 1993 to 1994. In 1978 he was named the Wisconsin Disabled American of the Year. Since his retirement in 1987, he has pursued his passion for helping ill and injured 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 Metcalf-Foster, for that kind introduction. (Laughter) And let me also extend the DAV Charitable Service Trust's gratitude to National Adjutant Marc Burgess, and our National Officers, our 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 Delphine Metcalf-Foster of California, 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 the 2017 Annual Report to this National Convention.

This past year has brought a lot of uncertainty to the Department of Veterans Affairs, from departing leadership to the struggle to replace some of the key positions in the VA. This can leave veterans wondering about the future of their care and benefits that they have earned through their service.

Many veterans and families have struggled with uncertainty about the future of the VA and with their confidence in the nation's ability to provide them with the care they were promised when they were faced with illnesses or injuries.

This is exactly why the DAV Charitable Service Trust exists and is so important. The Trust helps fill in those gaps in local community care, programs and services where veterans and their families are in need.

As an injured 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 I applaud you for that. (Applause)

Furthermore, we can't forget the families of our veterans as well as they carry a heavy weight. When a veteran faces the challenges of creating a new normal, the families often selflessly accompany them on the long and tough journey toward healing.

Your gift, no matter how big or small, helps us keep a sacred promise we made to those we called to serve in harm's way. And your support ensures the programs highlighted throughout this report are in place to facilitate victories for veterans.

Corporate matching gift programs, bequests and other forms of contributions from corporations, foundations, and individual donors also enable the Trust to fulfill its mission.

In 2017 these gifts, along with income derived from investments, totaled nearly \$10 million, allowing the Trust to devote more than \$6.7 million toward critical health services, education, employment, and transition assistance, and much more.

More than \$.96 out of every donated dollar went directly to support programs that contribute to the victories the Trust makes possible.

Notably, the Trust also received the coveted Four Star Rating for "sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency" from Charity Navigator for the thirteenth time since being first evaluated in 2002. (Applause) Yes, definitely.

As Charity Navigator is the nation's largest independent charity evaluator this acknowledgement speaks volumes about the Trust's careful and efficient stewardship of donated funds.

The transition to civilian life is a major adjustment for those who served, especially those who were changed as a result of their service. The support and stability a service member becomes accustomed to disappear the day they are discharged. When that day comes, the culture and structure they know are taken away, and the bonds of service, of counting on one's fellow soldiers, are made distant.

Veterans of all eras are resilient by nature, but even the heart of a war fighter can be challenged when the foundation they know is removed and cannot be fully replaced. This is especially true for recent veterans, many of whom have endured multiple combat deployments as our nation has waged war on two fronts.

Veterans are ingrained with a sense of selflessness in the military. Their humility and focus on the team over the individual makes any form of self-glorification unthinkable. But after experiencing the trauma that comes with wartime service, the ability to express oneself and process deep and complicated emotions can be extremely therapeutic.

These creative outlets provide a great vehicle for helping wounded veterans rediscover their sense of self-worth and learn more about themselves and others.

Employment and education are major components for veterans as they work to return to normalcy after an unexpected injury. The Trust proudly supports numerous organizations dedicated to helping veterans achieve scholastic success and secure employment.

And while we all know how families play a pivotal role in a veteran's health and wellbeing, the Trust has placed an emphasis on assisting organizations dedicated to helping families heal together.

Veterans can sometimes face unforeseen consequences to the intangibles of life as a result of their service injuries. For some of our most profoundly injured veterans a victory can be as simple as the restoration of life's most basic joy.

Fortunately, the Trust has dedicated itself to helping other organizations that provide services to improve the quality of life for veterans. Trust grants support wellness, mentoring programs, and alternative therapies to improve the futures of veterans and their families.

As you can see, the Trust supports a wide range of programs to aid and assist veterans through a multitude of challenges. Today we are extremely proud to highlight the Music Conservatory of Westchester and its Healing our Heroes program. The program gives local veterans access to the healing power of music therapy.

Built on a unique model, the program provides each veteran with a minimum of two years of one-on-one music therapy sessions, as well as two weekly group sessions open to all the veterans in the program. These services are provided at no cost to veterans or their families.

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 Music Conservatory of Westchester and Healing our Heroes 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 Jean Newton, the executive director of the Music Conservatory of Westchester. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Newton joined Charitable Service Trust President and Past National Commander Marbes at the podium.)

MS. JEAN NEWTON: Good morning, everyone, and thank you. It is such an honor to be here today. And I would like to take a moment to thank the DAV Charitable Service Trust for its very generous support and recognition of the Healing Our Heroes program.

The video you have just seen is a preliminary trailer for a documentary film currently being made about the program. Healing Our Heroes began in 2013 when a man named Joel Breittkopf walked into my office and said, "Let's start a program for our local veterans." And as soon as he said this I knew this was something that we could do.

Actually I learned at the time that the field of music therapy got started in military hospitals during World War II. And the Conservatory already had a large and well-established music therapy program in place.

We did recognize the need to consider a number of factors as we were planning our program. First, the goal of any therapy is to achieve real change, and that takes a lot of time. Second, the most effective therapeutic approach, and the most costly, is one-on-one. Third, we were absolutely determined to provide this program at no cost to veterans or their families.

So working with our music therapy staff we forged some connections to local VA hospitals and veterans' centers, and we were very fortunate that the mother of one of our young guitar students happened to be a senior counseling psychologist at the Bronx VA Hospital and she was really pivotal in enabling us to do this.

And then, of course, we had to work out the logistics and the procedures for our program. But less than four months later Healing Our Heroes was up and running.

So here is how the program works. Each veteran receives a minimum of two years of weekly individual music therapy sessions. And in a number of instances we have given a third year because it was needed by that person.

Music therapy uses music making as a context for addressing difficult issues. And I'm going to go off script for a moment to explain a little bit about how this works.

Traditional talk therapy can be very, very intimidating. But music is kind of magical in that it is innately joyful and it touches all of our emotions, creating a pathway that's easier for the individual to address those issues which are deepest and most difficult for him or her.

Some of the veterans in our program have played a musical instrument and others are starting from scratch, but it really doesn't matter. This process is not about musical expertise. It's about the process itself.

In addition to the individual sessions, we also run two weekly group sessions, one that focuses on having the veterans play music together as a group and the other that focuses on learning how to use music for relaxation and stress relief.

These groups are open to all of the veterans in the program, including those who have completed their individual sessions. They are invited to continue attending these groups for as long as they wish.

Healing Our Heroes is a program that really aims more for depth than breadth. And to date the program has served 30 veterans, all with symptoms of PTSD and many with Traumatic Brain Injuries.

They have served in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia and pretty much every front where our military has had a presence over the last 50 years.

Each veteran in the program has reported improved quality of life, including reduced stress and anxiety, improved personal relationships, and a more positive outlook as a result of the program.

The physical improvements they report include lower blood pressure, better short-term memory, better physical coordination, and less chronic pain. And these changes are documented in their medical exams as well as in their own testimonials.

On a personal note, it has been such an honor to have these brave men and women as part of the Conservatory's musical community. They have all bonded with each other and with their music therapist. And they have also developed relationships with our staff, with our teachers, and with our students, particularly the adult students who come to our school.

We just celebrated the fifth anniversary of Healing Our Heroes and, of course, now we are asking ourselves what's next.

First, we are looking at the ongoing challenge of sustaining a program that is 100 percent funded by contributions. It has been really inspiring to see how many individuals and organizations have stepped up to support the program. But we also recognize the need to diversify. And we're looking at some options, things like crowd funding and branded merchandise.

Second, we are very much aware that Healing Our Heroes is a unique program and that it perhaps has the potential to become a replicable model. So we are looking at creating a tool kit for national distribution so that other community organizations and local VA centers can create something similar.

The documentary film, of course, will also help spread the word about the value of music therapy for helping veterans.

And, finally, we are looking at the potential to expand Healing Our Heroes by perhaps creating some complementary components for veterans who are not able to physically get to the Conservatory. Perhaps these components could take place in VA hospitals or veterans' centers or other community organizations like public libraries.

Before I conclude I just want to let you know that if you have any questions about Healing Our Heroes or would like more information I will be outside of this room for a number of hours and would be happy to answer your questions and tell you how to get in touch with me.

Thank you all for being here this morning. And I especially want to thank each and every one of you for your service and for helping to keep our country safe and strong. Thank you. (Applause)
(Whereupon, Ms. Newton withdrew from the podium.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES:
Thank you, Jean, and thank you for all that you've done to help veterans over the last five years with this wonderful program. (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, allowing veterans of all generations to find their victories.

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 the work you continue to do, all in the name of our brothers and sisters who served this nation.

Thank you, Commander, for the opportunity to make this presentation and recognize the tremendous services and support provided by the grants recipients. And let me just take a moment to acknowledge the administrator of the trust Bridgette Sorrell and her awesome staff back at the National Headquarters who make the Board's day-to-day work much, much easier.

Thank you, Commander. That concludes my report. (Applause)

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust

Financial Statements as of and for the Years
Ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, and
Independent Auditors' Report

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, 2017 and 2016, 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, 2017 and 2016, 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.

Deloitte + Touche LLP

April 9, 2018

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	2017	2016
ASSETS		
CASH	\$ 5,459,989	\$ 3,678,468
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	51,803	59,418
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	261,432	293,913
CAMPAIGNS' PLEDGES RECEIVABLE—Net of allowance for uncollectible pledges of \$387,433 in 2017 and \$369,474 in 2016	120,869	292,668
PREPAID EXPENSES AND OTHER	7,801	7,549
INVESTMENTS—Includes charitable gift annuity reserve balances of \$5,934,478 and \$6,673,220 in 2017 and 2016, respectively	26,266,208	22,969,290
SOFTWARE - Net	<u>7,762</u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 32,175,864</u>	<u>\$ 27,301,306</u>
LIABILITIES AND UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable—Disabled American Veterans	\$ 471,983	\$ 475,567
Accounts payable—other	17,690	23,609
Annuity payment liability	<u>4,363,079</u>	<u>4,512,873</u>
Total liabilities	4,852,752	5,012,049
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>27,323,112</u>	<u>22,289,257</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 32,175,864</u>	<u>\$ 27,301,306</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	
	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:		
Contributions—net of assessment fees and provision for uncollectible pledges of \$518,981 in 2017 and \$416,428 in 2016	\$ 6,953,478	\$ 6,289,575
Contributions of charitable gift annuities	296,259	335,117
Bequests	1,650,056	1,325,434
Interest and dividend income—net	557,465	397,480
Gain on sale of investment securities	<u>508,992</u>	<u>9,297</u>
Total support and revenue	<u>9,966,250</u>	<u>8,356,903</u>
EXPENSES:		
Program services	6,722,973	5,604,684
Management and general	193,104	200,582
Fundraising	<u>118,705</u>	<u>94,492</u>
Total expenses	<u>7,034,782</u>	<u>5,899,758</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE CHANGE IN NET UNREALIZED APPRECIATION (DEPRECIATION) OF INVESTMENTS AND ANNUITY VALUATION ADJUSTMENT	2,931,468	2,457,145
CHANGE IN NET UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	2,114,663	610,472
CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY VALUATION ADJUSTMENT	<u>(12,276)</u>	<u>(848,755)</u>
CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	5,033,855	2,218,862
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	<u>22,289,257</u>	<u>20,070,395</u>
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS—End of year	<u>\$ 27,323,112</u>	<u>\$ 22,289,257</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	2017			2016		
	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising
			Total			Total
EXPENSES:						
Allocations to charitable programs	\$ 6,618,811	\$ -	\$ 6,618,811	\$ 5,491,932	\$ -	\$ 5,491,932
Grant proposal processing	63,706		63,706	63,280		63,280
Administrative charges		42,472	42,472		42,186	42,186
Travel	2,594	21,443	102,156			74,436
Advertising	14,405	960	3,841	3,023	15,996	19,019
Printing, postage and supplies	4,207	4,341	8,644	24,083	1,605	32,110
Depreciation of software	862		862	3,204	3,221	6,882
Legal fees			6,840			6,840
Professional fees	16,428	75,785	92,213	17,202	91,766	108,968
Insurance	1,960		1,960	1,960		3,920
Banking fees		38,873	38,873		35,572	35,572
Other expenses		7,270	5,772		8,276	6,337
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 6,722,973</u>	<u>\$ 193,104</u>	<u>\$ 7,034,782</u>	<u>\$ 5,604,684</u>	<u>\$ 200,582</u>	<u>\$ 94,492</u>
						<u>\$ 5,899,758</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	2017	2016
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in unrestricted net assets	\$ 5,033,855	\$ 2,218,862
Adjustments to reconcile change in unrestricted net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Noncash investment contributions	(85,290)	(147,958)
Change in net unrealized appreciation of investments	(2,114,663)	(610,472)
Depreciation of software	862	
Charitable gift annuity valuation adjustment	12,276	848,755
Gain on sale of investment securities	(508,992)	(9,297)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Interest and dividends receivable	7,615	(1,150)
Accounts receivable	32,481	(250,378)
Campaigns' pledges receivable	171,799	(17,052)
Prepaid expenses and other	(252)	574
Accounts payable—DAV and other	(9,503)	230,439
Annuity payment liability	(296,259)	(335,117)
	<u>2,243,929</u>	<u>1,927,206</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Payment for software	(8,624)	
Purchase of investments	(10,510,874)	(13,740,462)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	9,922,901	13,458,741
	<u>(596,597)</u>	<u>(281,721)</u>
Net cash (used in) investing activities		
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Proceeds from gift annuity agreement contributions	731,326	734,337
Payments to annuitants	(597,137)	(686,345)
	<u>134,189</u>	<u>47,992</u>
Net cash provided by financing activities		
NET INCREASE IN CASH	1,781,521	1,693,477
CASH—Beginning of year	<u>3,678,468</u>	<u>1,984,991</u>
CASH—End of year	<u>\$ 5,459,989</u>	<u>\$ 3,678,468</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF AND FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

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 March 2017, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) 2017-08, *Receivables - Nonrefundable Fees and Other Costs (Subtopic 310-20): Premium Amortization on Purchased Callable Debt Securities*. ASU 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 2017-08 is for annual reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018. The ASU has not yet been adopted; however, it will not have a material impact on the Trust's financial position, cash flows or results of operations.

In August 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*. Adoption of FASB ASU 2016-14 will result in significant changes to financial reporting and disclosure for not-for-profit entities. FASB believes the update will improve not-for-profit entities' financial statements and provide more useful information to donors, grantors, creditors, and other financial statement users. Specifically the ASU modifies the net asset classification requirements and disclosure requirements related to liquidity, financial performance, and cash flows. In addition to added disclosure, this standard will result in the Trust's unrestricted net assets being relabeled as "net assets without donor restrictions." The standard is effective for annual financial statements issued for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2017, with application applied retrospectively.

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 other parts are to be applied using a prospective approach. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In January 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-01, *Financial Instruments Overall (Subtopic 825-10) — Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities*. ASU 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. The ASU also amends certain disclosure requirements associated with the fair value of financial instruments. The effective date of ASU 2016-01 is for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2018. The ASU has not yet been adopted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact to the financial statements.

In May 2014, the FASB issued ASU 2014-09, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. ASU 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 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 will not have a material impact on the Trust's financial position, cash flows or results of operations.

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 \$20,613 and \$9,808 in 2017 and 2016, 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 U.S. 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 unrestricted net assets 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 \$120,869 are expected to be received in 2018. Amounts received from accounts previously written off are recognized as contribution revenue when received.

As a member of MFVSOA during 2017 and 2016, 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 unrestricted net assets when received. The Trust received \$150,964 and \$177,843 in 2017 and 2016, respectively, included in contributions within the statements of activities, for excess income recognized by MFVSOA in 2016 and 2015.

Contributions and Bequests—Contributions and bequests received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. The Trust recognizes contributions and bequests with donor-imposed restrictions that are met in the same period as unrestricted contributions and bequests. The Trust received noncash contributions at a fair market value of \$85,290 in 2017 and \$147,958 in 2016.

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 and 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. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

Investments include investment of contributions and charitable gift annuity agreements (see Note 6). 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.

The cost and fair value of investments and the unrealized appreciation (depreciation) at December 31, 2017 and 2016, are summarized below:

	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation)
2017			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 549,271	\$ 549,271	\$ -
Commercial paper	2,332,567	2,362,250	29,683
U.S. government securities	1,542,653	1,525,982	(16,671)
Certificates of deposit	1,479,604	1,485,342	5,738
U.S. government agency notes	2,602,853	2,554,892	(47,961)
Municipal bonds	402,568	401,836	(732)
Corporate bonds	1,786,095	1,727,246	(58,849)
Common stocks	3,451,373	4,451,272	999,899
Mutual funds/ETFs	<u>8,563,628</u>	<u>11,208,117</u>	<u>2,644,489</u>
Total	<u>\$ 22,710,612</u>	<u>\$ 26,266,208</u>	<u>\$ 3,555,596</u>
2016			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 502,949	\$ 502,949	\$ -
Commercial paper	626,467	627,913	1,446
U.S. government securities	892,494	888,498	(3,996)
Certificates of deposit	1,714,193	1,743,322	29,129
U.S. government agency notes	4,355,220	4,300,301	(54,919)
Municipal bonds	402,568	402,132	(436)
Corporate bonds	2,797,584	2,666,447	(131,137)
Common stocks	3,090,090	3,419,832	329,742
Mutual funds/ETFs	<u>7,146,792</u>	<u>8,417,896</u>	<u>1,271,104</u>
Total	<u>\$ 21,528,357</u>	<u>\$ 22,969,290</u>	<u>\$ 1,440,933</u>

Interest and dividend income—net is \$557,465 and \$397,480 for 2017 and 2016, respectively. The year 2017 is composed of gross interest and dividend income of \$626,263 less \$68,798 for investment management and custody fees. The year 2016 is composed of gross interest and dividend income of \$462,136 less \$64,656 for investment management and custody fees.

As of December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, the amount of securities in a continuous unrealized loss position for a duration of greater than twelve months is not material.

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC 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 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 2017 or 2016.

The Trust's policy is to recognize transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers during 2017 and 2016.

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, 2017 and 2016.

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.

U.S. Government Securities (U.S. 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.

U.S. 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 the Trust's financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, are as follows:

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	\$ 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
	<u>11,208,117</u>		<u>11,208,117</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs:			
	<u>11,208,117</u>		<u>11,208,117</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 17,734,642</u>	<u>\$ 8,531,566</u>	<u>\$ 26,266,208</u>

2016	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	\$ 502,949	\$ -	\$ 502,949
Commercial paper		627,913	627,913
U.S. government securities	888,498		888,498
Certificates of deposit		1,743,322	1,743,322
U.S. government agency notes		4,300,301	4,300,301
Municipal bonds		402,132	402,132
Corporate bonds		2,666,447	2,666,447
Common stocks	3,419,832		3,419,832
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	5,550,890		5,550,890
International equity funds	2,867,006		2,867,006
	<u>8,417,896</u>		<u>8,417,896</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs:			
	<u>8,417,896</u>		<u>8,417,896</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 13,229,175</u>	<u>\$ 9,740,115</u>	<u>\$ 22,969,290</u>

Fair value of the annuity payment liability of \$4,363,079 and \$4,512,873 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, 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;
- (2) the mortality assumption based on expected annuitant longevity.

5. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During 2017 and 2016, DAV (Disabled American Veterans) 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 \$189,749 and \$172,830 in 2017 and 2016, respectively. As of December 31, 2017 and 2016, the Trust owed DAV \$471,983 and \$475,567, respectively. DAV provides the Trust with the use of facilities, equipment and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2017 and 2016, the Trust distributed the following in support of DAV programs and services:

	2017	2016
DAV Employment Initiative	\$ 1,400,000	\$
Assistance to disabled veterans and their families	447,641	206,310
Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	303,637	364,380
DAV "Just B Kids" Scholarship	300,000	300,000
Transportation Network	200,000	200,000
Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program	45,000	45,000
DAV 5K Program	36,250	42,069
National Service Officer Programs—Other	5,000	15,000
National Service Officers' Case Management System		900,000

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 2017 and 2016, the Trust granted \$800,000 to the DAV National Service Foundation—Columbia Trust Fund for the DAV Transportation Network Van Grant Program. In 2017 and 2016 respectively, the Trust also provided \$760 and \$2,100 to the DAV National Service Foundation for use in assisting disabled veterans and their dependents.

6. ANNUITY PAYMENT LIABILITY

The Trust enters into charitable gift annuity agreements with donors. In the statements of activities, contributions of charitable gift annuities of \$296,259 and \$335,117 for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, 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, 2017 and 2016.

In 2016, the Trust updated the mortality table used in determining the liability to IAR-2012 (with 2015 valuation year) from 2000CM to reflect the most up-to-date expectations with regard to longevity for individual annuitant lives.

In 2017, the Charitable Gift Annuity Valuation Adjustment of \$(12,276) consists of:

- gain from deceased annuitants of \$493,742,
- other actuarial adjustments of \$(506,018), which are primarily related to discounting of the liability during the year ended December 31, 2017.

In 2016, the Charitable Gift Annuity Valuation Adjustment of \$(848,755) consists of:

- gain from deceased annuitants of \$510,576,
- other actuarial adjustments of \$(1,359,331), which are primarily due to change in mortality tables from 2000CM to IAR-2012 (with 2015 valuation year) during the year ended December 31, 2016.

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 \$5,163,730 and \$5,474,868 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, 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 \$770,748 and \$1,198,352 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, 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 unrestricted net assets as required by any state for the acceptance of charitable gift annuities, which is \$1,000,000. The total unrestricted net assets that are subject to state statutes or regulations (calculated as the reserve funds (investments), less the annuity payment liability) amounted to \$1,571,399 and \$2,160,347 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

7. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2017, but before April 9, 2018, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, that require consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the financial statements.

* * * * *

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Dick. May I have a motion to accept that impressive report? May I have a second?

MR. MIKE HURT: Commander, I would like to second that motion. Mike Hurt, the great State of Wisconsin, Chapter 17.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Thank you.

DAV played a pivotal role in the implementation of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial which opened October the 5th, 2014, and since has become a prominent and profoundly important monument in Washington, D.C.

We are proud to be joined here today by a well-known DAV leader who has led the charge to establish this memorial. He has been an endless presence and determined advocate for its use.

DAV Past National Commander Bobby Barrera is on the Board of Directors for the Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Foundation and assists with ensuring this Memorial effectively represents America's heroes, which is no small chore.

Without further ado please give a warm welcome to Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Foundation Director Bobby Barrera. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Roberto "Bobby" Barrera was elected to the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation Board of Directors in 2013. A Marine veteran, Bobby was seriously burned in Vietnam when enemy forces exploded a 500-pound landmine beneath his armored personnel carrier.

The Del Rio, Texas, native wouldn't let the loss of limbs or his scars slow him down. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees and served as a teacher and counselor. He was named DAV's Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year in 1998. That same year, he was honored with the LIFE's Presidential Unsung Hero Award. (Applause)

DVLMF DIRECTOR AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERTO "BOBBY" BARRERA: Thank you and good morning. Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster for that very kind introduction. Adjutant Burgess, national officers, delegates and guests.

Unfortunately, DAV Past National Commander Dennis Joyner, who is the president of the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation was not able to join us, so you have to deal with me. You're stuck with me. Sorry. (Laughter)

It has been nearly four years since our dream of a memorial to disabled veterans became reality. And I want to thank you, all of my brothers and sisters at DAV and at the Auxiliary, for the hard work put into 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, at the chapter, and/or department levels, please stand if you are able to be recognized. All my donors, please stand.

(Whereupon, donors stood or raised their hands and were recognized with a round of applause.)

DVLMF DIRECTOR AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BARRERA: Thank you so much for your generous support. I would like to take a moment to introduce the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation Board of Directors:

President Dennis Joyner; Vice-President Marc Burgess of Kentucky; our Secretary-Treasurer Gene Murphy of South Dakota; and our Directors: National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster of California; Jim Sursely of Florida; Dave Gorman of South Carolina; Dave Riley of Alabama; and our Ex-Officio member Art Wilson of Florida.

This Memorial and its upkeep would not be possible without these thoughtful veterans. And I thank you all for your support. (Applause) Please. Thank you.

The opening in 2014 of the American Veterans' Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C. was the culmination of a very long but very remarkable, worthwhile voyage, spanning nearly 20 years from its inception to its dedication.

However, it was certainly worth the wait for the inspiring, powerful, and I hope everlasting, monument. Since then, the memorial has shown its power by becoming the site for many veterans and families to reflect on and to honor our nation's heroes.

Since the dedication of the memorial, the Foundation's efforts have focused primarily on the areas of promotion and outreach, structural enhancement, maintenance, and public engagement.

Within the area of promotion and outreach, in recent months the Foundation has continued the memorial's message through YouVisit's virtual tour technology. As some of you know, YouVisit allows visitors to access comprehensive media footage of the memorial remotely.

In 2017, the walking tour, the photos, the videos, the 360-degree shots captured the attention of more than 2,500 unique visitors, bringing the total to more than 9,000 since the site was launched.

The visitors spent an average of eight minutes engaging with the content and stem from all over the country, all over the United States as well as 67 other countries. The memorial's viewer engagement continues to be above average with respect to other clients of virtual content.

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.

For those of you who have not had the pleasure of visiting the site in-person, a virtual tour of the memorial can be accessed at any time through the memorial website, by any person interested in touring its remarkable features.

Recently, a group of eighth graders from the Covenant School got a firsthand tour from two post 9-11 veterans and Purple Heart recipients. Army veterans Zach Herrick and Greg Hedrick spoke to the kids and emphasized what makes the memorial so unique and meaningful to each one of them.

A DAV life member, Greg was injured on his third deployment by a rocket-propelled grenade and lost his left leg and most of his left hand and sustained a traumatic brain injury. This is what he told those students from that school. He said, "This memorial means people who come back from war with disabilities won't be forgotten." And how true that statement is.

Greg met Zach while they were both patients recovering from their injuries at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Zach was 21 years old when he was shot in the face during an ambush while he was deployed to Afghanistan.

He told the students something that I know many of you in this room fully understand. He said, "It isn't a miracle that a combat veteran comes home alive, it is that they still have the ability to love." And love of country is one of the biggest things that we have. (Applause)

Zach and Greg were humble and transparent about their experiences and provided one heck of an education to those kids from the Covenant School.

I would also like to share a few highlights from the incredibly dedicated volunteers engaging at the memorial. Thus far, nearly 600 volunteers have provided almost 1,400 hours towards wall washing and general trash removal from the memorial. These volunteer efforts have been led by DAV Chapter 10 in Fairfax, Virginia. (Applause)

As the Foundation enters a new stage of its existence, new challenges and needs emerge. 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 from our mission from construction and dedication to one of education and outreach.

At this time I would like to pay some special attention to a major donor who has helped make the continued care and maintenance of this monument possible.

The Law Firm of Chisholm, Chisholm, and Kilpatrick gave an additional \$50,000 to the Foundation during this year's convention. (Applause) That brings their total contributions to \$200,000 since 2015. I know how much their generosity means to me and the upkeep of the memorial. Let's show them how much we appreciate all their unwavering support. (Applause)

I would like to express my sincere and personal thanks, as well as the appreciation of every member of the Board of Directors, both past and present, to DAV national, state departments, chapters, the Auxiliary, and all of the DAV's outstanding members for their support.

You, DAV's members, are the reason and the means by which this Memorial became a reality. I certainly believe you deserve a huge round of applause. Thank you. (Applause) Thank you.

We will continue to maintain and to honor this sacred memorial, which is a part of every member and family member in our community of veterans. Your fellow veterans with the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation want to thank you for your support. It is our great pleasure to represent this important landmark in recognizing your service and your sacrifices.

Thank you, Commander. I appreciate the time. This concludes my report. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Bobby. May I have a motion to accept that report?

MS. TINCIE LYNCH: Tincie Lynch, DAV Chapter 91, the great State of Georgia.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: May I have a second.

MR. KENDALL (INDISTINGUISHABLE): Kendall (Indistinguishable) from the State of California, I'd like to second that.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. (Applause)

Now, will you please welcome Cynthia Madison of Virginia, newly-elected president of the Commanders and Adjutants Association for 2018 to 2019. (Applause)

MS. CYNTHIA MADISON: Thank you very much. National Commander Metcalf-Foster, National Adjutant Burgess, national officers, delegates and guests, good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MS. MADISON: I am proud to have been elected as the president of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association for 2018-2019.

And 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 productive year in the DAV.

I would now like to read into record our officers and committee members for the coming year. Cynthia Madison, Virginia; John Donovan, Arkansas.

The Executive Committee consists of Kirk Johnson from California; Brian Wilner from South Carolina; Brigitte Marker from Oregon; Burl Jimmerson from Georgia; William Robinson from South Carolina; and Craig Vance from Oklahoma.

The appointed positions consist of our secretary, Rita Albergg from Virginia; the judge advocate, Floyd Watson from Wyoming; the chaplain, John King from Virginia; treasurer/assistant secretary, David Tannenbaum from Florida.

The Audit Committee consists of Mary Ann Keckler from Florida; Nancy Espinosa from Utah; Paul Lardizzone From Delaware; and Lisa Gregory from Virginia.

The Constitution and Bylaws consists of John Patterson from Maryland; Samuel Mantilla from New York; Robert Simmons from Texas; Richard Brunelle from Maine.

The Resolutions Committee consists of Wanda Janus from Oregon; Luis Rivera from Puerto Rico; Walter Cray from Alaska; and Dena Garcia from Washington.

The Special Projects Committee consists of David Tannenbaum from Florida; Danny Oliver from Oklahoma; Frank Maughan from Utah; and Jeremy Roberts from North Carolina.

And, last but not least, our sergeant-at-arms is Penny Larson from Utah.

At this time I would like for the national commander and the national adjutant to join me in a presentation.

(Whereupon, Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess joined Ms. Madison at the podium.)

MS. MADISON: And on behalf of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association I would like to present you with two donations—yes, two donations—for the National Service Foundation.

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I present you with our annual donation of \$1,500. And I have an additional check for \$100 in honor our immediate past President Danny Oliver. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you.

MS. MADISON: Thank you.

(Whereupon, Ms. Madison presented Commander Metcalf-Foster and Adjutant Burgess with the checks, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Cynthia.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Now, do I have any Special Forces folks out there? I can't hear you. (Cheer) All right. Okay, now, ladies and gentlemen, I have a mission for you. 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 quickly as possible. Pretend it's a recon mission. And if you're not quiet enough, those Special Forces folks are going to let you know. 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 METCALF-FOSTER: Incorporated in 1986, the DAV 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 veterans of today and tomorrow.

Although one of the Foundation's core missions is to support DAV's daily mission 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 President of DAV's National Service Foundation and past National Adjutant of DAV, Arthur H. Wilson. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: A native of Massachusetts, Art Wilson enlisted in the United States Air Force in September of 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 DAV's National Adjutant and CEO in 1994, a position he held until his retirement in June of 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.

He is also closely involved in the oversight of The Columbia Trust, a restricted fund within the Foundation that provides grants to support a variety of department and chapter service programs.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT ARTHUR H. WILSON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Commander for that very nice introduction. I appreciate that. Adjutant Burgess, national officers, delegates, guests and our friends.

I begin this morning by introducing you to the DAV National Service Foundation's Board of Directors: Vice-President Marc Burgess; Secretary-Treasurer Alan Bowers; and our Directors are the National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster, Joseph Johnston, Daniel Contreras, Lisa Kirk, and ex-officio member and DAV Board Chair David Riley.

It's always a great pleasure for me to present here at this convention and to report on the remarkable services of the National Service Foundation because we know they all result in the highest quality of life for disabled veterans and their families.

Too many need timely access for 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.

Our goal is that no veteran, no veteran walks this path alone. Rather, by providing the support for DAV's core mission of service through the Foundation we will walk with them every step of the way.

We have held firm in that mission over the past year and I am extremely proud and thankful to everyone who, once again, helped raise over \$2 million in donations and bequests for the Foundation and the Columbia Trust in 2017.

And for added impact, the DAV 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 2017 and with net assets of nearly \$140 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 more than \$1.6 million that was expended towards direct programs of service for veterans and their families in 2017. This represents a remarkable 90 percent of total expenditures.

The National Service Foundation helps to address some of the most immediate and pressing needs of disabled veterans and their families and also aims to protect the future of DAV's services.

Your gifts to the Foundation go toward ensuring long-term financial stability of DAV's service programs so we can continue offering free services to veterans well into the future while also supporting the day-to-day work of DAV. And that includes providing transportation for veterans to and from VA medical appointments, assisting with disability claims, and proudly providing many other DAV services.

Throughout 2017 the Foundation expended just over \$500,000 to help the National Organization provide necessary services to disabled veterans and their families. Most importantly, this support aided our National Service program which provides veterans with no-cost professional claims services throughout the nation.

Another way the Foundation is able to provide direct support is to help disabled veterans and their families through the Columbia Trust, a restricted fund that assists DAV Departments and Chapters in providing direct services to veterans and their families at the state and local level.

Grants awarded from the Trust primarily focus on four areas of service: transportation for disabled veterans to and from medical facilities; costs associated with department and hospital service coordinators; costs associated with the department and chapter service officers, including service school expenses; and assistance for initiatives combating veteran homelessness. New and unique veterans' service initiatives are always encouraged.

Impressively, in 2017, the Trust awarded grants totaling nearly \$1.2 million to chapters and departments throughout the nation. As evidenced in the Foundation's 2017 annual report, which is available online or by request to DAV National Headquarters, you will see that we have had another terrific year.

I consider us to be incredibly fortunate to have such committed members, organizations, and others dedicated to our cause who continue to express their devotion through contributions to the Foundation.

Within the pages, some very special individuals who have been extraordinarily generous in their support to the Foundation are noted. 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 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 \$612,000. (Applause)

Disabled veterans also have free advocacy and representation at the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims, also 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 the 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, I said millions—of dollars to the DAV National Service Foundation.

Having just made another contribution of \$100,000 to the Foundation yesterday, the firm's giving now stands at more than \$2 million. (Applause) This makes Finnegan the largest contributor in the history of the National Service Foundation.

Words cannot express our gratitude but this award is going to have to suffice for now. It's an etched crystal award that features gold accents and reads as follows: "In recognition of your unwavering and substantial commitment to the mission of the DAV National Service Foundation and the veterans we serve." It's a very special award.

And I would like to ask Mark Sweet, a managing partner from the firm's Washington, D.C., office, to come up and accept this award. And I think that they and the firm deserve the most thunderous DAV ovation that anyone has ever heard. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Sweet joined President Wilson at the podium, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. MARK SWEET: Hello. My name is Mark Sweet. I am managing partner of Finnegan and it is a great honor of mine to accept this award on behalf of the firm. Our firm has been doing pro bono work for disabled veterans for going on ten years.

I am very proud that we have been able to donate our time in the form of pro bono hours to represent over 800 disabled veterans with their claims. I'm very pleased and proud that our efforts have resulted in a success rate of over 85 percent representing those veterans. (Applause)

And I'm exceptionally proud that those successes resulted in attorney's fees that are awarded to our firm which we then turn around and donate to the DAV in now an amount that's totaled over \$2 million, which is exceptional.

And the one thing I want to add is that number will continue to grow as we continue to represent disabled veterans. So thank you very much. (Applause)

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

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Sweet. We are honored by your presence here today and for your amazing long-time continuing support of the Foundation.

Distinguished support of our veterans deserves special recognition. This year four DAV chapters or departments have earned a place among others or a higher position on the Foundation's Grand

Memorial Honor Roll of Distinguished Donors, DAV National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

They are St. Louis Chapter 1, Department of Missouri, who earned their fourth star for lifetime contributions of \$100,000; (Applause) the Department of New York who earned their second star for lifetime contributions of \$25,000; (Applause) the Arlington-Fairfax Chapter 10, Department of Virginia, who earned their first star for lifetime contributions of \$10,000; (Applause) the E.F. Gilmore Chapter 64 in the Department of Massachusetts who earned their first star for lifetime contributions of \$10,000. (Applause)

I would now like to take a moment to recognize the outstanding contributions of DAV chapters and departments who gave contributions of \$1,000 or more during 2017: Ninth NEC District; the Pahump Chapter 15, Department of Nevada; the William C. Malia Chapter 1, Department of Pennsylvania; the Permian Basin Chapter 58, Department of Texas; and the Seattle Chapter 2 from the Department of Washington. Thank you so much. (Applause)

And to you, the supporters of our Foundation, we offer our most sincere appreciation and gratitude. We simply could not do everything that we do and everything that we accomplish without you. By graciously supporting the DAV National Service Foundation you are truly making a difference in helping us create more critical victories for disabled veterans and their families.

I would now like to take a moment to proudly recognize National Service Director Jim Marszalek and his elite corps of national service officers whose daily work, as you know, is the backbone if this great organization and our mission. Jim, you and your staff should be all extremely proud of the impact that you have had on the lives of this nation's disabled veterans.

And one way we see this impact is reflected through the gifts made in honor of the national service officers for the work they do for disabled veterans.

In a slight change from past years, the Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award now 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 to help me honor these outstanding offices and our national service officers. Jim. (Applause)

(Whereupon, National Service Director James Marszalek advanced to assist President Wilson.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 1, the National Service Office in Albany, New York, totaling \$4,190. And accepting the award is supervisor William Gibney. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 1 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. WILLIAM GIBNEY: I want to thank you all for your attention and I accept this award on behalf of all of the national service officers, department service officers and chapter service officers of the great State of New York who have the most generous veterans. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 2, the National Service Office in Manchester, New Hampshire, with a total of \$13,225. And here to represent the Division 2 winner is supervisor Jesse Welch. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 2 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. JESSE WELCH: Thank you all very much for your support. It is truly a privilege to be able to help our veterans and their families each and every day. Thank you very much. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Jesse. Division 3, the National Service Office in Chicago, Illinois, with a total of \$19,658. And here accepting the award is Zachary Keene the NSO supervisor.

(Whereupon, the Division 3 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. ZACHARY KEENE: First of all I want to recognize my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, everything is possible with him, also, my DAV office. Outstanding. I am very proud of you guys. DAV. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 4, the National Service Office in Saint Louis, Missouri with a total of \$64,317. Representing Division 4 is NSO Supervisor Andy Edwards. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 4 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. ANDREW EDWARDS: Thank you. It's an honor to accept this award for the great State of Missouri. We couldn't do it without all the support that we get from the great State of Missouri every time. It's the "Show Me" state so I just want to say thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 5 is National Service Office in Seattle, Washington, with a total of \$12,323. And accepting the award for that office is Myke Kwaiter, the NSO supervisor. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 5 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. MYKE KWAITER: First of all I'd like to thank the department, my chapter service officers and, most importantly, every day what we put into the office, my national service officers. Without them this wouldn't be possible. So thank you. Thank you all. Appreciate it. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Myke. Division 6, the National Service Office in Cleveland, Ohio, with a total of \$14,468. And here today to accept that award is Supervisor Steve Strodtbeck.

(Whereupon, the Division 6 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MR. STEVE STRODTBECK: It's an honor to accept this on behalf of the State of Ohio. And this award just shows all the hard work that the service officers do. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: We all share in the same mission. And I hope you are as inspired as I am by the generosity of our fellow veterans and supporters. Now I want to call on you, your chapters and departments to be a part of that cause. This is a way to donate in honor of our friends, and brothers and sisters, to commemorate our fallen comrades and brothers and sisters.

Here we are able to show our commitment and support to our nation's finest through the Foundation's Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund or The Columbia Trust. The thermometer is now up, awaiting your generous, very generous donations.

To kick this off, this time of giving, I am pleased to acknowledge contributions from the Moral Rearmament League of \$2,000; Chapter 30 in Louisiana of \$10,000, submitted by Chapter Commander Mike McTiernan; Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett and Dunner for \$100,000; and \$50,000 to the Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Foundation from the Chisholm, Chisholm, and Kilpatrick LTD firm in Washington—or in New York, I think. I'm not sure.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Rhode Island.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Rhode Island. I was close. Okay, I've done enough talking. Now it's your turn to speak and to show the nation your support for the chapters and departments that are willing to support the cause that brought us here today.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning, sir. Department of Tennessee, I've got three checks for you: the first check, \$2,500 to The Columbia Trust; the second check, \$2,500 to the Winter Sports Clinic; and then a personal check from myself for \$500 to the National Service Foundation in honor of my father, a World War II veteran from Burma. (Applause)

MR. RICHARD PATTERSON: Rick Patterson, Chapter 45, Alabama, I'd like to make a personal donation of \$100 in memory of Henry J. Servant, my best childhood—my best friend growing up, killed in Vietnam in March 1968. (Applause)

MR. LAYTEN LAMPHERE: Laten Lanphear, Arlington-Fairfax Chapter 10 would like to present this check for \$1,500 in memory of John Mackie, our brother, mentor and friend, from the greatest chapter in the known universe. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: From Oklahoma Chapter 29 and our juniors I have a check for \$10,000 for the Winter Sports Clinic. From Oklahoma Chapter 29 and our juniors I have a \$10,000 check for the TEE Tournament. From Oklahoma Chapter 29 I have a thousand dollar check for the Charitable Service Trust. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And also on behalf of the Department of Oklahoma I've got a check for a thousand dollars for the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: From Oklahoma.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Department of Kansas, we have a donation for the National Service Trust of \$500. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: From the Department of Minnesota a donation of \$15,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Also on behalf of Minnesota DAV Foundation, another \$15,000 to Columbia Trust. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MS. IDALIS MARQUEZ: Idalis Marquez, District 6, we'd like to donate \$5,000 to the National Service Foundation and \$3,000 for the Disaster Relief Foundation. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. LISA GREGORY: Lisa Gregory, Commander, Department of Virginia, \$10,000 to the National Service Foundation and \$1,000 from General Washington Chapter 7 in Fredericksburg, Virginia. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you. Good morning.

MR. BENITO GONZALES: I'm Benito Gonzales from Colorado Chapter Number 7. And we are donating \$5,000 to the National Service Foundation and \$5,000 to The Columbia Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. RICHARD FOURNIER: Hi. My name is Richard Fournier, Department of Maine. We'd like to donate \$750 to The Columbia Trust, \$750 to the National Service Foundation, and then Chapter 1 of Augusta, Maine, John McPherson Chapter, \$500 to the National Service Foundation. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. SEAN JERNIGAN: Sean Jernigan, representing Chapter 6 in Bangor, Maine, donating \$500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. FRED POWERS: I'm Fred Powers with the National Order of Trench Rats. We'd like to make a donation of \$1,000 for the Kids B Kids, \$2,000 for the Legislative, \$2,000 for the Winter Sports Clinic, and \$100 in memory of Al Sorrentino, past Golden Rodent. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. RON VOGEL: Good afternoon. Ron Vogel, Department of California proudly donates \$20,000 to The Columbia Trust. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. JOHN PARKER: Art. Good morning. My name is John Parker, retired national service officer and current commander of the great State and Department of Ohio. I'd like to first give two checks, the first \$1,500 to the National Service Foundation in honor of our past Department Commander James Bailey; and the second, \$1,500 to the Charitable Service Trust. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. MIKE STITH: I'm Mike Stith, adjutant of the Department of Ohio here in the capacity as a member of Chapter 35 of that state. I've got three checks. First, \$1,000 from my chapter for the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Fund and \$1,000 from me, personally, and \$1,000 in matching funds from my chapter, also, for the National Service Foundation in honor of all Cleveland Region NSOs and staff. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. ERNIE BOURVAIS: Come on, Richard. My name is Ernie Bourvais, I'm the adjutant and treasurer. This is Richard Schatz, our current benefits protection team leader and past commander for our chapter, Poiss Cournyr Carpenter Bacon in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and we'd like to make a donation of \$500 to the National Service Foundation and a donation of \$500 to The Columbia Trust. We're a small chapter. All of you should be able to make some type of contribution to these causes. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

(Whereupon, Dennis Nixon's grandchildren advanced onto the stage and handed a paper to Mr. Wilson.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Oh, this is special. Dennis Nixon donates \$250 to the National Service Foundation in memory of Fred Bristol. And, by the way, this is Dennis Nixon's family. (Applause)

Dennis also donates \$1,000 to The Columbia Service Trust—I think that's right—in memory of Gerald Humphries, John Paul, Isaac Abernathy, and former NSOs Rodney Tucker and everyone's friend. (Applause)

And Bryson Davis donates \$20 to the CST in honor of the World War II Army Veteran Keith "Duke" Williamson of Oklahoma. (Applause)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken with Dennis Nixon's grandchildren and Mr. Wilson, followed by a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: From the Department of New York we have three donations. The first is \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation. In addition to that we also have \$200 to the National Service Foundation in memory of past Department Commanders Wagman and (Indistinguishable) and for the Charitable Service Trust, \$5,000. (Applause)

MR. SCOTT STEVENSON: Scott Stevenson, commander, Chapter 158, New York, we have a \$500 donation for Just B Kids program. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MS. LINDA McINNIS: Good day. My name is Linda McInnis and I'm from the great State of New York. I am here to donate \$500 for the National Service Foundation in memory of our past department commander, Mr. Ed (Indistinguishable) and all those veterans that we have lost this year. May they not be forgotten and may we always remember our veterans that are still fighting. (Applause)

MS. BONNIE ROAN: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MS. ROAN: I'm Bonnie Roan, commander from the Mile High State of Colorado. And we are donating \$5,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: From the Diamond State of the Department of Arkansas I proudly present to The Columbia Trust Fund a check for \$2,500. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Department Commander Jarvis (indistinguishable) from the great State of North Carolina. The Department of North Carolina donates \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation in memory of our past Department Commander Rodney S. Tucker. (Applause)

MR. GAYLORD HELMBRECHT: I'm Gaylord Helmbrecht, the Department of South Dakota. We're donating \$500 to the National Service Foundation in honor of our NSO Owen Richards. (Applause)

MR. DAN FRANCIS: Dan Francis with Arthur H. (indistinguishable) Department 1 would like to donate \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation. And I would also like to, on behalf of Gene Murphy, past national commander, donate \$100 to the National Service Foundation in honor of Roger Andall. (Applause)

MR. TIM ALEXANDER: Good morning, I'm Tim Alexander from the Department of Illinois, senior vice-commander, with a \$5,000 donation to the National Service Foundation. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. ERIC HUCKABEE: Eric Huckabee from the Land of the Lincoln, the great state of Illinois. We wish to donate from the department to the Winter Sports Clinic a check for \$5,000. (Applause)

MR. ALFRED REYNOLDS: I'm Al Reynolds, commander, Chapter 17, Macon County, Illinois. I have a donation to the National Service Foundation for \$5,000. I also have a donation to the Winter Sports Clinic of \$5,000, and also a donation of \$1,000 to Disaster Relief. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. LUIS BORGES-RIVERA: Good morning, Luis Borgez-Rivera from the Department of Puerto Rico. We're giving two donations today for the National Service Foundation of \$500. (Applause)

MR. ALEX MARTINEZ: Alex Martinez, National Service Office supervisor for Puerto Rico. The Department of Puerto Rico is contributing \$200 to The Columbia Trust. And I, myself, personally, will be contributing \$500 to the National Service Foundation in honor of Dennis Nixon. Thank you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Anna (Indistinguishable) Chapter 2 commander, Kansas City, Missouri, in donation of \$25,000 in honor of the NSO. (Applause)

MR. TOM DOLENZ: My name is Tom Dolenz. I'm with Chapter 1, Saint Louis, Missouri. I have a check for \$15,000 for the National Service Foundation in honor the National Service Office in Saint Louis. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. RON CARR: Good morning. Ron Carr, Department of Missouri. We have a check for \$25,000 for the National Service Foundation in honor of our great Saint Louis NSOs. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. GARY STOPYRA: Gary Stopyra, commander, Department of Pennsylvania, \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MS. CAROLYN SMALL: Good morning, Carolyn Small from the great State of Georgia. Georgia Department has two checks, one for \$1,000 for The Columbia Trust and one for \$1,000 for the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MS. RIDDELL SAMUEL: Riddell Samuel, Department of Nevada. We would like to donate \$500 to the National Service Foundation. Just want to say I hope that you all enjoyed our wonderful state and we pray for your safe travels home. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. MIKE HURT: Good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. HURT: My name is Mike Hurt. I am with the great State of Wisconsin and the home of America's dairy land and Green Bay Packer football. All right, it's my pleasure to announce that the Department of Wisconsin is making a \$2,000 contribution to the DAV National Service Foundation. God bless. (Applause)

MR. JULIAN CRAWFORD: Aloha.

(Response of "Aloha.")

MR. CRAWFORD: I'm Julian Crawford, the Department of Hawaii commander. And I have no more pins. In memory of Gordon and Cheryl (Indistinguishable) who were members and served the DAV for over (Indistinguishable) years—they both died in a tragic house fire earlier this year—the Department of Hawaii has donated \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation and \$1,000 to The Columbia Trust. Mahalo. (Applause)

MR. GREG BACON: Good morning. I'm Greg Bacon from the Department of Idaho, a state famous for its potatoes. Our department has donated \$400 in memory of two past department commanders that passed away this year, Edgar (Indistinguishable) and Charlie Chapin. That is going to The Columbia Trust.

While I was in line I decided to make another donation. I'm going to make a personal donation for all my brothers and sisters out here to the Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation of \$100. Thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. PAUL DUBEY: Good day, comrades. My name is Paul Dubey. I'm the commander for the Department of Massachusetts. Today I have donations in memory of past Department Commander Ray Richards for \$1,000 for The Charitable Service Trust and \$1,000 for the National Service Foundation.

Also, as a member of Charles (Indistinguishable) Chapter 46 of Athol, Massachusetts, I have a donation in memory of Paul Packadin, a life member, a lifetime member and benefactor, for the sum of \$5,000 for the Service Foundation. (Applause) Thank you.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm from the great State of Texas of where our new national commander will be coming from this year. (Applause) On behalf of Blue Bonnet Chapter 20 I'd like to present a check for \$1,000 to the Charitable Service Trust and also during the year we also donate to the 5K, to the TEE, and to the Winter Sports Clinic. (Applause)

MR. MICHAEL KERR: Good morning. Michael Kerr on behalf of Chapter 1, Department of California, I have \$100 for the Charitable Service Trust. (Applause)

MS. ASHLEY JOHNIKEN-CLARK: Good morning. My name is Ashley Johniken-Clark and I'm from District 20, the great State of Texas. And I would like to introduce our juniors who have a donation. Come on.

MS. ASHTON JOHNIKEN: Good morning. My name is Ashton Johniken. I'm Theresa Johniken's granddaughter. And I have been given the amazing honor of presenting this \$5,000 check to the Winter Sports Clinic on behalf of the DAV Auxiliary Juniors. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the juniors presented a hand-made check to President Wilson, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by another round of applause.)

MS. MARYANN KECKLER: Good morning. I'm Maryann Keckler from Florida, home of the national officer Andy Marshall. We are donating \$100 in honor of our immediate past Commander Frank (Indistinguishable) from Department of Florida. (Applause)

MS. DENISE WHITE PHILLIPS: Good morning. My name is Denise White Phillips from Chapter 83, the great State of Florida. And I would like to make a \$100 donation to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. JOHN CAUSEY: My name is John Causey. I'm senior vice-commander of William E. Tate Chapter 1, Georgia. And we are making a \$2,000 donation to the Charitable Service Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. ED GARRETT: Good morning. I'm Ed Garrett from the Department of Vermont. We are donating \$500 to the National Trust, \$500 to The Columbia Trust. Also Bennington Chapter 4 is donating \$25 to the National Trust and \$25 to The Columbia Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. JOHNNY BARNES: Good morning. My name is Johnny Barnes. I'm the commander of Chapter 28, Riverside. I'd like to make a \$1,000 donation in memory of Michael E. Barker. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm Nick (Indistinguishable), Chapter 28 treasurer, Riverside, California. And I would like to personally make a donation to the national trust for \$100. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. JERRY ROEBUCK: Good morning. Jerry Roebuck from the Department of Texas, Chapter 128, San Antonio, Texas. I'd like to make a donation of \$200 to the National Service Foundation. This is in memory of past Chapter Commander Howard T. Ray who passed away on July the 4th of this year. (Applause)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you.

MR. JOEL JIMMINEZ: Hello, Texas. Joel Jiminez from Chapter 41, Wichita Falls, Texas. I'd like to donate \$250 to the National Service Foundation and \$250 to The Columbia Trust fund in memory of a good friend of ours from Wichita Falls, Harry Patterson, Senior. Thank you all. (Applause)

MR. JEFFREY BALAY: How is everyone doing today? My name is Jeffrey Balay. I'm from the State of Washington. I'm the first junior vice. I'm also the department commander for Chapter 9 in Port Angeles. At this time I'd like to donate \$55 with JoAnn Gavin. Thank you very much and have a blessed day. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. BOB CUDWORTH: My name is Bob Cudworth, a proud member of Chapter 1, Scranton, Pennsylvania, the second oldest chapter in the nation. I make a personal donation of \$300 in memory of my brother, First Lieutenant Elmer Cudworth, United States Army Air Corps, KIA 16 April 1944. (Applause)

MR. PATRICK EUSTIS: Patrick Eustis, Department of California, Chapter 77, I would like to make a personal donation of \$1,500 to the DAV National Service Foundation in loving memory of my father, Robert Eustis, USAF, Air Force veteran. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. BOB CARNEGIE: My name is Bob Carnegie from the State of Indiana, Chapter 17, in Hammond. We have a \$500 donation to The Columbia Trust in honor of the hundreds of veterans that have been assisted by our NSOs and VSOs so thank you very much to that organization. (Applause)

MS. DEB OLSEN: Good morning. Deb Olsen, Department of Massachusetts. I make a personal donation in memory of my brother Staff Sergeant Francis Thompson, United States Army National Guard, my biggest supporter and my rock. I also donate this year of service to the DAV in his honor. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. CARL MARTIN: Good morning, DAV.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. MARTIN: I'm Carl Martin, commander of Chapter 5, Los Angeles. I have a personal donation here for my chapter for \$400. Also, I want to donate \$100 for my American Legion Post 43 in Hollywood. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. PAUL KOMINSKY: Paul Kominsky from the National Blind Chapter. We donated \$3,000 to the TEE Tournament which was started 25 years ago by blinded veterans from the Blind Veterans Chapter. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MS. AUDREY ADAMS: Good morning. My name is Audrey Adams. I'm the chapter commander for Chapter 233, Fort Benning County, Texas. We would like to make a donation of \$500 to The Columbia Trust. (Applause)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: I guess that's it.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Oh, thank you very much. Thank you, Commander. This concludes my report. (Applause)

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation

Financial Statements as of and for the
Years Ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, and
Independent Auditors' Report

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
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, 2017 and 2016, 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 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, 2017 and 2016, 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.



April 9, 2018

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	2017	2016
ASSETS		
CASH	\$ 2,683,069	\$ 2,646,703
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	203	64
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	5,730	463
INVENTORY	8,320	7,560
PREPAID EXPENSES	5,197	3,924
INVESTMENTS	<u>136,013,172</u>	<u>118,502,274</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 138,715,691</u>	<u>\$ 121,160,988</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Due to Disabled American Veterans	\$ 134,752	\$ 120,777
Other liabilities	<u>29,387</u>	<u>161,139</u>
Total liabilities	<u>164,139</u>	<u>281,916</u>
NET ASSETS:		
Unrestricted		
The Columbia Trust	\$ 2,076,091	\$ 1,476,091
Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund	<u>70,513,109</u>	<u>61,882,174</u>
Total unrestricted	<u>72,589,200</u>	<u>63,358,265</u>
Temporarily restricted		
The Columbia Trust	\$ 3,660	\$
Purpose restricted for mission	<u>65,729,198</u>	<u>57,293,313</u>
Total temporarily restricted	<u>65,732,858</u>	<u>57,293,313</u>
Permanently restricted	<u>229,494</u>	<u>227,494</u>
Total net assets	<u>138,551,552</u>	<u>120,879,072</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 138,715,691</u>	<u>\$ 121,160,988</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	2017			2016			
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUES:							
Support—contributions and bequests	\$ 952,332	\$ 1,104,008	\$ 2,000	\$ 846,970	\$ 945,732	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,796,702
Revenues:							
Interest and dividend income — net	1,460,613	1,403,727		1,528,985	1,467,952		2,996,937
Gain (Loss) on sale of investment securities	1,146,082	1,091,295		(47,913)	16,388		(31,525)
Total revenues	2,606,695	2,495,022		1,481,072	1,484,340		2,965,412
Net assets released from restrictions	1,110,976	(1,110,976)		953,020	(953,020)		-
Total public support and revenues	4,670,003	2,488,054	2,000	3,281,062	1,477,052	4,000	4,762,114
EXPENSES:							
Program expenses:							
Grants and expenses in accordance with The Columbia Trust	1,158,537			1,830,036			1,830,036
Appropriations to DAV National Headquarters and other organizations	506,551			422,022			422,022
Total program expenses	1,665,088			2,252,058			2,252,058
Management and general expenses	117,733			118,506			118,506
Fundraising expenses	80,488			97,134			97,134
Total expenses	1,863,309			2,467,698			2,467,698
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE CHANGE IN NET UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	2,806,694	2,488,054	2,000	813,364	1,477,052	4,000	2,294,416
CHANGE IN NET UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	6,424,241	5,951,491		1,401,282	1,184,216		2,585,498
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	9,230,935	8,439,545	2,000	2,214,646	2,661,268	4,000	4,879,914
NET ASSETS — Beginning of year	63,358,265	57,293,313	227,494	61,143,619	54,632,045	223,494	115,999,158
NET ASSETS — End of year	\$ 72,589,200	\$ 65,732,858	\$ 229,494	\$ 63,358,265	\$ 57,293,313	\$ 227,494	\$ 120,879,072

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	2017			2016				
	Program	Management and General	Fundraising	Total	Program	Management and General	Fundraising	Total
EXPENSES:								
Allocations to charitable programs	\$ 1,613,814	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,613,814	\$ 2,210,303	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,210,303
Grant proposal processing	47,561			47,561	37,997			37,997
Administrative charges		47,561	21,317	68,878		37,997	27,389	65,386
Travel		15,224		15,224		11,348		11,348
Postage and shipping	20	4,287	26,087	30,394	35	5,011	34,853	39,899
Printing, stationery and supplies	304	2,825	22,852	25,981	540	3,923	23,105	27,568
Legal fees		125	6,840	6,965			6,840	6,840
Professional fees		27,500		27,500		33,372		33,372
Insurance		3,920		3,920		3,920		3,920
Registration fees		15	3,392	3,407			4,947	11,072
Awards		10,935		10,935		9,293		9,293
Banking & credit card fees	3,389	5,166		8,555	3,183			10,640
Miscellaneous		175		175		60		60
TOTAL	\$ 1,665,088	\$ 117,733	\$ 80,488	\$ 1,863,309	\$ 2,252,058	\$ 118,506	\$ 97,134	\$ 2,467,698

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION**STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**

	2017	2016
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets	\$ 17,670,480	\$ 4,875,914
Adjustments to reconcile change in unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Change in net unrealized appreciation of investments	(12,375,732)	(2,585,498)
(Gain) Loss on sale of investment securities	(2,237,377)	31,525
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Interest and dividends receivable	(139)	(28)
Accounts receivable	(5,267)	25,709
Inventory	(760)	1,643
Prepaid expenses	(1,273)	389,968
Due to Disabled American Veterans	13,975	96,756
Other liabilities	<u>(131,752)</u>	<u>(113,950)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>2,932,155</u>	<u>2,722,039</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchases of investments	(18,910,417)	(24,454,115)
Proceeds from sale of investments	<u>16,012,628</u>	<u>21,420,603</u>
Net cash (used in) investing activities	<u>(2,897,789)</u>	<u>(3,033,512)</u>
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITY:		
Contributions of permanently restricted assets	<u>2,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH	36,366	(307,473)
CASH — Beginning of year	<u>2,646,703</u>	<u>2,954,176</u>
CASH — End of year	<u>\$ 2,683,069</u>	<u>\$ 2,646,703</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF AND FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

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 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*. Adoption of FASB ASU 2016-14 will result in significant changes to financial reporting and disclosure for not-for-profit entities. FASB believes the update will improve not-for-profit entities’ financial statements and provide more useful information to donors, grantors, creditors, and other financial statement users. Specifically the ASU modifies the net asset classification requirements and disclosure requirements related to liquidity, financial performance, and cash flows. In addition to added disclosure, this standard will result in the Foundation’s unrestricted net assets being relabeled as “net assets without donor restrictions.” The temporarily and permanently restricted net assets will be reported as “net assets with donor restrictions.” The standard is effective for annual financial statements issued for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2017, with application applied retrospectively.

In January 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-01, *Financial Instruments Overall (Subtopic 825-10) — Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities*. ASU 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. The ASU also amends certain disclosure requirements associated with the fair value of financial instruments. The effective date of ASU 2016-01 is for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2018. The ASU has not yet been adopted. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact to the financial statements.

In May 2014, the FASB issued ASU 2014-09, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. ASU 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 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 will not have a material impact on the Foundation's financial position, cash flows or results of operations.

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 \$15,624 and \$12,968 in 2017 and 2016, 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 market, generally determined on the first-in, first-out basis. Inventory consists of solicitation materials and other items.

Contributions — Contributions received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support, 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.

Unrestricted Net Assets — All unrestricted contributions and bequests 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 are included in the unrestricted net assets and used for current operations of the Foundation or appropriated by the Foundation for use by DAV.

The Foundation has adopted an investment policy for the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund and temporarily restricted investments. The primary goals of the investment portfolio are safeguarding of the assets; maximization of return on the interest, dividends and appreciation of capital; and avoidance of 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 (realized and unrealized) 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.

The Foundation's unrestricted Board-designated endowment, Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, had the following activity:

	2017	2016
Public support — contributions and bequests	\$ 952,332	\$ 846,970
Revenues:		
Interest and dividend income — net	1,460,613	1,528,985
Gain (Loss) on sale of investment securities	<u>1,146,082</u>	<u>(47,913)</u>
Total public support and revenues	<u>3,559,027</u>	<u>2,328,042</u>
Expenses:		
Program:		
Appropriations to DAV National Headquarters and other organizations	506,551	422,022
Internal appropriation to Columbia Trust	600,000	650,000
Grant proposal processing	<u>47,561</u>	<u>37,997</u>
Total program expenses:	1,154,112	1,110,019
Management and general	117,733	118,506
Fundraising	<u>80,488</u>	<u>97,134</u>
Total expenses	<u>1,352,333</u>	<u>1,325,659</u>
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	<u>6,424,241</u>	<u>1,401,282</u>
Total change in unrestricted Board-designated endowment fund	<u>\$ 8,630,935</u>	<u>\$ 2,403,665</u>

For 2017 and 2016, appropriations to the Columbia Trust of \$600,000 and \$650,000, respectively, is excluded from the statement of activities due to the transaction being an internal appropriation.

For 2017 and 2016, the Board has designated \$2,076,091 and \$1,476,091, respectively, as total unrestricted net assets for the Columbia Trust and are not included in the Board-designated endowment fund. The Columbia Trust recorded an increase in unrestricted net assets of \$600,000 and a decrease of \$189,019 in 2017 and 2016, respectively. No unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of investments is designated to the Columbia Trust's net assets from the unrestricted general fund.

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets — Funds contributed to the Columbia Trust are matched 100% by DAV, up to a maximum of \$3,000,000 per year. In 2017 and 2016, the Columbia Trust received \$65,508 and \$72,866, respectively, in contributions, which were matched by DAV. In 2017 and 2016, the Columbia Trust received \$800,000 from the DAV Charitable Service Trust to be used for the DAV Transportation Network Van Grant Program. As of December 31, 2017 and 2016, The Columbia Trust held \$227,383 and \$225,825, respectively, in money market funds.

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, 2017 and 2016, the net assets with donor restrictions of \$65,729,198 and \$57,293,265, respectively, are included within the investments balance in the statements of financial position.

Permanently Restricted Net Assets — Contributions by the National Order of Trench Rats for the DAV Legislative Program are permanently restricted. Investment income of \$6,403 and \$6,848 in 2017 and 2016, respectively, from the National Order of Trench Rats DAV Legislative Fund was transferred to DAV for use by DAV’s Legislative Program. The permanently restricted net assets of \$229,494 and \$227,494 as of December 31, 2017 and December 31, 2016, respectively, are included within the investments balance in the statements of financial position.

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 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. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

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.

The cost and fair value of investments and the unrealized appreciation (depreciation) as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, are summarized below:

	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation)
2017			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 992,857	\$ 992,857	\$ -
Common stocks	5,893,057	8,974,215	3,081,158
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Fixed-income funds	43,979,710	43,891,612	(88,098)
Equity funds	<u>57,409,394</u>	<u>82,154,488</u>	<u>24,745,094</u>
Total	<u>\$ 108,275,018</u>	<u>\$ 136,013,172</u>	<u>\$ 27,738,154</u>
2016			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 873,732	\$ 873,732	\$ -
Common stocks	5,603,982	7,284,559	1,680,577
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Fixed-income funds	49,150,854	48,901,972	(248,882)
Equity funds	<u>47,511,284</u>	<u>61,442,011</u>	<u>13,930,727</u>
Total	<u>\$ 103,139,852</u>	<u>\$ 118,502,274</u>	<u>\$ 15,362,422</u>

Interest and dividend income — net is \$2,864,340 and \$2,996,937 for 2017 and 2016, respectively. The year 2017 is composed of gross interest and dividend income of \$2,936,624 less \$72,284 for investment management and custody fees. The year 2016 is composed of gross interest and dividend income of \$3,059,696 less \$62,759 for investment management and custody fees.

As of December 31, 2017 and 2016, the amount of securities in a continuous unrealized loss position for a duration of greater than twelve months is not material.

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC 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 Foundation did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are observable and significant (Level 2) or unobservable and significant (Level 3) to the overall fair value measurement during 2017 or 2016.

The Foundation's policy is to recognize transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers during 2017 or 2016.

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, 2017 and 2016.

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.

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, 2017 and 2016, are as follows:

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	<u>2,947,275</u>		<u>2,947,275</u>
Total mutual funds	<u>126,046,100</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>126,046,100</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 136,013,172</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 136,013,172</u>

2016	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	\$ 873,732	\$ -	\$ 873,732
Common stocks	7,284,559		7,284,559
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	48,901,972		48,901,972
Domestic equity funds	43,628,147		43,628,147
International equity funds	15,005,000		15,005,000
Real estate equity funds	<u>2,808,864</u>		<u>2,808,864</u>
Total mutual funds	<u>110,343,983</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>110,343,983</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 118,502,274</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 118,502,274</u>

5. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During 2017 and 2016, DAV personnel assisted the Foundation on a limited basis in administering its business operations and fundraising program. For these services, the Foundation reimbursed DAV \$110,260 and \$101,026 in 2017 and 2016, respectively. At December 31, 2017 and 2016, the Foundation owed DAV \$134,752 and \$120,777, 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 \$65,508 and \$72,866 to the Columbia Trust in 2017 and 2016, respectively. The Columbia Trust also received \$174,991 from DAV in 2017 for funds designated to The Columbia Trust for the DAV Transportation Network Van Grant Program.

In 2017 and 2016, the DAV Charitable Service Trust made contributions of \$800,000 to the Columbia Trust for the DAV Transportation Network Van Grant Program. In 2017 and 2016 the DAV Charitable Service Trust made contributions of \$760 and \$2,100, respectively, to the NSF to be used in assisting disabled veterans and their dependents.

In 2017 and 2016, the Foundation appropriated the following in support of DAV programs and services:

	2017	2016
National Service Office Structured & Continuing Training Program	\$ 250,000	\$ 360,000
National Service Office Scanners and Webcams	123,387	
National Service Office Furniture and Equipment Fund	60,000	10,000
National Service Office Copier Fund	41,761	20,174
National Service Office Reference Manuals	25,000	25,000

In performing the duties of their positions, DAV's National Commander and National Adjutant serve on the Foundation's Board of Directors. In performing the duties of their positions as a Foundation Director, some members also serve on the DAV Charitable Service Trust's Board of Directors and the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation's Board of Directors.

6. GRANTS AND EXPENSES OF THE COLUMBIA TRUST

At December 31, 2017 and 2016, the grants and expenses of the Columbia Trust are as follows:

	2017	2016
Grants to DAV chapters and departments in accordance with The Columbia Trust:		
Hospital Service Coordinator Program	\$ 337,361	\$ 569,534
Transportation Network Van Grant Program	725,502	1,098,468
Other grants to service programs	44,400	120,280
Miscellaneous expenses	3,713	3,757
Grant proposal processing	<u>47,561</u>	<u>37,997</u>
Total	<u>\$ 1,158,537</u>	<u>\$ 1,830,036</u>

In 2017, temporarily restricted net assets of \$1,110,976 and designated, unrestricted net assets of \$47,561 were used. In 2016, temporarily restricted net assets of \$953,020 and designated, unrestricted net assets of \$877,016 were used. The temporarily restricted net assets used, of \$1,110,976 and

\$953,020, are shown as “Net assets released from restrictions” in the accompanying statements of activities for 2017 and 2016, respectively.

Net assets are released from restrictions by incurring expenses to satisfy the restricted purposes or by occurrence of other events specified by donors. Net assets with donor restrictions as of December 31, 2017 is \$3,660.

7. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2017, but before April 9, 2018, 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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COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Art, for an outstanding report and your continued leadership. May I have a motion to accept the report from President Wilson for the National Service Foundation?

MR. THOMAS AYELLA: Mic 1.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Mic 1.

MR. AYELLA: Mic 1, Thomas Ayella, senior vice-commander, Department of Florida, Chapter 1, makes that motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: May I have a second?

MR. JOHNSON: Mic 2, Kirk Johnson, District 16, makes the second.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Marc, do you have any announcements?

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. This afternoon's final business session will begin promptly at 1:30. We will start off with the important business of nominations and election of officers and please be on time.

Line Officer Introduction Dinner tickets will be available after this morning's business session in the back of the Summit Pavilion. Following this afternoon's sessions, tickets can be picked up in the Grand Salon. Tickets will be available in the Grand Salon until after the banquet begins.

Nominating Committee members, please plan to meet one-half hour after the conclusion of this session.

And we are giving away three \$50 gift cards to the DAV store for convention attendees. You must be present to win. If I call your name and you are in the hall, please see Membership Director Doug Wells up here at the stage after we adjourn. And the lucky winners are: Lindsay Kinslow, Maryland Number 13; Mary McClinnahan, North Carolina Number 17; Ronald Pandos, Oklahoma Number 9. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Marc. Chaplain Dover, will you lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN DOVER: Thank you, Commander. Ladies and gentlemen, let us pray. Heavenly Creator, we praise you for the gift of unity. You place others perfectly in our lives and inspire us to work together with the gifts that we have been blessed with.

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.")

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: The Convention stands in recess until 1:30 this afternoon.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 10:49 o'clock, a.m. on Tuesday, July 17, 2018.)

FINAL BUSINESS SESSION

July 17, 2018

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The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 97th National Convention convened in the Summit Pavilion on the Casino Level of the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, Nevada, Tuesday afternoon, July 17, 2018, and was called to order at 1:27 o'clock, p.m., by National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster.

COMMANDER DELPHINE METCALF-FOSTER: The Convention will come to order. As a reminder, once again we ask that everyone in attendance please silence your cell phone and portable devices.

In opening this afternoon's business session it is fitting and proper that we render the respect due to the flag. (Three gavel raps) Please join me in reciting our Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, Commander Metcalf-Foster led the Pledge of Allegiance.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: We will now be led in prayer by Chaplain Dover.

CHAPLAIN MICHAEL 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, Commander.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: (One gavel rap) 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 a microphone will be recognized. Upon being recognized, the delegate must state their name, chapter number, and the state they represent.

I would like to remind everyone that registration of delegates is now closed. I will call upon Chairman Warren Tobin for the final report of the Credentials Committee.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TOBIN: Comrade Commander and delegates, this is the final report of the Credentials Committee and it reflects the total registration as of 10 o'clock, a.m., on July 17th, 2018.

There are 1,060 delegates and 61 alternates registered which includes 44 departments and 370 chapters. There are 41 national officers, 19 national executive committeemen and 12 past national commanders currently registered. The vote total is 8,294. At this time I would like to extend my thanks to the Committee members and advisors.

Comrade Commander, that completes the final report of the Credentials Committee. On behalf of the Committee I move for its adoption.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. JOHNNIE CARVER: Mic 2, Johnnie Carver, (Indistinguishable) Mountain Chapter 94, Department of Tennessee, second the motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

Now I will call on Dan Stack, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, for his report.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DANIEL P. STACK: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Nominations of the National Officers was called to order for its first business session on July 14th, 2018, by Committee advisors Joseph W. Johnston and Al Church.

The first order of business was the election of a convention committee chairman and secretary. Dan Stack was elected as chairman and Gene Murphy was elected as secretary.

The Committee on Nominations of National Officers met on the following days: Saturday, July 14th, at 4:15 p.m.; Sunday, July 15th, at 1:00 p.m. The Committee met again today at 11:21 to review and interview more candidates. We have elected the following individuals that we recommend for national office:

For the office of National Commander, larger-than-life from Texas, Dennis R. Nixon; (Applause) for the office of National Senior Vice-Commander Stephen "Butch" Whitehead from Minnesota; (Applause) for the office of National First Junior Vice-Commander, from New York, Donald Day; (Applause) For the office of National Second Junior Vice-Commander, from Florida, Andrew H. Marshall; (Applause) for the office of National Third Junior Vice-Commander, from Montana, Joseph Parsetich; (Applause) For the

office of National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander, from Utah, Nancy G. Espinosa; (Applause) for the office of National Chaplain, from Georgia, Michael Dover; (Applause) and for the office of National Judge Advocate, from North Dakota, Michael E. Dobmeier. (Applause)

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Nominations of National Officers. On behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of this report.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Dan for your report. I will now call on a second that the report of the Committee on Nomination of National Officers be adopted and that the Committee be discharged. All those in favor—or a second. I've called for a second. Mic 2.

MR. FLOYD WATSON: Floyd Watson.

MR. PAUL HERMON: Paul Hermon, Springfield, Louisiana, Chapter 50, makes the second.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

You have heard the report of the Committee on Nominations of National Officers and they have nominated Dennis Nixon for National Commander. (Applause) Here to second the nomination is Ron Hope. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Ron Hope advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER RON F. HOPE: And you thought you got rid of me. (Laughter) Dennis Nixon was born in Levelland, Texas, and now resides in China Spring, Texas, with his wife, Maxine. He is a life member of Chapter 20 in Fort Worth, Texas.

Dennis is a very proud United States Marine who enlisted in 1964 at the age of 17. He was wounded during his second tour in Vietnam on June the 5th, 1969, in Danang. On that fateful day he stepped on a landmine which resulted in severe shrapnel wounds to his leg and throughout his body.

Dennis was eventually transported to the 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 DAV as a national service officer in Waco, Texas. In July of 1975 he was appointed NSO assistant supervisor in Waco and then promoted to NSO supervisor in October of 1992. In 2000 Dennis 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 that they earned.

Dennis has served in various leadership capacities at the chapter and department level as well as the national level, serving veterans on the National Executive Committee and the DAV Charitable Service Trust Board of Directors. He also serves as judge advocate for the DAV Department of Texas.

He continuously volunteers to train department and chapter service officers and even today is sought out for his advice and mentoring on NSO trainees in the Waco, Texas, national service office.

Fellow veterans, families and friends, I can tell you beyond any shadow of a doubt that Dennis Nixon has been a fighter for this great country, the way of life that we as Americans hold sacred, and for veterans and their families for the past 46 years.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe now is the time to let Dennis fight for you and ensure that the promises made by our country to its disabled veterans are kept. It is my pleasure and with great honor that I second the nomination for your next national commander for 2018-2019, Dennis R. Nixon. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you. The Chair will now call for any further nominations for the office of national commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations?

If there are no further nominations I close the nominations and declare Dennis Nixon elected as national commander and instruct the National Adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for his election. (Applause)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: I, Marc Burgess, National Adjutant of DAV, hereby cast one unanimous ballot for Dennis Nixon, for the office of national commander. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: The Nominating Committee has nominated Stephen "Butch" Whitehead of Minnesota for the office of national senior vice-commander. Are there any recommendations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Stephen "Butch" Whitehead of Minnesota elected as senior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Donald Day of New York for the office of national first junior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Donald Day elected as first junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Andrew H. Marshall for the office of national second junior vice-commander. Are there any other 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 H. Marshall elected as national second junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Joseph Parsetich 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 Joseph Parsetich of Montana elected as national third junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Nancy G. Espinosa 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 Nancy G. Espinosa elected as national fourth junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Michael E. 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 Michael E. Dobmeier of North Dakota elected as the national judge advocate. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Michael Dover of Georgia 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 Michael Dover elected as our national chaplain. (Applause)

And I will now instruct the National Adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for these offices.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: I, Marc Burgess, National Adjutant of DAV, cast one unanimous ballot for Stephen "Butch" Whitehead as national senior vice-commander; Donald Day for national first junior vice-commander;

Andrew H. Marshall for national second junior vice-commander; Joseph Parsetich for national third junior vice-commander; Nancy G. Espinosa for national fourth junior vice-commander; Michael E. Dobmeier for national judge advocate; and Michael Dover for national chaplain. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Marc. I would like to ask that the National Commander-elect Dennis Nixon and his family take the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Commander-elect and family advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER-ELECT DENNIS R. NIXON: Thank you for this honor. I want to take the opportunity to introduce my family. The three little ones in the front that were asking for votes for their Pepaw (Applause) that's Braxton and Kilee Miller and Bryson Davis. Behind them is my youngest daughter Mandy and her husband Jase. (Applause)

And, of course, that's Maxine in the middle there. (Applause) My oldest daughter Casey and her husband Shane. (Applause) Maxine's brother and my good friend, Byron, and his wife, Barbara. (Applause) Maxine's cousin Johnny and another good friend and his wife Becky. (Applause)

Thank you. Thank you very much.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask National Senior Vice-Commander Butch Whitehead and family to the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Senior Vice-Commander-elect and family advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER STEPHEN "BUTCH" WHITEHEAD: I want to take this time to extremely send my gratitude of thanks to the membership, to the commander for a wonderful year. Fourteenth District, thank you for your lovely support. And I look forward to serving all of you.

I want to take this time to introduce my lovely wife who has been by my side my whole life, military and through the DAV, my wife, Kim. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask the National First Junior Vice-Commander-Elect Donald Day from New York to take his family on stage, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National First Junior Vice-Commander-elect and family advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT DONALD DAY: Thank you all so much. I just want to introduce my family—my wife of 36 years, (indistinguishable), who told her mother when she was 12 years old that she would marry me; my son, Donald; my youngest daughter, Dana; my oldest daughter is not here but she did drive us to the airport. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask our National Second Junior Vice-Commander-Elect Andy Marshall to bring his family on stage, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National First Second Vice-Commander-elect and family advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER ANDREW H. MARSHALL: Good afternoon. I'd like to introduce you all to the eighth wonder of the world, my wife, Susan. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask the National Third Junior Vice-Commander-Elect Joe Parsetich and family to the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Third Junior Vice-Commander-elect and family advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT JOSEPH PARSETICH: And I would like to introduce you to my lovely wife of going on 18 years, Meg Parsetich. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask the National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander-Elect Nancy Espinosa and her family to the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander-elect advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask the National Judge Advocate-Elect Michael E. Dobmeier and family to the stage if possible. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Judge Advocate-elect and family advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

JUDGE ADVOCATE-ELECT MICHAEL E. DOBMEIER: Thank you. You notice the first one that corrected me was Shannon down there and then Sandy was right behind her. (Laughter) This is my wife of 43 years, your past national auxiliary commander, Sandy. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I would like to ask our new National Chaplain-Elect Mike Dover and family to the stage, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the National Chaplain-elect advanced to the stage, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

CHAPLAIN-ELECT MICHAEL DOVER: Well, ladies and gentlemen, thank you again for your confidence and trust in me as your chaplain. I want to thank the national commander for a wonderful year and an honor it has been serving with you, ma'am. And I'm looking forward to serving with you, Dennis, and line officers. And thank you very much.

But, before I sit down, I have to tell a story on Dennis because he's too humble to tell it. And you know he's from Texas and he's full of pride. And I think it's worth sharing with the membership here since he's going to be your national commander.

And as you all know, or didn't know, Dennis owned a lot of land back in the day. And he's probably since sold a lot of that off and living comfortably with his wife now and family in a smaller setting. But he wanted to take a trip to Europe and explain to the, and show off the Texas way of landowning compared to the European farmers.

So when he gets over there he finds a European farmer and he approaches them and he's going to ask the question—well, how many acres do you own?—because he knew by asking that question he would be reciprocated with the like question to him.

And so the European farmer looks at Dennis and says, well, I only own about 20 acres. By that time the Texas pride in Dennis' chest welled up inside and he stood a little bit taller. And, of course, the question came from the European farmer and he says, well, how many acres do you own?

And Dennis says, well, I get up in the morning before the sun rises and I drive across my land and I can never get to the other end before the sun sets. Then there was a pause and the European farmer says, yes, I had a truck like that, too. (Laughter)

Ladies and gentlemen, for those of you who have supported my wife and I, she's back home healing from cancer and I appreciate the love and outpouring that you all have given us. She would have been here today but I wanted her to stay home and heal. And she knows that we're thinking about her. And I just appreciate the love you have all shown me.

Thank you very much, everyone. And looking forward to serving another year. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: It is my great pleasure to now call on National Commander-Elect Dennis Nixon for remarks. (Applause)

(Whereupon, reveille was played twice.)

COMMANDER-ELECT NIXON: One more time.

(Whereupon, reveille was played again.)

COMMANDER-ELECT NIXON: Thank you. Thank you. (Applause) Good afternoon and thank you so much. It is truly an honor, Delphine. And I want you to know I, and many gathered here, consider you

a mentor, a stellar advocate for the disabled veteran community, and I also am privileged to call you my friend. Thank you so much for your leadership over the past year. (Applause)

And before I get too far along here, there is a lot of people mentioned in my speech but there is a couple here that I want to personally recognize—Barry Jesinoski the executive director of the Washington office—or the Cincinnati office. I just demoted you, didn't I. (Laughter)

And Randy Reese, the assistant executive director of the Washington office. I don't see Garry but Garry Augustine, also. I consider all three of those truly good leaders and good friends. (Applause)

I think it's important to recognize that you are DAV. You are the ones carrying forth the important mission here and through the country. You deserve a tremendous amount of credit for the seriously and thoughtfully—for how seriously and thoughtfully you conduct business on behalf of our organization.

For the better part of the last half-century DAV has been a second calling to me. And throughout this whole time DAV has felt like home to me. My fellow veterans, our spouses, our caregivers and survivors have been my family.

Everyone I've ever met in this organization has a story. And each story is important and meaningful. Our connection with our cause is real. And our understanding of the definition of the word "sacrifice" is unique.

You wouldn't know it by looking at me now but there was a time that I was like—I'm sorry. But like many of you there was a time in my life when I was young and I was strong. Out of high school I enlisted in the Marine Corps. I found what I believed was my life calling.

I was young and fit, a lean, mean fighting machine. I even had hair, (Laughter) but kept it pretty tight—not quite as tight as it is now but tight. (Laughter) I've sort of transitioned that way, you know. I guess you could call me a jarhead without a lid. (Laughter)

But I loved the Marine Corps. I loved just about everything about it. I found my calling as a combat engineer. And as a very young man I was astonished that the United States government not only taught me how but paid me to blow things up. (Laughter)

I made sergeant in 23 months and loved nearly every aspect of my job.

As many of you know, 1969 was a unique time for our nation's military. For those of us in Vietnam it was a busy time. And it was often thrilling, and at other times frightening how much was happening.

This was especially true in our little part of the war in Danang. We were on Day Five of an Operation Pipestone Canyon, a mission that was planned for two weeks but ended up lasting six months.

On June 5th we had set up a command post and I realized I had lost my crimpers crossing a creek. Now for those of you who are not familiar with that particular tool, it is hard to explain its importance. But about the only other thing you might be able to use to attach detonation cord to a blasting cap in the field is your teeth. And as I'm known for my extreme good looks, I wasn't about to do that. (Laughter)

So I left my radio man at the perimeter and was hiking back along Highway 4 to a position not too distant from where we had dug in. I was going to get replacement crimpers from my lieutenant. That's when I blew the last landmine of my military career. Unlike the others, it wasn't an intentional demolition.

In an instant, the world I knew had changed forever. A Chinese Communist landmine ripped up through my body and, as a result, I lost my left leg above the knee and sustained very serious injuries throughout my body.

My dream—the only future I could imagine—of a career in the Marine Corps was over in an instant. It took 17 months of intensive care at Navy and VA hospitals for me to learn to walk. But even then I felt broken. I had gone from being young, cocky to feeling useless. And I had been invincible and suddenly felt defeated.

But like so many of you here, I picked up the pieces. I spent the next two years working with my father in the family business and attending college. But I felt guilty knowing that some of my fellow veterans were still in the fight. They were moving on and up in their careers and that possibility had ended for me.

That all changed in 1972 when I was accepted into the DAV national service office program and assigned to the field office in Waco. Suddenly, I was back in the right. I was making sure my fellow veterans weren't left behind. I was able to help them find justice. And that wasn't always easy to come by for a Vietnam veteran. (Applause)

Now, I wouldn't be here today without the support of my best friend and the love of my life, Maxine. (Applause) Combined, we're the proud parents of four and I'm "Pepaw" to eight. (Applause) As many of you with strong spouses can relate, she has made my work with DAV possible.

And I feel perpetually blessed to include my DAV family as a source of strength and inspiration over the course of nearly 40 years in Waco. DAV gave me the opportunity to learn and to lead. I'm especially

grateful for my mentors, people like past National Adjutant Art Wilson, Adjutant Marc Burgess, and the many leaders who have shaped my journey at the chapter, department and national levels.

Also, DAV has given me many lifelong friends like past National Commander Ron Hope and so many others who share our passion and commitment to our cause. And I see the beginnings of a legacy that I helped form by recruiting and training others.

That includes John Kleindienst, National Voluntary Services Director; Rob Lougee, Assistant National Employment Director; Ron Minter, Assistant National Voluntary Services Director; Jennifer Kellogg, Area Seven Supervisor; and Don Warren, Supervisor of the Georgia National Service Office, just to name a few.

I feel a special kinship with the leaders and members of the DAV Department of Texas similar to the community of veterans throughout our organization.

If there's one thing that I would leave all of you with today it's to ask you to think about your DAV legacy. DAV gives us a unique opportunity to empower and improve the lives of our fellow veterans. It helps us ensure promises are kept. And we know our services are substantive and vital.

The seeds that we plant today contribute to the legacy of our mission. And many of us remember World War II veterans in every elected position in our chapter. Some of us remember World War I veterans.

It's a strange thing when you wake up and you realize that you have become the "old guy" or gal at the meetings. (Applause) For us Vietnam veterans, we may remember many different leaders who shaped our outlook on DAV—some for better and some for worse. Some of us may remember feeling discouraged when we presented ideas and they were shot down. And now we're the ones calling the shots.

If the organization is to continue the work we're doing today and the work we're doing today is to ensure, we need to be the voice of encouragement. We need to inspire. We need to thank people who are doing the right things. We need to be mentors.

Even a blasting-cap biting Marine can tell you that the most effective weapon in a DAV leader's arsenal is a well-placed and sincere "thank you." It can make all the difference in the world to the people who are donating their most precious commodity—their time. So, to those of you here today, I say, thank you. (Applause)

May God bless all the young men and women currently in harm's way. May God bless all of you. May God bless DAV. And may God bless the USA. (Applause) And now, let's all get to work. Semper Fi. (Response of "Semper Fi, followed by a standing ovation.")

(Whereupon, Commander Metcalf-Foster placed the National Commander's cap on Commander-Elect Nixon, at which time an official photograph was taken, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT NIXON: Thank you. Thank you all.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Now our National Senior Vice-Commander-Elect, would you like to come up for words? (Applause)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT WHITEHEAD: Well, Commander, congratulations on your election and I look forward to serving with you and we're going to have a great year.

To the members of DAV, thank you for all the hard work you guys do for our organization but for the veterans that we serve. I look forward to working with you, serving for you, and let's have a great year. Thanks, everybody. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Our National First Junior Vice-Commander, Donald Day. (Applause)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT DAY: Thank you, Delphine. You know I once told Dennis Nixon that I'm going to move up in the scheme of things and he said, "Maybe." (Laughter) And I thanked him for that. And I thank all of you for your support through the years. And thank you for another year. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Andrew H. Marshall. (Applause)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT ANDREW H. MARSHALL: Good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT MARSHALL: Florida, we made it again. (Applause) And I told Dennis I've never heard him talk that much in 30-some years I've known him. (Laughter)

Commander, it has been a pleasure.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Andy.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT MARSHALL: You know when I was elected national fourth and third junior vice-commander I was very fortunate to be part of history of the DAV electing our first Coast Guard veteran and quadruple amputee as our national commander and then this

past year having our first female national commander of any veterans' organization I got to serve with two fine people. (Applause) Thank you.

I'm very lucky in that respect. And when they said, you know, bring your family up on stage I wish all of you could have come up here with me. It's been a pleasure. I look forward to serving with you. My friend for over 30 years, Dennis, anything I can do, let me know. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Now our Third Junior Vice-Commander Joseph Parsetich. (Applause)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT JOSEPH PARSETICH: Thank you, Commander Metcalf-Foster and National Adjutant Burgess. And congratulations to my commander-in-chief here. As far as Dennis Nixon, I can't think of a better person to follow. I'm honored to serve on your line.

But I also want to give thanks where thanks is definitely due, first of all to God for the health and everything that he has blessed me with, especially that of a Godly wife because without her support this wouldn't be possible.

But I also want to thank all of you for entrusting me with the responsibility to represent you in the fashion that will bring dignity to our organization and to each and every one of you to have my voice be heard on your behalf. So for all of that. Thank you for a great year last year. Expect some bigger and better things as we continue to grow in our organization.

God bless you all. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: And our National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Nancy Espinosa. (Applause)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT NANCY ESPINOSA: Commander Nixon, I am honored to work with you. I am looking forward to it. Anything I can do to help, I am here to work.

I want to thank everyone who supported me, especially the 17th District (Applause) and our friends in all the other districts. Thank you so much. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Our National Judge Advocate Michael Dobmeier. (Applause)

JUDGE ADVOCATE-ELECT MICHAEL E. DOBMEIER: Thank you, Commander.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you.

JUDGE ADVOCATE-ELECT DOBMEIER: You have already met Sandy. I want to thank the 14th District for their continued support and each and every one of you. (Applause) We don't take this for granted. This is a special opportunity for us to function with you and to help veterans. And we appreciate it. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: And our National Chaplain Michael Dover. (Applause)

CHAPLAIN-ELECT MICHAEL PATRICK DOVER: Commander, I'm good. I'm good. (Laughter)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: At this time I will entertain a motion to discharge the Credentials Committee. Do I hear a motion? May I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. KIRK JOHNSON: Mic 2, Kirk Johnson, past state commander of California, make the motion.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Do I hear a second?

MR. JOHNSON: I make the second.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: All in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

National Adjutant Burgess, would you please read the list of our newly-elected National Executive Committee members.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: The following members have been elected to the National Executive Committee for the two-year term 2018 to 2020: District 2, Keith Robinson out of New York; District 4, Benjamin Flynn from Delaware; District 6, Robert Cox from Virginia; District 8, Jerry Bratton from Mississippi; (Applause) District 10, James Dempsey from Michigan; (Applause) District 12, Kevin Walkowski out of Wisconsin; District 14, Warren Tobin out of North Dakota; (Applause) District 16, Kirk Johnson out of California; (Applause) District 18, Julian Crawford from Hawaii; and District 20, Thomas Parker from Texas. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Congratulations, all of you. Believe it or not, that concludes today's agenda. Marc, do you have any announcements?

But before I do that I have to go off script.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Go right ahead, Commander.

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: I walked in saying this and I'm going to leave saying it—Is there any Air Force in the house? (Cheers) Any Navy in the house? (Cheers) Any Coast Guard in the house? (Cheers) Any Marines in the house? (Cheers) Now, the tree that holds up all the branches, is there any Army in this house? (Cheers)

Do you have any announcements? (Laughter)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: As a reminder to all the National Executive Committee members, including those newly-elected, the National Executive Committee will meet immediately following adjournment of the Convention, in just a few minutes, in the Tahoe Room on this level. 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 p.m. here in the Summit Pavilion followed by dinner. You cannot enter without a ticket so make sure you bring your ticket.

Following this afternoon's session dinner tickets can be picked up in the Grand Salon. Tickets will be available in the Grand Salon until after the banquet begins. So come and enjoy an evening filled with ceremony, food, friends, music, entertainment, and get to know your newly-elected national officers. (Applause)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: So come and enjoy an evening with celebration, food and friends. Chaplain Dover, would you please lead us in the closing prayer?

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 dedicated 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 be the blessing be upon us and remain with us for always. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Thank you, Chaplain. Retire the Colors.

(Whereupon, the Colors were retired by the Black Mountain Chapter 12 Color Guard, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER METCALF-FOSTER: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in thanking the Black Mountain Chapter 12 and their color guard. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, the 97th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans is now adjourned. We'll see you next year in Orlando. (Applause)

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned on Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 2:26 o'clock, p.m.)

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**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
96th NATIONAL CONVENTION**

**Grand Sierra Resort and Casino
Reno, Nevada**

July 14, 2018

First Business Session

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The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Reno Ballroom on the Casino Level of the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, Nevada, on Saturday afternoon, July 14, 2018, and was called to order at 2:02 o'clock, p.m., by National Adjutant Patricia S. Kemper.

ADJUTANT PATRICIA S. KEMPER: Okay, we are going to call this meeting to order. As a reminder, please shut the sound off on your cell phones, please—myself included.

Also, we will try to keep the aisles free. If you have a cart you need to park in the aisle we will work it out if we have to move some chairs out of the way to accommodate your situation. We just want to make sure there aren't any missteps.

Okay, National Sergeant-at-Arms please present National Commander Craig Johniken to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Commander William "Craig" Johniken 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, Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Judge Advocate Donna Adams is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Judge Advocate Donna M. Adams was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have National Third Junior Vice-Commander Carolyn Sensat escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Third Junior Vice-Commander Carolyn Sensat was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have National Second Junior Vice-Commander Lynn Helms Prosser escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Second Junior Vice-Commander Lynn Helms Prosser was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have National First Junior Vice-Commander Diane Franz escorted to the platform, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, First Junior Vice-Commander Diane Franz was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have National Senior Vice-Commander Ellen Timmerman escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Senior Vice-Commander Ellen Timmerman was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have Immediate Past National Commander Frances Costa escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Immediate Past National Commander Francis J. Costa was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have National Convention Chairman Beverly Baker of Nevada escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Convention Committee Chairman Beverly Baker was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, present and post the State Colors of Nevada.

(Whereupon, the Colors for the State of Nevada 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 CHARLENE K. PARKER: Post Colors.

(Whereupon, the National Colors were posted.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please dismiss the Color Bearers, please.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Dismiss Color bearers.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: We will now have a prayer by National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus.

(Whereupon, Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for bringing us, each of us, safely here today. We pray for our families that are at home, that you will care for each and every one of them.

We give thanks for our junior members that are here and show the patriotism that we heard today and that we've seen and witnessed. We thank you for our future that's in their hands.

We pray as we go forward to these meetings that you will guide us and help us to make good decisions for the future of our organization. Guide all of our words and actions. Help us to be kind to one another and thoughtful before we speak.

In Your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which Chaplain Nicodemus withdrew from the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: We will be led in the Pledge of Allegiance by National Americanism Chairman Carolyn Sensat.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice-Commander and National Americanism Chairman advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN CAROLYN SENSAT: Free your hands. Stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join in the Pledge of Allegiance of our Flag.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice-Commander and Americanism Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance, after which she withdrew from the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: 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 96th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary to be convened at Reno, Nevada.

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.

Now, it is my honor and privilege to introduce someone who has led this organization extremely well this past year. He has been a dedicated commander. He has been so busy burning up the phone wires talking to me. We communicate nearly every day. It's just been a really good and productive year.

And it is my honor to introduce the man who has represented everyone in this room, every member of our organization well, National Commander Craig Johniken. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, the Commander advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER WILLIAM "CRAIG" JOHNIKEN: Thank you all. This has truly been an amazing experience for me. I want to introduce our National Convention Chair Beverly Baker. (Applause)

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

CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BEVERLY BAKER: Well, I want to thank you for this award—wait, that's the wrong speech. (Laughter) Welcome—

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Here it is.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BAKER: Yes, really. Thank you. Welcome to the national convention. We are thrilled to have you. This is an opportunity for us to renew friendship for people that we have met in the past, to make new friends with folks who have the same goals in mind. And that's working for the veterans.

I was in the business, casino business for 30 years. When I retired I said to my husband, "Do not ask me to join anything." Right. Now, just a few years later, it has become my life.

There is not a day goes by that I am not working on a project near and dear to my heart—and that's helping the veterans or the DAV chapter that is with our auxiliary unit.

So, with that, I hope that I speak words for every auxiliary person in this audience from my heart to all veterans and communities—we have you six.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. You've done an amazing job, by the way. Thank you.

Now I have the honor of introducing the Past National Commanders that are present: first up is Linda Trulio, please stand and be acknowledged; (Applause) Judy Steinhouse; (Applause) Sandy Dobmeier; Susan Henry; (Applause) Patti Rapisand; (Applause) Donna Adams; (Applause) Susan Miller; (Applause) LeeAnn Karg; and last but certainly not least, Fran Costa. (Applause)

(Whereupon, as their names were called each Past National Commander stood and acknowledged the delegates.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Oh, Paula Raymond—how could I forget you? (Applause) Sorry about that. It won't happen the next session. (Laughter)

I would like to acknowledge the state delegates. As I call your name please stand and be recognized. Alabama, Marilyn Edwards; (Applause) and if I mess up anybody's name, don't be offended; I do it all the time; Arizona, Bill Sumler; (Applause) Arkansas, Rhonda Bauer; (Applause) California, Christine Castillo; (Applause) Colorado, Leslie Sandoval; (Applause) Florida, Maria Holloway; (Applause) Georgia, Cheyra Causey; (Applause) that's why I like to have Pat here; she keeps me straight; Idaho, Sienna Stewart; (Applause) Illinois, Karen Eccles; (Applause) Indiana, Lynn Swanson; (Applause) Iowa, Melissa Pierce; (Applause) Kansas, Karen Brader; (Applause) Kentucky, Tawnya Kingsley; (Applause) Louisiana, Linden Comeaux; Maine, Erin O'Brien; (Applause) Maryland, Elizabeth Swientek; (Applause) is that good? Massachusetts, Janet Pratt; (Applause) Michigan, John Olinger; (Applause) Minnesota, Nancy Berndt; (Applause) that was close, I guess; Mississippi, Lee Benoit; (Applause) Missouri, Sharon Keyes; (Applause) Nebraska, Harold (Indistinguishable); Nevada, Beverly Baker; (Applause) New Hampshire, Melanie Joyce; (Applause) New Jersey, Linda Applegate; (Applause) New Mexico, Teresa Barr; (Applause) New York, Terry Grabowski; (Applause) North Carolina, Margaret Snelling; (Applause) North Dakota, Bernadine Burke (Applause) Ohio, Darlene Hanneman; (Applause) Oklahoma, Marie Hansen; (Applause) Oregon, Vickie Partridge; (Applause) Pennsylvania, Laurie Stopyra; (Applause) Rhode Island, Linda Folcarelli; (Applause) South Carolina, Wanda Parker; (Applause) South Dakota, Verna Messerschmidt; (Applause) it was a gallant effort, wasn't it? (Laughter) Tennessee, Jeannette Stinnett; (Applause) Texas, Cherie Hansard; (Applause) Utah, Beth Maughan; (Applause) Vermont, Karen Rediker; (Applause) Virginia, Amy Bowser; (Applause) Washington, Marion Wagner; (Applause) Wisconsin, Linda Gresbach; (Applause) Wyoming, Nancy Coffey; (Applause) Puerto Rico, Anna Iris Pagan-Delgado. (Applause)

(Whereupon, as the representatives' names were called, they advanced to their seats and were recognized.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: All right. I would now like to call on Past National Commander Patti Rapisand to bring greetings.

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Patrice Rapisand advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER PATRICE "PATTI" RAPISAND: Okay, Commando Craig.

Commando is the masculine of commander. Madam Commander—we call him Sir Commando. (Laughter)

On behalf of the past national commanders—I'm like "commandos" here—commanders, we would like to give greetings to you all. It's very nice to be here among everybody again.

Craig, if you would stand. This is a gift for you from the past national commanders. We are very proud of you. And you have done a wonderful job. And I'm excited because, of course, he came from Texas. (Applause)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: It's not going to blow up is it? (Laughter)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER RAPISAND: But it's from all of us. And thank you. And maybe next year we'll let you in our club—our all girls club.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you, Patti.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER RAPISAND: You're welcome.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: And, by the way, there it is. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Rapisand withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Okay, at this time we would like to recognize first-time attendees. We'd like for all of you to stand up and remain standing while your first-timer ribbons are passed out.

(Whereupon, first-time attendees stood, were recognized with a round of applause and were handed first-timer ribbons, after which they sat down.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I hope all you first-timers have an amazing experience here. And it makes you definitely want to come back and see what this thing is all about.

And we hope to see all of you at Fall Conference this year where we can build and keep trying to learn how things are done in this organization. It's awesome to have you all here.

Please remain standing. I know it's going to take a little time to get all these ribbons passed out but this looks like an amazing group to have this many first-timers here today. We're proud of you all. (Applause)

All right, is there anybody else that did not get their ribbons? There is one right there.

Okay, at this time I would like to recognize our PNC Outstanding Member of the Year recipient Miss Mary Lee Kolter of Florida. Would you please stand.

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

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: She's pretty amazing, all the things that she has accomplished so far, and she has many more years to keep going with that.

At this time I would like to excuse the Nominating Committee. So you all can go and start getting your business together—otherwise known as the firing squad. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, members of the Nominating Committee withdrew from the ballroom.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: 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 hears the information through his or her headphones.

Will the Credentials Chairman Allan Schwartz please come forward to give a preliminary report of the Credentials Committee?

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

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ALLAN SCHWARTZ: Commander, National Officers, delegates and guests, the Credential report is as follows.

Total units registered, 136; total departments registered, 38; national officers registered, 8; past national commanders registered, 7; total guests registered, 176; total registered, 506; total delegates, 289; total alternates, 26; total vote count of 1,035.

Commander, I move that we accept the Credentials report.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion to accept the preliminary report of the Credentials Committee. Is there a second?

(Whereupon, someone called out a second from the floor.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: You have to go to a microphone, Kathy.

MS. KATHY DUNHAM: I second it, Unit 22, Texas, Kathy Dunham. (Applause)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carries.

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

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: The first order of business is the adoption of the National Convention Rules. Printed copies of the Convention Rules have been furnished to all registered delegates. The Chair will now entertain a motion for adoption of these rules.

MS. CAROL LEE: Carol Lee, Michigan, Unit 130, I make the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: All right. And we need a second.

MS. KIMBERLY OLINGER: Kim Olinger, Unit 2, Michigan, second the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JUDY STEINHOUSE: Commander Craig, Judy Steinhouse, Valley City, North Dakota, Unit 24, at the National 2017 Convention Article V, Section 6, National Interim Constitution and Bylaws Committee was changed to read:

"All proposed constitution and bylaw amendments shall be sent to the National Adjutant no later than ten (10) days prior to the National Convention. The amendments shall be signed by the sponsor."

Convention Rule Number 7 also should have been updated at that time to coincide with the approved bylaw amendment. However, it was overlooked. Therefore, I move that we change Convention Rule Number 7 to read:

"All proposed constitution and bylaw amendments shall be sent to the National Adjutant no later than ten (10) days prior to the National Convention. The amendments shall be signed by the sponsor."

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Can we have a motion to accept the amendment—oh, she made the motion. We need a second to that.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Susan Henry, Past National Commander, seconds.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. We have a motion and a second. Is there any more discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

Okay, now we're having another vote on the original convention rules. And we already have a first and a second so all we've got to do is call for the vote. I call for the vote. All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. Carried.

May I have a motion to accept the agenda subject to changes? The agenda is written.

MS. LINDA BRATCHER: Linda Bratcher, District 13, make a motion that we accept them.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: What's the unit?

MS. BRATCHER: Unit 27, Indiana.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Okay. Thank you. I need a second.

MS. BETH MAUGHAN: Beth Maughan, Ogden, Utah, Unit Number 4, I second.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

I will now call on the Finance Committee Chairman Christopher Easley for the National Finance Committee report and the budget review.

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

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CHRISTOPHER EASLEY: National Commander Craig Johniken, national officers, past national commanders, delegates, family and friends, good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN EASLEY: The National Finance Committee meeting was held April 7th, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. at the Hilton Cincinnati Airport Hotel in Florence, Kentucky.

The voting members on the Committee present were Craig Johniken, national commander; Elizabeth Eldridge District 1 NEC; Linda Applegate, District 4 NEC; Delores Roussey, District 7 NEC; and myself, Christopher Easley, District 20 NEC.

Those present without a vote were National Senior Vice-Commander Ellen Timmerman, National Adjutant Pat Kemper; and National Assistant Adjutant Bunny Clos and National Finance Committee Advisor Sylvia Heath.

The purpose of the meeting was to set up and adopt a budget for the 2019 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 packet. And at this time I move for adoption of the budget.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: There is a motion on the floor by Finance Committee Chairman Christopher Easley to accept the budget. Is there a second?

MS. AMY BOWSER: Amy Bowser, Unit 48, Virginia, I second it.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the Finance Committee Chairman withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Now I guess I have to ask for the Senior Vice-Commander to take over the chair. Taking my job early.

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice-Commander advanced to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER ELLEN TIMMERMAN: Taking your job early, yes. (Laughter) I will now present our National Commander Craig Johniken for the purpose of reading his report.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: National Adjutant Kemper, line officers, members and guests, I'm honored to give my year-end report to a group of people who I have come to admire over the past six years.

You remember when you were a child and waiting for Christmas Eve? For weeks before that day you would hardly wait to get up on Christmas morning to see what surprise awaited you from Santa Claus.

You come running into the living room and suddenly you saw what awaited you. You may have felt almost sad because the surprise was over and there was nothing left to wait for.

When I went on the national line six years ago it seemed like I would, it would take an eternity to get through the national commander—almost like waiting for Christmas morning.

Each year I was nervous and anxious to learn if I would make it up the rung of the ladder one more time. (Laughter) In 2017 I finally made it to the top. I went home, stayed focused, worked on our mission, and turned around and here I am again. And it all happened in the "blink of an eye."

I am not sad. I feel proud of being a part of this great organization. I feel we all accomplished a lot this year. I would like to briefly touch on some of the things.

I attended the TEE Tournament in Iowa for the first time in 2017. While I realized—while I was there I was in awe of this event. There was many caregivers present and how much they gave of themselves.

I wondered why we as an organization could not give some type of respite care to the spouses that accompany their spouses to adaptive sports events.

Although there are many volunteers present, each of them have a job to do. My thought was even if we could financially offer a luncheon, a small program for some time away for being a caregiver that would not only be appreciated but allow this group to meet each other.

I spoke to Pat when I returned and together we approached the DAV. I am happy to say we now have this program and we will be actively fundraising for this cause. I would like to thank Marc Burgess, John Kleindienst, Barry Jesinoski for their support for this new program.

This year has been great and full of opportunities to visit and participate by representing the DAV Auxiliary national organization.

In September I got the opportunity to go to the TEE Tournament and it was the birthplace of the caregiver program.

I also attended the Fall Conference where I believe everyone had an exciting time as well as received a lot of educational opportunities.

In October I had the honor of presenting the state charter back to West Virginia.

November was a big month for me. I attended and volunteered at the DAV 5K held in San Antonio. I also attended the Veterans' Day in Birmingham, Alabama.

While in Birmingham I received a tour of the VA medical center, had a sit-down with the director, and then we toured the VA clinic where a new women's clinic had been opened. Both facilities were awesome.

I also had the privilege of taking a part in the memorial service and tribute to Raymond Weeks, the father of Veterans' Day. I toured a state veterans' home while we were in town, had a history lesson, and they were fantastic. The Veterans' Day parade was like no other I have ever attended.

In February I attended a veterans' program at the Waco VA Medical Center. The grounds of this facility are wonderful. The employees are truly loving towards their patients.

I also attended the Mid-Winter Conference in D.C. I was honored to speak at the conference as well as attend Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster's testimony on The Hill. The commander did an excellent job.

While I was at Mid-Winter I had the opportunity to lay the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. We included Delphine in this event to show a united front for the Auxiliary and the DAV.

In March I went to Snowmass and home of the Winter Sports Clinic. This is where I found myself. It is truly amazing what these athletes accomplish on the mountain.

My testimonial was held in San Antonio, Texas. And I was truly honored to have several members attend. My hat is off to Darlene Spence, Charlene Parker, Greg Dunham, Kathy Dunham, Patti Rapisand, my son, Tim, my daughter, my grandchildren, and last but not least, certainly my wife for everything that they did for this event.

Commander Delphine's testimonial came on the heels of mine in San Francisco, California. A fun time was had by all.

June of 2018 the Department of Texas held their convention. There was a lot of business taken care of and a beach theme that was a lot of fun.

July, DAV Day at the Ballpark in Frisco, Texas, it was fantastic. Also, got to attend the CNA orientation in Cold Spring.

The states that I visited this year were I was treated so well was Minnesota, Louisiana, New York, and Puerto Rico. Many thanks to all of you who welcomed me so warmly.

In closing I have to admit the next few days will be bittersweet for me. I offer myself to anyone that would like to work towards being a national officer. I encourage you to try.

I also encourage you that this decision should be approached for the right reasons. Working as a team with your line officers, fellow members and the National Adjutant Pat Kemper, to move the mission forward is the only right answer.

I have had the honor of carrying the prestigious title of national commander but I am now excited about taking on a more prestigious title, and that's a member.

Thank you all for being a part of my dash. (Standing Ovation)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: I will now entertain a motion to accept the national commander's report as read.

MR. CHRISTOPHER EASLEY: Christopher Easley, Alamo Unit 5, the great State of Texas, I make the motion.

MS. FRANCES MOSES-KNIGHT: Good afternoon. My name is Frances Moses-Knight, Unit 22, out of the State of Virginia for the second. (Laughter)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER TIMMERMAN: Those in favor of accepting this motion; those opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the Senior Vice-Commander returned to her seat.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I've got to find my place here. Hold on. Bear with me. Okay. I would now call on Strategic Planning Chairman Sandy Dobmeier for a Committee report.

(Whereupon, the Convention Strategic Planning Chairman advanced to the podium.)
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SANDRA DOBMEIER: Good afternoon, everyone.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DOBMEIER: Commander Johniken appointed a committee to review the DAV Auxiliary's Strategic Plan that was developed a few years ago.

The Committee members were Sylvia Heath, Donna Tanner, Pat Kemper and myself, Sandy Dobmeier. The Committee reviewed the entire Strategic Plan. A few minor changes were made to update some of the wording to make it more current.

The primary change was adding "caregivers" to this plan. It was added to the vision, the strategy for our goals; and the caregiver initiative program was also added.

The five goals of the DAV Auxiliary were also reviewed. A couple of the goals were renumbered because work has been done and continues to be done on all of these goals.

The order of the goals is now:

Number 1. Staying the same is Membership which is very important for our organization.

Goal Number 2 is now to grow growth of the DAV Auxiliary by becoming more welcoming and supportive of new ways and ideas while still maintaining the traditions of our organization.

Number 3 is the same regarding technology and communication techniques to reach the DAV Auxiliary members and potential new members of all generations.

Number 4 is still the same—developing standard operating procedures to maintain continuity for the organization at the national, state, and unit levels.

Goal Number 5 is now to create and maintain a sustainable financial income to support and grow the DAV Auxiliary programs and activities.

A photo change will also be made to include a caregiver photo for our plan.

Because there were no real big change made to the plan, a new revised plan, the new revised plan will be updated and then posted on the DAV Auxiliary website for everyone.

I would like to thank Commander Johniken for having the Strategic Plan reviewed to help keep our organization moving forward and the Committee members, also, Sylvia Heath, Donna Tanner, and especially National Adjutant Pat Kemper for all of her work with the updates we made and scheduling all of our meetings.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Okay, now I'm going to call on our, all of our good friend, Pat Kemper, for announcements.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: I do have several announcements. (Applause) Thanks. Okay, as a reminder, the Memorial Service is tomorrow morning at 7 a.m. Business attire is appropriate. The NECs will participate in that. Those who were missing from the practice yesterday, I have reached out to you or your district so we will have representation.

The national chairmen are to pick up their respective committee folders tomorrow morning in the Auxiliary office. I believe you all know where that is.

And that's over by where you purchased your Forget-Me-Not Luncheon ticket which segues right into the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon discussion which is Monday at 12:30. Tickets must be shown when entering. So you want to make sure you bring your ticket with you.

And then along those lines, as well, we've said it pretty often; we have to continue repeating it. In order to enter any of the events at this Convention you must wear your credential badge. Everyone must be registered, including children.

Also, there is an event tonight. Tickets are required. And you must get those tickets over in the registration area, the DAV registration area. And that is for a Frankie Valli concert for those who are interested in that event. And it is free. It's complimentary. You can't get much cheaper than that. (Laughter)

So let me scroll and make sure I don't miss anything here. The convention committee meetings, they do convene tomorrow morning so look on your little schedules that were handed to you when you registered to see where the rooms and times are.

Please be prompt so that the rest of the committee members don't have to sit and wait around on you because they want to get out as well and take care of the business that they need to and then move on. So please be prompt if you can.

We do have—if you haven't stopped by or noticed this by our registration area—not registration area, where we're selling the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon tickets for the Auxiliary, we are, in an effort, it's a fundraising effort, DAV National Headquarters approved this fundraiser for us at this convention.

So we are accepting donations for the Caregiver Initiative. We're really excited about this but we can't do great things without the money. So you know everything falls on the money.

So if you make a donation, even of a dollar, you're going to get this nice ribbon. It says, "I support veteran caregivers" and you can put that on your badge and that's some bragging rights there.

For those who donate \$25 or more, you have your choice of a water bottle or a little tool kit. All donations are appreciated and will be put to the best use. You are guaranteed that they will be put to the best use.

For those of you, before you scoot out of here, if you are interested, following this meeting we are going to have an informational seminar on the newly-revised financial report form.

It's been changed up a little bit. We are requiring more information to validate and support the expenses and income. So I do urge you, especially treasurers but everybody should stay because you never know if you are going to be elected treasurer someday.

Another thing, the juniors, any junior is welcome to participate in a junior activity event that we have scheduled for tomorrow. Many of the juniors were preregistered and we did order t-shirts for them. But we only ordered t-shirts for those who preregistered.

So if your child did not get preregistered this year I'm sorry they won't get a shirt but actually they can still participate in the really fun stuff that's planned.

So what the, what we need to have happen is the juniors and their parent or guardian must come to the Auxiliary National Headquarters Office tomorrow morning. They will get their t-shirt if preregistered, but even if not preregistered all juniors will get a wrist band.

And this wrist band will allow them to participate in some of the hotel fun events that we have worked out for them. So I really encourage you to have your children or grandchildren participate.

And the activities are the child's choice of two hours of gaming at Fun Quest or two hours at Tumble Town. Tumble Town—I won't be there. (Laughter) Child's choice of one round of laser tag or one bumper car ride at Fun Quest. Bumper cars are fun.

Child's choice of one go-cart race or one game of mini golf at Grand Adventure. And one game of bowling, shoes included. I think that's pretty nice. And it's nice that the hotel was willing to work with us and coordinate this for us. (Applause)

I mean it's not free from the hotel but we've worked it out and I think they've been very generous. And I am sure the kids will enjoy it.

Also, with regard to juniors, National Junior Activities Chairman Kim Stake, she's in the back of the room, yesterday afternoon I believe she passed out some maps for the juniors to run around and gather and accumulate state pins.

So if there are any juniors that were not in the room yesterday and did not get those maps, please see Kim. She is in the back of the room and she will have those for you.

And if you haven't already registered for the dinner on Tuesday night make sure you stop by that desk. That's over in the DAV registration area. And they will be doing table seat assignments.

And it's my understanding, again, that the assignments will be given out to you on Tuesday afternoon, after the DAV Business Session has closed.

So, again, we are going to be having a financial report information seminar immediately following the close of this session. And we do encourage everyone to attend.

And since we are having this meeting, we would like for those who are not interested in staying to please clear the room so we can move forward with this seminar.

So thank you for coming. And I turn this over to the national commander.

Oh, one more thing. I think you have noticed. The DAV usually has backpacks for their members. And last year, and the year before, and the year before I think we had tote bags. This year we have the briefcase type bag packet for you.

Some of our members have expressed interest in backpacks. They like the backpacks. (Applause) So by applause would you tell me if you are interested in backpacks? (Applause) So how many are not interested in backpacks? (Applause) That was pretty close.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: You ain't getting nothing. (Laughter)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Okay. Well, I don't know what we will have next year. We will talk about this later. Okay. National commander.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We will now have our closing prayer, Aura-Lee Nicodemus. (Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Dear Heavenly Father, we ask that you will bless us as we go forward. Bless our fun. Help us to enjoy the special times that we share together.

We pray that our juniors will have fun with all their activities and enjoy making new friends and treasuring the time that we all have together.

Bless us. Keep us. Guide us. And help us to keep an open mind so that we can learn in the seminars that we are about to attend and those tomorrow.

We ask a special prayer upon those in this room who have had recent losses, that you will bless and keep each and every one of them. Know that we love them and surround them with our love throughout this convention.

We pray that you will walk with us as we go forward. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the Chaplain withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: This Convention stands in recess and will convened at 9:00 a.m. Monday morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 3:00 o'clock, p.m., on Saturday, July 14, 2018.)

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**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
96th NATIONAL CONVENTION**

**Grand Sierra Resort and Casino
Reno, Nevada**

July 16, 2018

Second Business Session

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The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Reno Ballroom on the Casino Level of the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, Nevada, on Monday morning, July 16, 2018, and was called to order at 9:01 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander William "Craig" Johniken.

COMMANDER WILLIAM "CRAIG" JOHNIKEN: I want to remind everybody to keep the aisles clear and please turn your cell phone off or silence it.

Also, if you haven't purchased your Forget-Me-Not Luncheon ticket we still have a few left. Please feel free to by the Auxiliary counter over here and do that. And don't forget to make your donation to get your ribbon to put on the bottom of your badge.

First off we will have our prayer by Aura-Lee Nicodemus.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the privilege to be here together today. We give thanks for each and every person who came from all around the United States and Puerto Rico to be with us and share in the major decisions of our organization.

We give thanks for the many talents that make us and bring us together: the people that can sing; the people that can write; the people that have each and every talent that make us grow.

We pray for our families here that need our support today, those that have lost loved ones. Help us to be with them and support them in the ways that they best can help and need.

We pray for those involved with our natural disasters from coast-to-coast, including those here in Nevada with the wildfires. We ask that you will protect the firefighters that are fighting those.

We also ask that you will be with the family of the fallen police officer from Massachusetts, that you will care for him and his family as they go forward.

We ask your blessings upon our meetings. We ask that you will help us to be fair, kind, and impartial. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen" after which the Chaplain withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We will now have the Pledge of Allegiance by Carolyn Sensat.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice-Commander and National Americanism Chairman advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN SENSAT: Free your hands. Stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice-Commander and Americanism Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance, after which she withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Will the Credentials Chairman please come forward and give an updated report of the Credentials Committee, Iris Brzezinski? And, by the way, let's keep Mr. Schwartz in our prayers. He's having some medical difficulties right at this point.

(Whereupon, members called out, "We can't hear you.")

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I want everybody to keep Mr. Schwartz in their prayers. He's having some medical difficulties this morning so Iris will be taking his place.

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

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN IRIS BRZEZINSKI: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BRZEZINSKI: Commander, national officers, delegates and guests. The Credential report is as follows:

Total Units registered, 137, total departments registered, 40; national officers registered, 8; past national commanders registered, 7; total guests registered, 179; total delegates, 294; total alternates, 26; total vote count, 1,040.

Commander, I move that we accept the Credential report. Oh, total registered, 514.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion to accept the preliminary report of the Credentials Committee. Is there a second?

MS. JENNY CLARK: Jenny Clark, Unit 1, Oregon, I second the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; is anybody opposed. The motion carried.

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

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: 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 a second reading.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman and Past National Commander advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JUDY STEINHOUSE: National commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 96th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Constitution and Bylaws Convention Committee met in the Nevada Room Number 1 at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 15th. Our advisor was Donna Adams. I, Judy Steinhouse, served as convention chairman. And Susan Henry was elected as our secretary.

As I call the names of the Committee members, I ask that you please stand: District Number 1, Ann Marie Hurley; District Number 2—and I apologize if I ruin these names—District Number 2, Diane Wisnesky—excuse me;

District Number 3, Sylvia Heath; District Number 4, Sara Kashner; District Number 5, Loretta Nosko; District Number 6, Amy Bowser; District Number 7, Delores Roussey; District Number 8, Susan Henry; District Number 9, Margaret Snelling; District Number 10, Carol Lee; District Number 11, Darlene Hanneman; District Number 12, Patricia Davis; District Number 13, Melissa Driver;

I was from District 14; District 15, Linda Gerke; District 16, John Medvigy; District 17, Beth Maughan; District 18, Sharon Linton; District 19, Jenny Clark; District 20, Christopher Easley; and District 21, Vera Hendrickson. I thank you all for being on this Committee. (Applause)

It was a great committee. We had a good time and sit back and relax while I read these. Proposed Constitution and Bylaw Amendments for 2017-2018.

Page N-13, Article I, National Convention, Section 5, Official Rules of the National Convention, Rule 21B. Delete "Hospital".

Rationale: Recommendation is to report non-VA hospital information on the Community Service report. We have seen many times hospital information on the Community Service report. This non-VA hospital work is probably more related to Community Service work than the VAVS program is.

Page N-13, Article I, National Convention, Section 5, Official Rules of the National Convention, Rule 21B. Change the name of the Mae Holmes Award to Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award.

Rule 21B would then read:

"The following Committees are appointed: Committees on Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislation, Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award, and VAVS. These Committees shall consider all matters relating to their programs and shall designate the winners of their respective awards."

Rationale: the National Executive Committee approved renaming the award in 2015 and this amendment will bring the Committee name into compliance.

Page N-15, Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 1, National Commander, third paragraph, second line. Remove "National Hospital Chairman".

Rationale: if elimination of a non-VA hospital program is approved, this position is no longer needed.

Page N-25, Article V, National Committees and Chairmen. Add new Section 7 as follows:

"Section 7. Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year Committee.

"The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year Committee shall be a revolving committee composed of the immediate Past National Commander and the two (2) preceding Past National Commanders. They shall select a member who exemplifies distinguished dedication and remarkable accomplishments through the years for the DAV Auxiliary. This award may be presented at a national convention."

Rationale: provides award and committee recognition in the national bylaws. The award name recognizes an outstanding member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary and all costs associated with this award are paid by the national organization. This is moved from Page XXIII in the Bylaws.

Page N-26, Article VII, Membership, Section 2, Membership Basic Rights and Privileges, fourth line. Delete paragraph and substitute the following:

"No member of the Disabled American Veterans shall be expelled or limited within any of the rights and privilege of membership except as specified in the Constitution, Article III, Eligibility for Membership, Section 7; Article VII, Membership, Section 6D, Paragraph 3; and Article XI of these bylaws."

Rationale: a portion of our Bylaws state that DAV members that hold membership in the DAV Auxiliary cannot vote, et cetera, if they hold an elected or appointed office or chairmanship in the DAV.

Page N-26, Article VII, Section 2 provides that:

"No member of the DAV Auxiliary shall be expelled or limited within any of the rights and privileges of membership except as specified in Article XII of these Bylaws."

This change will clarify the restriction of chapter members holding an elected or appointed office in the chapter from voting in unit election.

Page N-27, Article VII, Membership, Section 6, Membership Classification. Delete "effective July 1st, 2015." This sentence would then read: "Membership classifications are as follows".

Rationale: it has been three years since this change was made and this effective date is no longer necessary.

Page N-37, Article IX, State Departments, Section 2, State Department Charter, second paragraph, first sentence. Add "applicable IRS fees" after "national charter fee". The sentence would then read:

"An application for a state department charter must be accompanied by a fifty dollar (\$50) national charter fee, applicable IRS fees, and ten dollars (\$10) per unit signing the application."

Rationale: sentence would then agree with Article X, Local Units, Section 1, Page N-39, second paragraph.

Page S-2, Article II, State Convention, Section 2, Composition. Delete the word "elected".

Rationale: in practice unit delegates are often selected by asking, "Who is going". With the reduction of the number of required meetings, some members may not be considered and there is not an opportunity to hold additional elections.

This will also now agree with the national provision on Page N-6, Article I, Governing Bodies, Section 4, Delegates, second paragraph, second sentence.

Page S-2, Article II, State Convention, Section 3, Delegates, second paragraph. Delete the entire paragraph and replace with the following:

"In addition, each unit shall be entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for its charter and one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for each ten (10) life members or major fraction thereof whose membership are in good standing."

Rationale: in practice unit delegates are often selected by asking "Who is going". With the reduction of the number of required meetings some members may not be considered and there is not an opportunity to hold additional elections.

This will also now agree with the national provision on Page N-6, Article I, Governing Bodies, Section 4, delegates, second paragraph, second sentence. Da-ta-da-ta-da-da. (Laughter)

Page S-5, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 1, State Commander, third paragraph. Delete the entire paragraph and substitute the following:

"The state commander shall appoint the state chairman of the following committees: Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislation, Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award, Membership, VAVS, and may also appoint such other chairmen as deemed necessary."

Rationale: to agree with provision amendments to merge the Hospital Program and remove the History Program and update the name of the Mae Holmes Program name.

U-2—excuse me, U-12, Article XIV, Unit Committees, Section 1. Remove items 3 and 7, hospital and history, and renumber the remaining committee titles.

Rationale: agree with change and rationale under N-13, change in national Bylaws to remove the hospital program.

U-12, Article XIV, Unit Committees, Section 2, Audit Committee, second paragraph. Delete the entire paragraph and substitute the following:

"Prior to the installation of a change in elected treasurer, all members of the Audit Committee shall be present to audit the financial records of the unit."

Rationale: to clarify the review of financial records to safeguard the unit funds and protect the outgoing and incoming treasurers.

U-13, Article XIV, Unit Committees, Section 2, Audit Committee, third paragraph, first and second sentences. Delete the first and second sentences and replace with the following:

"The annual financial report form provided by national headquarters shall be completed by the unit treasurer in office on June 30th. The Audit Committee, as part of their annual audit, shall verify and sign the report."

Rationale: clarification of report completion responsibilities.

Page U-23, Order of Business, Number 8. Remove "Hospital" and "History".

Rationale: to agree with the amendment and rationale of the prior changes.

Page XXIII, Auxiliary Past National Commander's Award. Delete the entire paragraph.

Rationale: This is moved to Page N-25, Article V, National Committees and Chairmen as a new Section 7.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I want to thank you and your crew for all your hard work on that. I now call on the Education Scholarship Chairman Frances Costa 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 FRANCES COSTA: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COSTA: The Scholarship Committee met via conference call. It was a difficult committee on a few issues.

We had 45 applicants. And 34 applicants were awarded and 11, sadly, had to be denied for various reasons: not a member of the DAV Auxiliary; not a full-paid life member of the DAV Auxiliary; did not use the most recent application; did not meet the GPA requirement; or did not provide a transcript.

Twenty-nine students received \$1,500 scholarships; 4 students received \$1,000 scholarship; and one student received a \$750 scholarship, which totaled for 2018 \$48,250.

Many recommendations were discussed. We would like to move away from the full-paid life membership requirement. It was suggested that applicants be a member and in order to qualify for renewal make a minimum payment amount each year. It has to show that they are working towards their payment.

We would like to include a section for certified VAVS hours for our junior volunteers, or anyone applying, and include a section for L-VAP, the Local Veterans Assistance Program, hours.

And we'd like to see that the names of the applicants be removed from the committee members' copy of the application and just have a cover letter with the applicant's assigned number on it. That way we don't know who the individual is that is applying for the scholarship by name.

It's difficult when you know individuals who are applying and don't meet the requirement for various reasons. It's kind of heartbreaking.

And, also, we'd like to reduce the number of letters of recommendation required from three to two or possibly one. And a letter of recommendation will not be included in the packet when sent to the judging committee.

The cover letter will have a line that indicates how many letters of recommendation have been received. And that will be filled out by the office staff.

Only require that the last four of the individual's social security number be visible.

And that completes my report.

(Whereupon, the Education Scholarship Convention Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you, Fran. For those planning to present donations please step to the front center aisle microphone to announce your name, state and/or unit and your donation amount then step to the table down to my right, please.

(Whereupon, the delegates lined up to begin presenting their donations.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: That would work better, actually. I'd like to personally thank you for your generous donations to our national programs. Your support is appreciated.

MS. CHARLENE PARKER: Charlene Parker, Heart of Texas Unit 3, Waco, we're making a donation to the caregiver program, \$300. (Applause) That's the Great State of Texas.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Mr. Commander, Susan Henry, Past National Commander's Club, we have a check for \$50 to the Scholarship fund in memory of Past National Commander Dorothy Van Hoy and Rose Schilpp.

We have a check for \$75 in memory for the Service Support Fund in memory of Evelynne Dunn, Evelyn Dorsey, and Carol Gray. (Applause)

MR. WILLIAM SUMLER: Bill Sumler, Department of Arizona, we have a check for \$200 due to the auspices of our National Judge Advocate at our state convention. She requested a donation for the Caregiver Initiative of \$200.

And now Bill Sumler, Unit 20, Glendale, Arizona, the unit decided that since the state had given \$200 we should give \$500. (Applause)

MS. LAURIE STOPYRA: Laurie Stopyra, District 5, Department of Pennsylvania, we have \$100 for Camp for Kids, \$100 for Winter Sports, and \$100 for the Service Fund. (Applause)

MS. MARIA HOLLOWAY: Maria Holloway from the State Department of Florida, \$100 check for the Scholarship Fund. (Applause)

MS. KATHY CHANEY: Kathy Chaney from Earnestine Schumann Heink Chapter 2, Kansas City, Missouri, we have a \$100 Education Scholarship Fund check. (Applause)

MS. MARIE HANSON: Marie Hanson, Department of Oklahoma, we have \$1,000 for the Tee Tournament. (Applause)

MS. CHEYRA CAUSEY: Cheyra Causey, Department of Georgia, we have \$100 check for the National Education Scholarship Fund, \$50 for the National Department Services Fund, \$50 for the National Fall Door Prizes Conference Gifts, and \$50 for Hospitalized Veterans Riding Program. (Applause)

MR. LINDEN COMEAUX: Linden Comeaux, Department of Louisiana, state commander, I have four \$25 donations to the Caregivers program under the names of Shirley Mercer, John Mercer, Linden Comeaux and Barbara Comeaux. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. BETH MAUGHAN: Beth Manghan, Department of Utah, a personal donation of \$50 for Camp Corral. (Applause)

MS. DARLENE HANNEMAN: Darlene Hanneman from the District 11, Department of Ohio. Ohio, please stand. Come on, guys.

(Whereupon, the delegation from Ohio stood.)

MS. HANNEMAN: We are donating \$300 to the Scholarship Fund and \$300 to the Service Support Fund. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. CHERIE HANSARD: Cherie Hansard, the Department of Texas, we are donating \$750 to the Service Support Fund and \$750 to the Scholarship Fund. (Applause)

MRS. DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, the great State of Texas, we have \$1,000 for the Caregivers Initiative. (Applause)

MS. SIENNA STEWART: Sienna Stewart from Idaho. I'd like to—we're donating \$100 for the National Service Program and National Scholarship Program, \$100. (Applause)

MS. TAWNIA KINGSLEY: Tawnia Kingsley, the Department of Kentucky, we're donating \$50 to the Scholarship Fund, \$50 to the National Service Fund, and Owensboro Unit 4 has donated \$100 to the Scholarship Fund. (Applause)

MS. JANET PRATT: Good morning. I'm Janet Pratt. I'm from District 1, the State of Massachusetts. And we are donating to the Service Fund \$200 and to the National Education Fund \$100. (Applause)

MS. ANNELIESE RAUBER: Anneliese Rauber, District 17, Department of New Mexico, Unit Number 38, we are donating \$600 to Camp Corral. (Applause)

MS. KAREN REDIKER: Karen Rediker, District 3, Vermont, we are donating \$100 to the National Service Fund and \$100 to the National Education Scholarship Fund. (Applause)

MS. BARBARA FISHER: Barbara Fisher, Indiana Unit 23, donating \$50 to the Widow's Service Fund. (Applause)

MR. MICHAEL GOLDBERG: Michael Goldberg, Old Adobe Unit Number 117, (Indistinguishable), California, we are donating \$100 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MS. EDNA LONG: Edna Iverson-Long, Unit 42, District 4, State of New Jersey, in memory of past State Commander Roberta Robinson who passed away last week we are donating \$100 to the Scholarship Fund and \$100 to the Freedom Fund. (Applause)

MS. GLORIA GOLSON: Commander Gloria Golson, District 7, Unit 83, we are donating \$25 to the Caregivers Initiative. (Applause)

MS. RHONDA BAUER: Rhonda Bauer, District 21, Arkansas, we have a \$100 check for the Educational Scholarship Fund and a \$200 check for the Service support Fund. (Applause)

MS. DARLENE SPENCE: Darlene Spence, Unit 17, Texas, we're donating \$1,000 to the Caregiver Program. (Applause)

MS. TERESITA MOREY: Tess Morey, Tenth District NEC, I am donating personal \$30 to Caregivers Initiative. Thank you. (Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER LINDA TRULIO: Past National Commander Linda Trulio in memory of my mom, \$100 to the Scholarship Fund. (Applause)

MS. ELIZABETH RAMIREZ: Commander Elizabeth Ramirez, Texas, Unit 169, \$50 to Camp Corral and \$100 to Caregivers Initiative. (Applause)

MS. MELISSA PARIS: Melissa Paris, Department of Iowa, \$926 to the Caregivers Initiative program. (Applause)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Thank you, everyone, for your generosity. We're going to ask Commander Craig to step down near the awards table and we are now going to go into the awards.

(Whereupon, the Education Scholarship Convention Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from the podium; and Commander Johniken withdrew from the podium to the table at the right of the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Monetary awards are given in each category of the respective programs to the first-place winning units. And the checks will be mailed out by National Headquarters after the Convention.

When called upon, the Convention Committee chairman will approach the podium and announce the winners. I ask the Committee advisors to step to the awards table, to the right of the podium, for award presentation and photo ops.

As winners are announced, please step forward to the awards table to receive the awards. If needed please form a line so we don't get too congested.

Right now I call on the Americanism Committee Chairperson please approach the podium.

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

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LYNN SWANSON: Good morning. (Response of "Good morning.")

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: National Commander, National Adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 96th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Americanism Convention Committee met in Nevada Room 8 at 9 a.m. on July 15, 2018. Our advisor was Carolyn Sensat. I, Lynn Swanson, served as the Committee chairman. And Mary Lee Kolter was elected secretary.

Now I would like to ask each of the members that helped to please stand. District 1, Nancy Hoey; District 2, Sonia Figueroa—and I apologize; District 3, Melanie Joyce; District 6, Maria Torres;

District 7, Mary Kolter; District 8, Barbara Comeaux; thank you; District 9, Linda Jimmerson; District 10, Barbara McComb; District 11, Diana Pollock; District 12, Shanda Alexander; District 13 was myself; District 14, Verna Messerschmidt; District 15, Mary Chaney;

District 16, Caroline Morris; District 17, Leslie Sandoval; District 18, Angela Rounds; District 19, Sienna Stewart; District 20, Robert Terrazas; District 21, Tammy Cato. Thank you all very much. I appreciate all your help. (Applause)

As you know, at National Convention we get the best of the best reports and these people did an excellent job choosing the best reports.

(Whereupon, the members as their names were called and they were recognized with a round of applause.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Americanism Awards.

Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Northern Hills Unit 11, South Dakota.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award, followed by a round of applause.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, William E. Tate, Unit 1, Georgia.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award, followed by a round of applause.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: Group 3, 101 to 200 members, John Woodall Unit 6, Georgia.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award, followed by a round of applause.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: And Group Number 4, 201 members or over, Lieutenant Vibert O. Fryer Unit 88, New York.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: Special Americanism awards: Group 1, 10 to 200 members: Jim Bowie, Unit 86, Florida.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: And Group 2, 201 members and over, Murphy Borelli Klumper Unit 7, Colorado.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SWANSON: And the Committee submitted the following recommendations. On Question 3 concerning the Freedom Foundation, it should be listed as the patriotic efforts.

And the question as to “yes” or “no” there should be an explanation. If yes, please explain what you did.

They also suggested that an example of winning reports be taken to Fall Conference for the workshops to show people how a report, how a winning report is filled out. That’s all. Thank you. (Applause)

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

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Thank you. We will now move forward with the Community Service Award portion. Will the Community Service Convention Committee Chairperson please approach the podium.

(Whereupon, the Community Service Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LINDEN COMEAUX: Good morning.

(Response of “Good morning.”)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMEAUX: National commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 96th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Community Service Convention Committee met in the Nevada Room at 9:00 a.m., July 15th, 2018. Our advisor was Judy Weissman-Steinbaugh. I, Linden Comeaux, served as the Committee chairman and Leslie Sandoval was elected/appointed secretary.

District 1 was Kathy Boarbas; District 2, Janice Bailey; District 3 was Ann Schatz; District 4 was Renee Blow; District 6, Lee Reeder; District 7, Paulette Pierce; District 8, myself, Linden Comeaux; District 9, Karen Jacobs; District 11, Denise Proffitt; District 12, Linda Gresbach; District 13, Terri Young; District 14, Sandra Dobmeier; District 15, Icilda Marley;

District 16, Leslie Svanevik; District 17, Laurel Boutwell; District 18, Catherine Price; District 19, Florence Riley; District 20, Evelyn Cupit and District 21, E. Hansen. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMEAUX: The winners of Group 1, which had 10 to 50 members, was Northern Hills Number 11, Piedmont, South Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMEAUX: Group 2, Units 51 to 100 members Saint Mary’s Number 26, California, Maryland. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMEAUX: Group 3, 101 to 200 members Millington Number 116, Munford, Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMEAUX: Group 4, 201 members and over, Lieutenant Alfred Lucier, Number 118, Glendale, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMEAUX: The Committee submitted the following recommendations: creating a score sheet to give to each one of the members that were on the Committee, that way you don’t have to be drawing lines on a piece of paper and stuff, it’s already made up;

Julie knows about it and she made the—I’m the one that made the recommendation. It makes it a lot quicker and easier.

Thank you. Thank you all. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Community Service Convention Committee Chairman withdrew from the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: We will now move with the Hospital awards. Would the chairman of the Hospital Convention Committee please come forward. (Applause)

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

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SHIRLEY HILL: National commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of the 96th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Hospital Convention Committee met in the Nevada 2, 9:00 a.m. on 7/15. Our advisor was Linda Bailey. I, Shirley Hill, served as committee chairman. And Elizabeth Eldridge was elected and appointed secretary.

As I call your name, please stand. District 1, Elizabeth Eldridge; District 2, Matilda Brooks; District 3, Leanne Fournier; District 6, Tonyia Courtemanche; District 7, Maria Holloway;

District 8, Shirley Mercer; District 9, myself, Shirley Hill; District 10, Kimberly Olinger; District 11, Judith Uetterling; District 12, Paula Raymond; District 14, Camille Remus; District 15, Velma Steinman;

District 16, Christine Castillo; District 17, Teresa Barr; District 18, Ann Richardson; District 19, Breanna Rackham; District 20, Nellie Hardaway; District 21, Teresa Vance. And I'll go back. District 13 was added to the bottom, Linda Bratcher. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HILL: The following units were judged to be the best in their category of the National Hospital awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Lafayette Unit 2, Louisiana. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HILL: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Glasgow Unit 20, Kentucky.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HILL: Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Carol E. Prosser Unit 30, South Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HILL: Group 4, for 201 members and over, Lieutenant Alfred Lucier Unit 118, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HILL: The Committee submitted the following recommendations: suggest that more copies of grading sheets be provided for Committee members to expedite judging process.

Number 2. Units should ensure that explanations are provided to clarify answers.

Number 3. Units should ensure that answers pertaining to non-VA hospitals and nursing homes, they also need to specify if it is a state or private nursing home.

Thank you. (Applause)

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

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Okay, now we move on to Junior Activities. Will the Convention Committee chairman please step forward?

(Whereupon, the Junior Activities Convention Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KAYLA VALILA: National Convention Junior Activities Convention Committee Report. The National Junior Activities Convention Committee met in the Nevada Nine room at 9:00 a.m. on 7/15, July 15th, 2018. Our advisor was Kim Stake. I, Kayla Valila served as committee chairman and was also the secretary.

As I call your name I ask you to stand. District 1 was myself, Kayla Valila; District 2, Nancy Murray, New York; District 3, Maine, was Erin O'Brien; District 7, Florida, was Amie Raber; District 8, Mississippi, Lee Benoit;

District 9, Georgia, Dorothy Guzman; District 10, Michigan, Anissa Olinger; District 11, Ohio, Amanda Louise Robertson; District 12, Illinois, Karen Eccles; District 13, Indiana, Tana Penland; District 15, Missouri, Gracie Caldwell;

District 16, California, Melissa Valdez; District 17, Colorado, Jean Addyman; District 18, Nevada, Carolyn Walker; District 20, Texas, Magdalena Aguinaga; District 21, Oklahoma, Kimberly Vickers-Dunning.

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

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VALILA: The following Units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Junior Activities awards. Group 1, 1 to 25 members, was Unit 134, Pikeville, Kentucky. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VALILA: Group 2, 26 to 50 members, was Unit 118, Lieutenant Alfred Lucier, New York. (Applause)
(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VALILA: Group 3, 51 to 100 members, was Unit 1, Francis J. Beaton, North Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VALILA: We did not have any Group 4 for 101 and over. Junior Activities Book was Chapter 62, Buffalo, Missouri.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VALILA: For National Junior Awards 15 to 17, Ethan Scott Kingsley.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VALILA: National Junior Award, 11 to 14, Abigail Dawn Maria Phinney.

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

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Thank you for that. And while young Ethan Kingsley from Kentucky, 134 goes up to get his award I would like to say he is a triple crown winner as far as these junior activities awards go.

He has been the award recipient in all three junior categories. (Applause) I'm very proud to say he's from my state. (Applause)

All right, we move on to Legislative. Would the Legislative Committee Chairman please step forward. (Whereupon, the Legislative Convention Committee Chairman advanced to a microphone.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN THERESA GRABOWSKI: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GRABOWSKI: Commander Johniken, line officers, PNCs, delegates, members and guests.

The National Legislative Committee, Convention Committee met in the Nevada Room 11 at 9:00 a.m. on July 15th. Our advisor was Lynn Prosser. I, Terri Grabowski, served as committee chairman.

As I call your names can you please stand, the committee people: District 1, Dorothy Raymond; District 2, myself; District 3, Aura-Lee Nicodemus; District 5—no, District 6, sorry, Frances Moses-Knight; District 7, Joan Tyson; District 8, Carolyn Harris; District 9, Joan Pope; District 10, Regina Fortner; District 11, Shirley Plahovinsak; District 12, Evelyn Couture; District 13 Linda Peake; District 16, Dave Bailey; District 17, Kathy Phelps; District 18, James Glasner. And that was the Committee.

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GRABOWSKI: I want to thank them for all the time and effort they put in. I know it took time out of their day so I appreciate you taking the time. (Applause)

Now to get on to the good stuff, the following units were judged to be the best in the category for the National Legislative Awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, is Johnson County Unit 44, North Carolina.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GRABOWSKI: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Edward G. Gallion Unit 212, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GRABOWSKI: Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Carol E. Prosser Unit 30, South Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GRABOWSKI: Group 4, 201 members or over, Phoenix, Unit 1, Arizona. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GRABOWSKI: And I want to congratulate all the units that won.

The Committee submitted the following recommendations. Make sure your unit name is correct on the report. Check your charter if you're not sure of your correct name.

Number 2. Bills and topics should be reported in standard fashion, not abbreviated. The suggestion was to look at modification of the line information to give more space to put the information.

3. Notice reports were missing information off of them.

And 4. Reports need to be made neater. That's it. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Legislative Convention Committee Chairman withdrew.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Thank you for that report. We will now invite the VAVS Convention Committee Chairman to step forward please.

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

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ASHLEY JOHNIKEN-CLARK: National Commander Dad, Craig Johniken, (Laughter) national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 96th National Auxiliary Convention, the National VAVS Convention Committee met in the Nevada 3 at 9:00 on July the 15th, 2018.

Our advisor was Melissa Pierce. I, Ashley Clark, served as the committee chairman. And Laurie Pekarik was our elected and appointed secretary.

When I name the Committee members I ask that you please stand and be recognized. District 1 is Nancy Mooney; District 2 is Josephine Rivera; District 3 is Donna Folcarelli;

District 6 is Charlotte Roberts; District 7 is Juanita Slavinsky; District 8 is Jeanette Stinnett; District 9 is Deanna Crockett-Brown; District 11 is Carol Parker-Park; District 12 is Patricia Dempsey;

District 13 is Arthur Frauendorfer; and if I mispronounced that I do apologize; District 14 is Laurie Pekarik; District 16 is Alma Fowlkes; District 18 is Jannis Saunders;

District 19 is Vickie Partridge; District 20 is myself; District 21 is Linda Oliver. And I'd like to thank my Committee who helped judge these reports.

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHNIKEN-CLARK: And now for the awards. The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National VAVS Awards. Group 1, 10 to 50, the Catherine Early Award goes to Rowan County, 96, Salisbury, North Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHNIKEN-CLARK: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, (indistinguishable) award, is Frye Unit 14, Arizona, Sierra Vista or Sierra Vista, Arizona, rather. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHNIKEN-CLARK: Group Number 3, 101 to 200, the Bay Hogan Award is Marshfield Memorial Unit Number 35, Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHNIKEN-CLARK: Group Number 4 is 201 members or over is National Headquarters Award is Phoenix Number 1, Phoenix, Arizona. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHNIKEN-CLARK: I'd like to congratulate all the winners. And we also had a few recommendations.

On the, by judging the reports we ask that don't write on the forms, heading and signature lines are all completed, total front and back need to match; the itemize, if anything is over \$1,000 please itemize it.

And the DVA medical centers need to be noted. If none, please state so. And this also applies to the satellite clinics or the CBOCs, as well. Thank you all. (Applause)

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

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Thank you. You just made Commander Dad very proud of you. (Laughter) Okay, so now National Membership Chairman Diane Franz would you please step forward.

We didn't do Mae Holmes. Well, heck, time for the Mae Holmes report Convention Committee chairman to step forward. Got a little crazy with my checks.

(Whereupon, the Mae Holmes Convention Committee Secretary advanced to the podium.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BETTY HESS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HESS: National commander, National adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates, members and guests of the 96th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Mae Holmes Convention Committee met in Nevada 4-5 at 9:00 o'clock on July 15th, 2018. Our advisor was Ellen Timmerman. I, Betty Hess, served as committee chair. And Debbie Hall was the appointed secretary.

As I call your name please stand: Unit 1, Sharon Dufault; District 2, Helen Mazza; District 3, Linda Folcarelli; District 4, Kathleen Walker; District 6, Grace James; District 7 was myself; District 8, Donald

Harris; District 9, Felicia Evans-Walls; District 10, John Olinger; District 11, Deborah Hall; District 12, Rose Williams; District 13, Dorothy Fivecoate; District 15, Sharon Keyes; District 16, Catherine Crigger; District 17, Jackie Glass; District 18, Beverly Baker; District 19, Christina Fairin; District 20, Elaine Moreland; District 21, James Hansen. I'd like to thank all of you for your hard work.

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were read and were recognized with a round of applause.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HESS: The following Units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Mae Holmes Awards.

Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Northern Hills Unit 11, Piedmont, South Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HESS: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Lafayette Unit 2, Lafayette, Louisiana. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HESS: And Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Saint Mary's Unit 26, California, Maryland. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HESS: Group 4, 201 or over, Murphy-Borelli-Klumpker Unit 7, Lakewood, Colorado. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HESS: The following were recommended—the only thing we had is to please give us more scoring sheets. (Laughter) So it slows it down if, you know, passing it around. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Mae Holmes Convention Committee Secretary withdrew from the podium.)

ADJUTANT KEMPER: The more scoring sheets suggestion has come up quite often today. That's really good. That shows me that everyone is taking their job seriously in those convention committees.

For probably about 35 years we've only put about four sheets in those folders. So now that everybody is wanting more shows really some really good interest and participation so thank you.

So, now, without further ado, Diane Franz, National Membership Chairman.

(Whereupon, the First Junior Vice-Commander and National Membership Committee Chairman advanced to the podium.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DIANE FRANZ: Thank you. I want to recap on some of the programs that we had that were ongoing during the year in case you missed it in the Headquarter News with the announcements of certain incentive winners.

The \$500 cash award that was everybody, every member that sent in an application was eligible for that drawing and we had four during the year, the first one went to Carol Lee of Michigan. (Applause)

The second quarter went to Anita Ayella from Florida. (Applause) The third quarter went to Tracy Mashburn of Indiana. (Applause) And this last quarter went to Virginia Davis of South Carolina. Congratulations to all of you. (Applause)

And we also had an incentive for the juniors, people that signed up for their juniors with a \$10 down payment. And they received a \$50 gift certificate to the DAV Store.

And those winners were Peggy Burkes of Tennessee; (Applause) Paul (indistinguishable) from Iowa; (Applause) and Joyce Thomas from Alabama. (Applause)

Now for the awards. Group 1, 10 to 50, with a 25 member increase is going to Prince William County Number 15 of Virginia.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: Group 2, 51 to 100, with a 54 member increase is going to Harry L. (indistinguishable), Junior, Number 22, Texas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: Group 3, 101 to 200, with a 41 member increase, Dothan Unit 87, Alabama. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: And Group 4, 201 and over, with a 133 member increase, it's going to Clark County Number 13, Ohio. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: New Unit with Most New Members, with 16 new members, it's going to Milwaukee Number 44 of Wisconsin. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: Department with largest percentage increase over quota with a 105.63 percent increase, State Department of Nevada. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: And, finally, the Department with the largest numerical increase over quota with 46 members, State Department of Ohio. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: And we have one more award that we were going to be giving out here at National Convention and it was for a unit incentive.

Units recruiting at least 15 new paid members by June 30th will be entered into this drawing for \$250. You were to use the special membership form with the Code 440 on there or to write 440 on the membership application.

And each unit receives one entry for every 15 new paid members. And if you submitted a photo and/or a brief description of the member drive you received an additional entry.

So now—and we had quite a few—the units that are eligible for this drawing: Milwaukee Number 44; (indistinguishable) Renegades Number 18; Manatee County Number 18; Elkhart Number 19; Clark County Number 13; and Harry L. (indistinguishable) Junior, Number 22. (Applause)

And I'm going to ask—I was going to ask Pat to draw the winning number or winning unit but she ran away. And the winner is—and I'm glad she drew it—Manatee County Number 18, Florida.

You will receive your checks in the mail. (Laughter) The check is in the mail. If somebody from Unit 18 will come up to receive your certificate. Thank you.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANZ: I really appreciate all the hard work. It's not always easy to recruit new members but we've got to keep trying, we've got to keep our numbers growing. It's the way to help our veterans and their families. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the First Junior Vice-Commander and National Membership Committee Chairman withdrew from the podium as Commander Johniken advanced to resume the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Okay, it looks like we're going to have time so we want to go ahead and let the districts caucus. And we will have the second reading of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws amendments.

I want to call on Judy Steinhouse to come forward, please. Yes, we'll caucus first. We're going to do this for like 15 minutes so everybody will be on the same page.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed to caucus; the meeting reconvened at 10:35 o'clock, a.m. July 16, 2018.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Okay, everybody please have their seat and let's get this thing back in order again.

(Whereupon, the delegates returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I would like to call on Judy Steinhouse for the second reading of the proposed Constitution and Bylaw amendments.

(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: Proposed Constitution and Bylaw amendments for 2017-2018. Page N-13, Article I, National Convention, Section 5, Official Rules of the National Convention, Rule 21B. Delete "Hospital".

Rationale: Recommendation is to report non-VA hospital information on the Community Service report. We have seen many times hospital information on the Community Service report. The non-VA hospital work is probably more related to Community Service work than the VAVS program is.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MR. EASLEY: Christopher Easley, Alamo Unit 5, State Department of Texas, I second.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Are there any discussion? No? Okay, all in favor signify by saying aye; any opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-13, Article I, National Convention, Section 5, Official Rules of the National Convention, Rule 21B, change the name of the Mae Holmes Award to Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award.

Rule 21B would then read:

"The following Committees are appointed: Committees on Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislation, Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award, and VAVS. These Committees shall consider all matters relating to their programs and shall designate the winners of their respective awards."

Rationale: the National Executive Committee approved renaming this award in 2015 and this amendment will bring the Committee name into compliance.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. DARLENE HANNEMAN: Darlene Hanneman, Unit 77, District 11, Ohio, I second that motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-15, Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 1, National Commander, third paragraph, second line, remove "National Hospital Chairman".

Rationale: if elimination of a non-VA hospital program is approved, this position is no longer needed.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. JENNIE CLARK: Jennie Clark, Portland Unit 1, Department of Oregon, I second the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-25, Article V, National Committees and Chairmen, add new Section 7 as follows:

"Section 7. Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year Committee.

"The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year Committee shall be a revolving committee composed of the immediate Past National Commander and the two (2) preceding Past National Commanders.

"They shall select a member who exemplifies distinguished dedication and remarkable accomplishments through the years for the DAV Auxiliary. This award may be presented at a national convention."

Rationale: provides award and committee recognition in the national Bylaws. The award name recognizes an outstanding member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary and all costs associated with this award are paid by the national organization. This is moved from Page XXIII in the Bylaws.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. AMY BOWSER: I'd like to second it, Amy Bowser Unit 48, Virginia.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. Is there any discussion? Hearing none we will call for the vote. All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-26, Article VII, Membership, Section 2, Membership Basic Rights and Privileges, fourth line, delete paragraph and substitute the following:

"No member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary shall be expelled or limited within any of the rights and privilege of membership except as specified in the Constitution, Article III, Eligibility for Membership, Section 7; Article VII, Membership, Section 6D, Paragraph 3; and Article XII of these Bylaws."

Rationale: a portion of our Bylaws state that DAV members that hold membership in the DAV Auxiliary cannot vote, et cetera, if they hold an elected or appointed office or chairmanship in the DAV. Page N-26, Article VII, Section 2 provides that:

"No member of the DAV Auxiliary shall be expelled or limited within any of the rights and privileges of membership except as specified in Article XII of these Bylaws."

This change will clarify the restriction of chapter members holding an elected or appointed office in the chapter from voting in unit election.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. JOHN MEDVIGY: John Medvigy, Unit 157, California, so seconds.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-27, Article VII, Membership, Section 6, Membership Classification. Delete (effective July 1st, 2015). This sentence would then read: "Membership classifications are as follows".

Rationale: it has been three years since this change was made and this effective date is no longer necessary.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. ELIZABETH ELDRIDGE: Liz Eldridge, Unit 35, Department of Massachusetts, I second that motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page N-37, Article IX, State Departments, Section 2, State Department Charter, second paragraph, first sentence, add "applicable IRS fees" after "national charter fee". The sentence would then read:

"An application for a state department charter must be accompanied by a fifty dollar (\$50) national charter fee, applicable IRS fees, and ten dollars (\$10) per unit signing the application."

Rationale: sentence would then agree with Article X, Local Units, Section 1, Page N-39, second paragraph.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. PATRICIA DAVIS: Patricia Davis, District 12, Unit 19, Wisconsin, I second that motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-2, Article II, State Convention, Section 2, Composition. Delete the word "elected".

Rationale: in practice unit delegates are often selected by asking, "Who is going". With the reduction of the number of required meetings some members may not be considered and there is not an opportunity to hold additional elections.

This will also now agree with the national provision on Page N-6, Article I, Governing Bodies, Section 4, Delegates, second paragraph, second sentence.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. MARIE HANSEN: Marie Hansen, Department of Oklahoma, Chapter 20, District 21, I second the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-2, Article II, State Convention, Section 3, Delegates, second paragraph. Delete the entire paragraph and replace with the following:

"In addition, each unit shall be entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for its charter and one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for each ten (10) life members or major fraction thereof whose membership are in good standing."

Rationale: in practice unit delegates are often selected by asking "Who is going". With the reduction of the number of required meetings some members may not be considered and there is not an opportunity to hold additional elections.

This will also now agree with the national provision on Page N-6, Article I, Governing Bodies, Section 4, Delegates, second paragraph, second sentence. I heard that before some place. I don't know where.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. IRIS BRZEZINSKI: Iris Brzezinski, District 18, Sunrise Mountain Unit 13, I second that.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page S-5, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 1, State Commander, third paragraph. Delete the entire paragraph and substitute the following:

"The state commander shall appoint the state chairman of the following committees: Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislation, Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award, Membership, VAVS, and may also appoint such other chairmen as deemed necessary."

Rationale: to agree with the previous amendments to merge the Hospital Program and remove the History Program and update the name of the Mae Holmes Program name.

Madam—Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment. I'm sorry. (Laughter)

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment. I'm going home. (Laughter)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Give it another shot.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: One more time, huh?

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I was going to give her a third shot at it. (Laughter) We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. HANNEMAN: Darlene Hanneman, District 11, Department of Ohio, Unit 77, I second that motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Laughter is good medicine so I'll provide you your comedy relief today. (Laughter)

U-12, Article XIV, Unit Committees, Section 1. Remove items 3 and 7, hospital and history, and renumber the remaining committee titles.

Rationale: agrees with change and rationale under N-13, change to the national Bylaws to remove the history program. –

(Response of "Hospital.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Excuse me, hospital program. Thank you. Agrees with the change and rationale under Page N-13, change to the national Bylaws to remove the hospital program.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. MELANIE JOYCE: Melanie Joyce, state commander for the Department of New Hampshire, I second the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? Hearing none we will call for the vote. All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: U-12, Article XIV, Unit Committees, Section 2, Audit Committee, second paragraph.

Delete the entire paragraph and substitute with the following:

"Prior to the installation of a change in elected treasurer, all members of the Audit Committee shall be present to audit the financial records of the unit."

Rationale: to clarify the review of financial records to safeguard the unit funds and protect the outgoing and incoming treasurers.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. EASLEY: Christopher Easley, Alamo Unit 5, State of Texas, I second.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: Mr. Commander, Susan Henry, PNC, to help clarify so that between this change and the next change people understand that only the annual financial report provided by national is required to go to national.

This audit is an internal audit to protect the unit and to protect the two treasurers. But it stays at the unit level.

I would like to make a motion that we insert a second sentence that reads: "This internal audit does not require the completion of the annual financial report form and should not be submitted to National Headquarters."

Okay? I will repeat. Insert a second sentence after the one we just corrected to read: "this internal audit does not require the completion of the annual financial report form and should not be submitted to National Headquarters."

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion on the floor. Do we have a second?

MR. EASLEY: Christopher Easley, Alamo Unit 5, Texas, I second.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? Hearing none, call for the vote. All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

Now we're going to vote on the original. Is there any more discussion on that? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Last page. Page U-13, Article XIV, Unit Committees, Section 2, Audit Committee, third paragraph, first and second sentences. Delete the first and second sentences and replace with the following:

"The annual financial report form provided by National Headquarters shall be completed by the unit treasurer in office on June 30. The Audit Committee, as part of their annual audit, shall verify and sign the report."

Rationale: clarification of report completion responsibilities.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion on the floor. Do we have a second?

MS. MARY VALENTINE: Mary Valentine, District 6, Unit 26, Chesapeake, Virginia, I second.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page U-23, Order of Business, Number 8. Remove "Hospital" and "History".

Rationale: to agree with the amendment and rationale of the prior changes.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. JENNY CLARK: Jenny Clark, Unit 1, Oregon, I second the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Page XXIII, Auxiliary Past National Commander's Award. Delete the entire paragraph.

Rationale: This is moved to Page N-25, Article V, National Committees and Chairmen as a new Section 7.

Commander Craig, I move for the adoption of this proposed amendment.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. BOWSER: I second it. Amy Bowser, Unit 48, Virginia, Sixth District.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried on the last one.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: I want to thank all my Committee members again for their work. It was a great Committee. And I thank you Commander Craig for putting me on the Interim Constitution and Bylaws.

COMMANDER JOHNNIKEN: You did a great job. Thank you.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Thank you.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Even though you did call me a madam. (Laughter)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Yes. The first time in my life—no. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Chairman and Past National Commander withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Okay, we're getting down to the happy part of this—it's closing down. I want to call on Bunny Clos to make some announcements.

(Whereupon, Assistant Adjutant Bunny Clos advanced to the podium as Commander Johniken stepped aside.)

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT BUNNY CLOS: Sorry, Pat had to step out for a few minutes so I get to do this now.

Don't forget, the Forget-me-Not Luncheon is at 12:30. It's in the Silver State Pavilion on the Spa Level. Be sure to show your ticket at the door. If you still need a ticket we do still have probably about ten left to sell.

If they have not done already—we did that. Never mind.

National officers and NECs will not have reserved seating at the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon and are welcome to sit with their states. The PNCs will, however, have a reserved table near the front of the room. No one will be escorted in.

Registration badges will be needed to enter the Fun Night and Introduction of National Officers and the dinner. Those without a badge will have to go through a verification process before being admitted. All attendees over 18 must be registered in order to admit, to be admitted.

If you have not already done so, please stop by the table outside of registration for the table reservations for the Introduction of National Officers and the dinner.

You must be registered before table assignments can be made. Table assignments will be available for pick up immediately following the DAV meetings tomorrow.

That's it. That's all I have. Actually one more thing. I lied. If anybody lost a bag, we have it.

(Whereupon, Assistant Adjutant Clos withdrew from the podium as Commander Johniken stepped back to the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: There being no further business, we will now have our closing prayer by Aura-Lee Nicodemus.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain Nicodemus advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Oh, wait a minute. Sit down a second. (Laughter) I get to make an announcement. I want to give out a list of the donations that we received today: the Caregivers program, \$4,981; (Applause) Education Scholarship, \$2,250; (Applause) DAVA for Kids, \$650; (Applause)

Hospitalized Vet Riding Project, \$50; (Applause) Fall Conference Gifts, \$50; (Applause) Freedom's Foundation \$100; (Applause) Service Support Fund, \$2,085; (Applause) for a grand total of \$10,166. (Applause)

The Caregiver program that was collected in the DAV Auxiliary office for these nice little ribbons I've been trying to sell all week was \$2,329.75. (Applause)

Now would everybody please stand and we will hear from Aura-Lee. Thank you all for your donations. That was great.

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we ask a special blessing upon the members that were taken from here to the hospital today. We ask that you will heal them.

We pray for our families who remain at home and our members who are unable to be with us. We give thanks for their love and support that allows us to be here.

We pray for our troops in harm's way. We pray for the leaders of our nation and we give thanks for the harmony of this meeting that allowed us to complete the business.

As we go forward we thank you for one of the greatest gifts we share: our friendship and camaraderie and the fun we are about to have. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen", after which Chaplain Nicodemus withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: The Convention stands in recess and we will reconvene at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting was recessed at 11:04 o'clock, a.m., on Monday, July 16, 2018.)

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
96th NATIONAL CONVENTION**

**Grand Sierra Resort and Casino
Reno, Nevada**

July 17, 2018

Final Business Session

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The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Reno Ballroom on the Casino Level of the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, Nevada, on Tuesday morning, July 17, 2018, and was called to order at 9:00 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander William "Craig" Johniken.

COMMANDER WILLIAM "CRAIG" JOHNIKEN: First off we will have our opening prayer by Aura-Lee Nicodemus.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the day today to come together to join in friendship and love. We ask that you will bless this meeting, give us peace and serenity, provide this meeting with the goals to lead us forward to the next year.

We ask your blessings upon each and every person here, our families that are at home, our troops that are in harm's way, and those who risk their lives each and every day for every one of us, our EMTs, firefighters, and those who lead our nation. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," whereupon, the Chaplain withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We will now have the Pledge of Allegiance by Carolyn Sensat.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice-Commander and National Americanism Chairman advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN SENSAT: Free your hands. Stand at attention. Thank you. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join in the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.

(Whereupon, the Third Junior Vice-Commander and Americanism Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance, after which she withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Will the Credentials Chairman, Iris Brzezinski, please come forward to give the final Credentials report?

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

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BRZEZINSKI: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BRZEZINSKI: Commander, national officers, delegates and guests. The Credential report is as follows. This will be the final reading of the Credential report.

Total units registered, 137; total departments registered, 41; national officers registered, 8; past national commanders registered, 7; total guests registered, 183; total registered, 518; total delegates, 294; total alternates, 26; total vote count, 1,041. Commander, I move that we accept the Credential report.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MS. CLARK: Jennie Clark, Unit 1, Portland, Oregon, I second the motion.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Is there any discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The motion carried. Thank you, Iris, for all your hard work.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee Chairman withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: 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 2, Helen Mazza, (Applause) Janice Bailey; District 4, Sarah Kashner, Edna Iverson Long; District 6, Maria Torres, and I'm going to back up to District 5 Alternate Laurie Stopyra; District 8, Carolyn Harris; District 11, Denise Proffitt; District 13, Mildred Brown.

And we are going to have to back up again. District 10, Regina Fortner; District 12, Patricia Davis; District 14, Sandra Dobmeier; District 16, Mary Lou Caldwell and Alma Fowlkes; Christina Alexander, Rose Williams, Judy Steinhouse, Sharon Linton, Carolyn Walker, Charlene Parker, and Sharon Thornton.

Now to make sure everyone is here, when I call your name raise your hand and the National Sergeant-at-Arms will announce your presence.

Helen Mazza. Sergeant-at-Arms. Sergeant-at-Arms. Charlene Parker. I'm calling the roll so if you could please answer for them. Okay, so we did Helen. Okay, so Helen Mazza.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Janice Bailey

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Sarah Kashner.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Edna Iverson Long.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Laurie Stopyra.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Maria Torres.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Carolyn Harris.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Donald Harris. I didn't call his name before. Is Donald Harris here?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Yes, I didn't call his name earlier. Regina Fortner.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Christina Alexander.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Denise Proffitt.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Patricia Davis.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Rose Williams.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Mildred Brown.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Sandra Dobmeier.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Judy Steinhouse.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Mary Lou Caldwell.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Alma Fowlkes.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Sharon Linton.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Carolyn Walker.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Charlene Parker.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Sharon Thornton.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Alternate for District 6, Carol Simmons.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Present.

ADJUTANT KEMPER: Did we miss anyone? Okay.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and Commander Johniken returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: 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 JOHNIKEN: Place your right hand over your heart, pronounce your name and repeat after me the oath of office. Just a second. Let me get to it.

"I, having been selected as a National Executive Committee member or alternate 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. Turn around. (Applause) I want to thank you all for accepting this challenge. It's a very serious duty that you have. And I want to thank you all. Now you can go sit down. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, the newly-elected NEC members assumed their appropriate seats.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Will the Nominating Committee Chairman LeeAnn Karg please come forward to give the Committee report?

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee Chairman advanced to the podium to give her report.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER LeeANN KARG: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: Commander Johniken, National Adjutant Pat, Assistant Adjutant Bunny, past national commanders, national line officers, delegates, members and guests.

The Nominating Committee of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary held their first meeting on Saturday, July 14th. We are pleased to submit the following slate for consideration to serve as your 2018-2019 officers.

But before they do that, I do that I would like to announce the Committee that served with me. So if you would please stand when I call your name and hold your applause until they have all been announced:

District 1, Janet Pratt; District 2, Linda Trulio; District 3, Karen Rediker; District 4, Edna Long; District 5, Laurie Stopyra; District 6, Carol Simmons; District 7, Irene Stevens;

District 8, Dorothy Robinson; District 9, Wanda Parker; District 10, Christina Alexander; District 11, Vicki Johnston; District 12, Carla Reynolds; District 13, Barbara Fisher; District 14, myself, LeeAnn Karg;

District 15, Edna Mitchell; District 16, Mary Lou Caldwell; District 17, Susan Miller; District 18, William Sumler; District 19, Jerry Royse; District 20, Patrice Rapisand; District 21, Ronda Bauer. Give them a huge round of applause.

(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 KARG: I'm very grateful and very thankful for this hard-working group so thank you all very, very much.

And now for the good stuff. We'd like to present the following for national office: Commander Ellen Timmerman; (Applause) Senior Vice-Commander Diane Franz; (Applause) First Junior Vice-Commander Lynn Helms Prosser; (Applause) Second Junior Vice-Commander Darlene Spence; (Applause) Darlene, please stand up.

(Whereupon, Darlene Spence stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: Third Junior Vice-Commander Julie Weismann-Steinbaugh; (Applause) Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Anne Marie Hurley. And Ann, please stand up.

(Whereupon, Ann Marie Hurley stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: Judge Advocate Paula Raymond. Paula, please stand.

(Whereupon, Paula Raymond stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KARG: She's way in the back. We have the following recommendations.

We wanted to have it added to the form that if you are willing to accept another position please check the box. And the second one is to add a picture of the candidate so we can relate the name to the face.

I ask that Nominating Committee be excused. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee Chairman withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. Good job. When two or more candidates are nominated for any one office roll calls shall continue until completed unless a candidate withdraws. The person receiving the 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 Convention Committees.

I now ask all the officers to leave the podium and go to your respective Districts for the purpose of nomination and election. NECs, please join your Districts as well.

(Whereupon, the officers and NECs withdrew to their respective districts.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: I have to appoint three tellers. It will be Ann Glende, Billy Freeman, and Linden Comeaux. Would you all please come up here and take your respective places.

(Whereupon, the tellers advanced to the table at the front of the room.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: You have heard the report of the Committee on Nominations. Ellen Timmerman's name has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Commander.

Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none I declare nominations closed for the office of National Commander. (Applause) Go ahead.

(Whereupon, Ms. Victoria Salazar advanced to a microphone.)

MS. VICTORIA SALAZAR: National Commander Craig Johniken, Adjutant Pat Kemper, national officers, and fellow DAV Auxiliary members, my name is Victoria Salazar. I am the state adjutant for DAV Auxiliary Department of New Mexico and a member of Grant Fort (indistinguishable) Unit 1 in New Mexico.

I would like the second the nomination of Ellen Timmerman for the office of national commander of the DAV Auxiliary.

Ellen, a native New Mexican, became an Auxiliary member in 2005. She is eligible for membership under her husband, Tim Timmerman, who is a Vietnam veteran and her father, Burl Jackson, a World War II veteran.

She is a member of Eugene P. Long Unit 32 in New Mexico. Ellen has served as unit commander, unit SEC, unit adjutant, and assistant adjutant.

At the State of New Mexico level she was elected to the office of junior vice-commander, senior vice-commander and commander. After one year as our state commander she became our state adjutant and served six terms as adjutant, part of those with me as commander. So, without her help I may not have stayed as long. (Laughter)

Ellen was elected as District 17 NEC. She served as NEC for a two-year term, 2011 through 2012, 2012 through 2013. She was elected to the organization's National Finance Committee and served as National Finance Committee Chairperson in 2013.

Ellen then started her journey up the chairs of the elected offices at the national level, making the members of the State of New Mexico and District 17 proud.

As national senior vice-commander Ellen is chairman of the National Mae Holmes program. Because Ellen is very dedicated to working and advocating for veterans and their families I am confident that she will serve the DAV Auxiliary well as our commander.

She has been an inspiration to many of us. She has recruited many of us to join our great organization as volunteers, advocates, and believers in our mission as DAV Auxiliary members.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to second her nomination.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Salazar withdrew from the microphone.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: All those in favor of Ellen Timmerman for the office of National Commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. They ayes have it. Ellen Timmerman (Applause) has been elected to the office of National Commander. Congratulations.

COMMANDER-ELECT ELLEN TIMMERMAN: Thank you.

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Oh, wait a minute. (Laughter) Diane Franz 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 in favor of Diane Franz for the office of National Senior Vice-Commander signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The ayes have it. Diane Franz is senior vice. (Applause)

Lynn Prosser 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 signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The ayes have it. (Applause)

Darlene Spence has been nominated by the Committee for the office of 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 Darlene Spence for the office of National Second Junior Vice-Commander signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. The ayes have it. (Applause)

Julie Steinbaugh 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 Julie Steinbaugh for the office of National Third Junior Vice-Commander signify by saying aye; anybody opposed. Julie Steinbaugh is the National Third Junior Vice-Commander. (Applause)

Ann Marie Hurley 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 in favor of Ann Marie Hurley for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. They ayes have it. Ann Marie Hurley is the 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; anybody opposed. Paula Raymond is the National Judge Advocate. (Applause)

Will the current national officers please return to your seats at the head table. That means up here. (Laughter) I'm just saying.

(Whereupon, the national officers returned to their stations.)

COMMANDER JOHNKIN: The election having been completed, I now ask for the National Sergeant-at-Arms to come to the podium for the purpose of introducing those members who served as pages.

Oh, I guess you all are released.

(Whereupon, the tellers withdrew from their table as the Sergeant-at-Arms advanced to the podium.)

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: I'm a little bit shorter than our commander. First of all I would like to thank all of the pages and the NECs who served as pages. I think they did a wonderful job. Could everybody give them a round of applause? (Applause)

Okay, as I call your name if you will come forward, please, I have Savannah Clark, (Applause) you can just turn around and face the audience; Ashley Johnkin; (Applause) oh, I'm sorry, Ashton; I know her name. I know this little girl. (Applause) I'm sorry, big girl.

Arianna Loy; (Applause) Olivia Sensat; (Applause) I'm sorry, it's Arianna; Lillian Valila; (Applause)—and I might just add these kids have just been super. They've been a pleasure to work with—Aticus Woodfork; (Applause) Janna Palmer; (Applause) Max Robertson; (Applause) Addison Robertson. (Applause)

And we had a couple of others that aren't here today but I'd like to go ahead and recognize them because they did work and help us. We had Kilee Miller, Jeffrey Olson, and Olivia Kashner. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the pages advanced to the front as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: I'd also like to recognize the NECs who served as pages. They not only did their part of what they needed to do but they helped with our younger pages as well.

We have Terri Grabowski was here but she became ill yesterday. I don't know if she is in the room but she hasn't been able to serve today.

We have Linda Applegate; (Applause) if you all don't want to come forward you can just stand—come forward, please. (Laughter) It's a command. And it was such a pleasure getting to know these women.

Grace James; (Applause) Charlene Williams; (Applause) Teresita Morey; (Applause) Melissa Valdez; (Applause) Carol Rundell. (Applause)

We also had Carla Reynolds and Laura Pekarik—I think I'm saying that right. I don't know. But, anyway. But they're not serving as pages today. And then Christopher Easley.

(Whereupon, the NECs advanced to the front as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PARKER: Being sergeant-at-arms you know you come in and it's the first time you have ever done it and maybe you know what you're doing but the time you get through. So they've been great. I couldn't have done what I've done the last few days without all of their help. Thank you all so much. (Applause)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: You did a great job, by the way. We've got to get the photo op here. (Laughter) What a dashing group. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Sergeant-at-Arms withdrew from the podium and the pages returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER JOHNIKEN: Okay, at this time I'm want to acknowledge my National Color Bearers, Ethan Kingsley and Jeffrey Olson. I want to thank you guys for your help. (Applause)

I also want to recognize my State Color Bearers which was Iris Brzezinski and Ann Richardson. (Applause)

And at this point in time I am dismissing all of my pages. Thank you all.

Is there any further business to come before this Convention? I've just got something to say.

(Laughter) I want to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to serve as your national commander. It has truly been an amazing experience.

We've done the best we could do. I have to thank Pat Kemper. She has worked right along beside me. She is a good friend of mine now and I don't have very many reasons to call her but I'm going to call her every once-in-a-while just to let her know that I'm still kicking. (Laughter)

I want to thank the national staff. These people are great. It is amazing the amount of things they do for you if you are trying to work with them. So I would give any of you on this line that advice. Please work with Pat and things will run smooth for you. (Applause)

Hearing none, I now declare this 96th 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 9:41 o'clock, a.m., on Tuesday, July 17, 2018.)

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Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2017, and
Independent Auditors' Report

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, 2017, 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, 2017, 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.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

April 9, 2018

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017**

ASSETS			LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS
GENERAL ASSETS:			
Cash	\$ 485,146	LIABILITIES:	
Accounts receivable	15,795	Accounts payable and other liabilities	\$ 2,335,855
Inventory	15,033	Contributions distributable to state departments	401,553
Investments	8,452,601	Deferred membership fees	<u>239,634</u>
Accrued interest receivable	16,910	Total liabilities	<u>2,977,042</u>
Prepaid expenses	2,910		
Office equipment - net	3,077		
SERVICE PROGRAM ASSETS:		LIFE MEMBERSHIP—Reserve for future	
Cash	12,751	distribution of life membership dues	<u>6,653,424</u>
Investments	356,073		
Receivable from General fund	27,314		
DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM ASSETS:		NET ASSETS:	
Receivable from General fund	15,208	Unrestricted	6,014,612
		Temporarily restricted:	
EDUCATION LOAN/SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM		Service Program	395,956
ASSETS:		Disaster Relief Program	15,208
Cash	217,674	Education Loan/Scholarship Program	<u>1,188,394</u>
Investments	550,510	Total net assets	7,614,170
Loans receivable (less reserve of \$9,677)	38,709		
Receivable from General fund	381,501		
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ASSETS:			
Investments	4,972,753		
Accrued interest receivable	4,626		
Receivable from General fund	1,676,045		
TOTAL	<u>\$ 17,244,636</u>	TOTAL	<u>\$ 17,244,636</u>

See notes to the financial statements.

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**

	Unrestricted General	Temporarily Restricted		Total	
		Service Program	Disaster Relief Program		Education Loan/ Scholarship Program
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:					
Membership fees and mandates	\$	\$ 706	\$	\$ 432	\$ 1,138
Life membership distributions	477,901				477,901
Contributions	202,819	7,959	11,190	9,485	231,453
Contributed facilities	9,095				9,095
Conference and meetings	21,005				21,005
National convention	26,914				26,914
Interest and dividends	287,965	11,227		15,048	314,240
Realized investment gains	552	2,347		4,946	7,845
Net assets released from restrictions	51,078	(14,328)		(36,750)	
Other	9,632				9,632
Total support and revenue	1,086,961	7,911	11,190	(6,839)	1,099,223
EXPENSES:					
Program services	648,879	4,857		3,636	657,372
Fundraising costs	125,691				125,691
General and administrative	243,680				243,680
Total expenses	1,018,250	4,857		3,636	1,026,743
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION (DEPRECIATION) OF INVESTMENTS					
	68,711	3,054	11,190	(10,475)	72,480
CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION (DEPRECIATION) OF INVESTMENTS					
	473,739	17,923		28,380	520,042
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	542,450	20,977	11,190	17,905	592,522
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	5,472,162	374,979	4,018	1,170,489	7,021,648
NET ASSETS—End of year	\$6,014,612	\$395,956	\$ 15,208	\$ 1,188,394	\$7,614,170

See notes to the financial statements.

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**

	Program Services	Fund Raising Costs	General and Administrative	Total Expenses
Salaries and wages	\$ 205,296	\$ 23,782	\$ 89,124	\$ 318,202
Employee benefits	54,473	4,622	22,301	81,396
Distributions to state departments	69,492			69,492
Fundraising expenses		95,250		95,250
Payroll taxes	16,072	1,225	6,627	23,924
Conferences and meetings	74,394			74,394
Expenses of national convention	82,162			82,162
Printing, stationery and office supplies	13,020		17,665	30,685
Expenses of national commander and officers	56,247			56,247
Contributed facilities	6,385	457	2,253	9,095
Postage	22		19,655	19,677
Travel	5,213		1,756	6,969
Professional fees	9,986	134	42,233	52,353
Service program benefits	14,328			14,328
Scholarship program benefits	36,750			36,750
Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services, memberships, and other awards	1,592			1,592
Other	<u>11,940</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>42,066</u>	<u>54,227</u>
Total	<u>\$ 657,372</u>	<u>\$ 125,691</u>	<u>\$ 243,680</u>	<u>\$ 1,026,743</u>

See notes to the financial statements.

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	\$ 592,522
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:	
Change in unrealized (appreciation)depreciation in investments	(640,304)
Realized investment gains	(54,825)
Depreciation	1,945
Changes in assets and liabilities:	
Accrued interest receivable	(10,601)
Inventory	(256)
Accounts receivable	7,541
Prepaid expenses	2,938
Receivable from General Fund	85,538
Accounts payable and other liabilities	(173,479)
Contributions distributable to state departments	18,288
Deferred membership fees	7,238
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	<u>192,377</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>28,922</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Purchases of investments	(6,207,008)
Proceeds from sale of investments	5,791,233
Collections from repayment of education loans	<u>17,874</u>
Net cash used by investing activities	<u>(397,901)</u>
NET DECREASE IN CASH	(368,979)
CASH:	
Beginning of year	<u>1,084,550</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 715,571</u>

See notes to the financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017

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) 2014-09, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. ASU 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 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 will not have a material impact on DAVA's financial position, cash flows or results of operations.

In January 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-01, *Financial Instruments—Overall (Subtopic 825-10)—Recognition and Measurement of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities*. ASU 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. The ASU also amends certain disclosure requirements associated with the fair value of financial instruments. The effective date of ASU 2016-01 is for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2018. The ASU has not yet been adopted. Management is currently evaluating the impact to the financial statements.

In August 2016, the FASB issued ASU 2016-14, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*. Adoption of FASB ASU 2016-14 will result in significant changes to financial reporting and disclosure for not-for-profit entities. FASB believes the update will improve not-for-profit entities' financial statements and provide more useful information to donors, grantors, creditors, and other financial statement users. Specifically, the ASU modifies the net asset classification requirements and disclosure requirements related to liquidity, financial performance, and cash flows. The standard is effective for annual financial statements issued for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2017, with application applied retrospectively. In addition to added disclosure, this standard will result in DAVA's unrestricted net assets being relabeled as "net assets without donor restrictions", while temporarily restricted net assets will be relabeled as "net assets with donor restrictions".

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.

Contributions—Contributions received are recorded at their fair value and are classified as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support. 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 unrestricted net assets if the restriction expires in the reporting period in which the support is recognized.

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 2017 in the reserve for future distribution of life membership dues are as follows:

Balance—January 1, 2017	\$ 6,461,047
Additions:	
Membership dues received	444,079
Earnings on invested assets	158,288
Gain on sale of investments	<u>46,980</u>
Total additions	<u>649,347</u>
Deductions:	
Dues to National Headquarters	485,140
Dues to local units	25,435
Dues to State Departments	56,227
Investment fee	<u>10,430</u>
Total deductions	<u>577,232</u>
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	<u>120,262</u>
Balance—December 31, 2017	<u>\$ 6,653,424</u>

4. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

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.

The cost and fair value of investments in securities and the net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) at December 31, 2017, are summarized below:

2017	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation)
General fund:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 139,595	\$ 139,595	\$
Common stocks	773,312	805,994	32,682
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	2,559,738	2,563,894	4,156
International fixed income funds	250,000	250,000	
Domestic equity funds	2,573,403	3,000,629	427,226
International equity funds	<u>1,606,423</u>	<u>1,692,489</u>	<u>86,066</u>
Total	<u>\$ 7,902,471</u>	<u>\$ 8,452,601</u>	<u>\$ 550,130</u>
Service program:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 8,273	\$ 8,273	\$
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	208,674	206,674	(2,000)
International fixed income funds	7,008	6,865	(143)
Domestic equity funds	97,510	106,637	9,127
International equity funds	<u>23,833</u>	<u>27,624</u>	<u>3,791</u>
Total	<u>\$ 345,298</u>	<u>\$ 356,073</u>	<u>\$ 10,775</u>
Education Loan/Scholarship program:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 12,661	\$ 12,661	\$
Common stocks	72,895	84,414	11,519
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	326,759	323,021	(3,738)
International fixed income funds	11,524	11,290	(234)
Domestic equity funds	70,273	77,528	7,255
International equity funds	<u>35,611</u>	<u>41,596</u>	<u>5,985</u>
Total	<u>\$ 529,723</u>	<u>\$ 550,510</u>	<u>\$ 20,787</u>
Life membership:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 83,881	\$ 83,881	\$
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	3,746,722	3,735,679	(11,043)
International fixed income funds	268,470	231,544	(36,926)
Domestic equity funds	479,371	670,485	191,114
International equity funds	<u>244,638</u>	<u>251,164</u>	<u>6,526</u>
Total	<u>\$ 4,823,082</u>	<u>\$ 4,972,753</u>	<u>\$ 149,671</u>

As of December 31, 2017, the amount of securities in a continuous unrealized loss position for a duration of greater than twelve months is not material.

5. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC 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 2017.

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 and Level 3 during 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 has been no change in the methodologies used at December 31, 2017.

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, 2017, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
General fund:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 139,595	\$	\$ 139,595
Common stocks	805,994		805,994
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	2,563,894		2,563,894
International fixed income funds	250,000		250,000
Domestic equity funds	3,000,629		3,000,629
International equity funds	1,692,489		1,692,489
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>7,507,012</u>		<u>7,507,012</u>
Total	<u>\$ 8,452,601</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$ 8,452,601</u>
Service program:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 8,273	\$	\$ 8,273
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	206,674		206,674
International fixed income funds	6,865		6,865
Domestic equity funds	106,637		106,637
International equity funds	27,624		27,624
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>347,800</u>		<u>347,800</u>
Total	<u>\$ 356,073</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$ 356,073</u>
Education Loan/Scholarship program:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 12,661	\$	\$ 12,661
Common stocks	84,414		84,414
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	323,021		323,021
International fixed income funds	11,290		11,290
Domestic equity funds	77,528		77,528
International equity funds	41,596		41,596
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>453,435</u>		<u>453,435</u>
Total	<u>\$ 550,510</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$ 550,510</u>
Life membership:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 83,881	\$	\$ 83,881
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	3,735,679		3,735,679
International fixed-income funds	231,544		231,544
Domestic equity funds	670,485		670,485
International equity funds	251,164		251,164
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>4,888,872</u>		<u>4,888,872</u>
Total	<u>\$ 4,972,753</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$ 4,972,753</u>

6. FREEDOMS FOUNDATION

DAVA has designated \$8,336 of unrestricted funds for the purpose of providing financial aid to elementary and secondary school teachers attending annual summer teaching seminars held at the Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. This amount is included in Other Liabilities on the Statement of Financial Position.

7. DONOR RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Service Program—Donations from individuals and amounts received from each unit as a mandate for the Service Program are recorded as temporarily restricted net assets, 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 temporarily restricted net assets. 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 temporarily restricted net assets, which are used for members of DAV and DAVA who are in need of temporary financial assistance due to natural disaster, such as flood, earthquake, etc. 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 temporarily restricted assets from which scholarships are awarded to students in accordance with the by-laws of DAVA. In 2017, there were 26 scholarships in amounts ranging from \$750 to \$1,500 issued to selected Auxiliary member applicants for a total of \$36,750. 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 7 years of graduation or withdrawal from school. At December 31, 2017, the total amount of loans outstanding was \$38,709, net of reserve.

8. 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 2017, DAV charged DAVA \$81,396 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 2017, DAV did not charge DAVA for these benefits. Such amounts are immaterial.

9. 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 \$9,095 in 2017 and is included as revenue and expense on 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, 2017, DAVA owed approximately \$122,682 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, 2017 DAVA was due approximately \$15,795 for dues collected, which is recorded as an accounts receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

10. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2017, but before April 9, 2018, 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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