

**PROCEEDINGS
of
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
2022 NATIONAL CONVENTION**



**August 6–9, 2022
Orlando, Florida**

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS
OF DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE NATIONAL ADJUTANT,
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

TRANSMITTING

2022 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, PURSUANT TO
36 U.S.C. 50308 AND 44 U.S.C. 1332



February 10, 2023—Referred to the Committee on Veterans'
Affairs and ordered to be printed

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LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

February 10, 2023

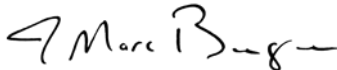
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Speaker:

As business manager of DAV (Disabled American Veterans), and as secretary of its national convention, I hereby certify as to the authenticity of the reports and proceedings of our national convention, held in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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, 2021, as described in 36 U.S.C. 10101.

Sincerely,



J. Marc Burgess
National Adjutant
Chief Executive Officer

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**NATIONAL OFFICERS 2022–2023
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS**

National Commander

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

Senior Vice Commander

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

1st Jr. Vice Commander

Daniel Contreras, 13733 E. Rosecrans Avenue,
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

2nd Jr. Vice Commander

Coleman Nee, 1 Leeward Run, South Yarmouth, MA 02664

3rd Jr. Vice Commander

John Donovan, 135 N. Woodland Dr, Conway, AR 72032

4th Jr. Vice Commander

Cynthia Madison, 314 Pebble Creek Drive, Suffolk, VA 23435

National Judge Advocate

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

National Chaplain

Debra Varner, 404 Lorain Street, Birmingham, AL 35224

Past National Commander

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

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2022–2023

First District	James Follis, Malden, Massachusetts
Second District	Israel Rivera, Glendale, New York
Third District	Robert Guldner, Alexandria, New Hampshire
Fourth District	Johnnie Walker, Villas, New Jersey
Fifth District	Philip Arnold, Lebanon, Pennsylvania
Sixth District	John Patterson, Accokeek, Maryland
Seventh District	Frank Chicollo, Oldsmar, Florida
Eighth District	Dave Sensat, Sulphur, Louisiana
Ninth District	Gregory Keesee, Goldsboro, North Carolina
Tenth District	Rolly Lee, Farwell, Michigan
Eleventh District	Michael Stith, Akron, Ohio
Twelfth District	John Polk, Menomonee, Wisconsin
Thirteenth District	George Hall, Harold, Kentucky
Fourteenth District	Kevin Grantier, Lincoln, Montana
Fifteenth District	Karin Hansen, Saint George, Kansas
Sixteenth District	Gerald Wilson, Antioch, California
Seventeenth District	Floyd Watson, Cheyenne, Wyoming
Eighteenth District	Bill Dolan, Pahrump, Nevada
Nineteenth District	JoAnn Gavin, Silverdale, Washington
Twentieth District	Charles Edwards, Austin, Texas
Twenty-first District	Danny Oliver, Coweta, Oklahoma



Joseph Parsetich
National Commander
2022–2023
Disabled American Veterans



Andy Marshall
National Commander
2021–2022
Disabled American Veterans

**NATIONAL OFFICERS 2021–2022
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS**

National Commander

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

Senior Vice Commander

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

1st Jr. Vice Commander

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2nd Jr. Vice Commander

Daniel Contreras, 13733 E. Rosecrans Avenue,
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

3rd Jr. Vice Commander

Coleman Nee, 18 Zamora Street, Boston, MA 02130

4th Jr. Vice Commander

John Donovan, 135 N. Woodland Dr, Conway, AR 72032

National Judge Advocate

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

National Chaplain

Debra Varner, 404 Lorain Street, Birmingham, AL 35224

Past National Commander

Stephen Whitehead, 16095 Excel Way, Rosemount, MN 55068

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2021–2022

First District	James Follis, Malden, Massachusetts
Second District	Thomas Ingram, Brooklyn, New York
Third District	Robert Guldner, Alexandria, New Hampshire
Fourth District	Ronald Werlich, East Hartford, Connecticut
Fifth District	Philip Arnold, Lebanon, Pennsylvania
Sixth District	Michael Dawson, Ronceverte, West Virginia
Seventh District	Frank Chicollo, Oldsmar, Florida
Eighth District	William Baker, Enterprise, Alabama
Ninth District	Gregory Keesee, Goldsboro, North Carolina
Tenth District	James R. Dempsey, Dexter, Michigan
Eleventh District	Michael Stith, Akron, Ohio
Twelfth District	Eric Huckaby, Pawnee, Illinois
Thirteenth District	George Hall, Harold, Kentucky
Fourteenth District	Robert Hill, Brookings, South Dakota
Fifteenth District	Karin Hansen, Saint George, Kansas
Sixteenth District	Clyde Maddox, Riverside, California
Seventeenth District	Floyd Watson, Cheyenne, Wyoming
Eighteenth District	Glenn Hohman, Sierra Vista, Arizona
Nineteenth District	JoAnn Gavin, Silverdale, Washington
Twentieth District	Charles Edwards, Austin, 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. Clinkin, 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 (deceased 2021)
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 (deceased 2021)
 1985–86: Albert H. Linden Jr., Camp Springs, Maryland
 1986–87: Kenneth G. Musselmann, Huntington Beach, California (deceased 2009)
 1987–88: Gene A. Murphy, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
 1988–89: Billy E. Kirby, Clifton, Texas
 1989–90: Vernon V. Cardosi, Saugus, Massachusetts
 1990–91: Joseph E. Andry, Westerville, Ohio (deceased 2010)
 1991–92: Cleveland Jordan, Washington, D.C. (deceased 2019)
 1992–93: Joseph C. Zengerle, Washington, D.C.
 1993–94: Richard E. Marbes, Green Bay, Wisconsin
 1994–95: Donald A. Sioss, Miller Place, New York
 1995–96: Thomas A. McMasters, III, Sterling Hts., Michigan (deceased 2008)
 1996–97: Gregory C. Reed, Indianapolis, Indiana
 1997–98: Harry R. McDonald Jr., Crestview, Florida (deceased 2008)
 1998–99: Andrew A. Kistler, Franklin, Pennsylvania (deceased 2018)
 1999–00: Michael E. Dobmeier, Grand Forks, North Dakota
 2000–01: Armando C. Albarran, San Antonio, Texas
 2001–02: George H. Steese Jr., Fresno, California
 2002–03: Edward R. Heath Sr., Mechanic Falls, Maine (deceased 2005)
 2003–04: Alan W. Bowers, Royalston, Massachusetts
 2004–05: James E. Sursely, Apopka, Florida (deceased 2021)
 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 (deceased 2020)
 2013–14: Joseph W. Johnston, Williamsburg, Ohio
 2014–15: Ron F. Hope, Clemmons, North Carolina
 2015–16: Moses A. McIntosh Jr., Hephzibah, Georgia
 2016–17: David W. Riley, Semmes, Alabama
 2017–18: Delphine Metcalf-Foster, Vallejo, California
 2018–19: Dennis R. Nixon, China Spring, Texas
 2019–21: Stephen Whitehead, Rosemount, Minnesota
 2021–22: Andrew Marshall, Palm Harbor, Florida

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 100th NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS HELD AT**

Orlando, Florida

August 6, 2022

Joint Opening Session

- - -

The Joint Opening Session of the Disabled American Veterans 100th National Convention and the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary 99th National Convention convened in the Regency Ballroom O-S on the Convention Level of the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Saturday, August 6, 2022, and was called to order at 8:32 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Andrew "Andy" Marshall.

COMMANDER ANDREW "ANDY" MARSHALL: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Welcome to Orlando. (Applause) That's right. I now call to order the 100th National Convention of DAV and DAV Auxiliary. (Applause) The 100th. National Adjutant Marc Burgess, will you read the Call to Convention, please.

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 100th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans to be convened in Orlando, Florida, at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, August 6th, 2022. (Applause)

Consideration and disposition of business brought before this Convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Please silence your cell phones and other mobile devices.

Ladies and gentlemen, here this morning to perform our National Anthem is retired Technical Sergeant Sonya Bryson-Kirksey. Sonya has sung "The Star Spangled Banner" over 1,000 times, including a performance for the president of the United States on his visit to MacDill Air Force Base in the fall of 2014.

Sonya retired in 2015, ending two decades of service to the United States Air Force. Since her retirement she stays active in the community raising funds for research for Multiple Sclerosis, which she was also diagnosed with. You may know her as the voice of the three-time Stanley Cup champions, the Tampa Bay Lightning. (Applause)

If able, please stand and join in singing our national anthem.

(Whereupon, the National Anthem was sung, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Sonya, for that truly beautiful performance. Now, please join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Please be seated, for now. I'd like to call on our national chaplain, Debra Varner, to lead us in prayer. Chaplain Varner.

(Whereupon, the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DEBRA VARNER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN VARNER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN VARNER: If you can stand, we ask that you stand for our prayer. Let us pray.

Almighty Creator, it's once again that we invoke your presence into this great conference. We ask, Father, that your spirit would move among your people as you continue to give us the wisdom and knowledge that is so needful, as we break away and take our (indistinguishable) perspectives we ask for wisdom and knowledge, spiritual might and understanding, that as we come together, we reunite in sharing that which has been given.

Now we ask that you move on the hearts of our leaders that we follow line upon line and precept upon precept, that we can continue to serve and be servants, one of another.

These and all things that we ask and receive by faith. And the people said amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the chaplain withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Chaplain Varnier. Please be seated. Again, welcome to the 100th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans. (Applause) One hundred. I am proud to introduce our 2022 National Convention Chairperson.

Laymond Rose is a disabled Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War. During his enlistment from 1967 to 1970 he was assigned to the First Marine Division and his service included 13 months in country.

The Indiana native had a successful career in industrial sales and marketing. Like any level-headed Midwesterner, he retired to Florida to enjoy our beautiful beaches (Laughter) but his fellow veterans were never far from his mind.

As an active DAV life member, Laymond Rose served as a chapter service officer for five years, and is currently the commander of Central Florida Chapter 16 in Longwood, Florida.

He and his wife, Margaret, live just outside of Orlando and have two children and four grandchildren.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to introduce to you our 2022 National Convention Chair, fellow Vietnam veteran and my friend, Laymond Rose. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the convention chairman advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN LAYMOND ROSE: Good morning, DAV and Auxiliary.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN ROSE: Welcome to Orlando. Thank you, Commander Marshall, for that very kind introduction.

National Commander Marshall, National Adjutant Burgess, national line officers, Auxiliary National Commander Helms-Prosser, Auxiliary National Adjutant Clos, Auxiliary national line officers, distinguished guests and DAV members.

If I may, I would like to give a shout-out to my home chapter and Auxiliary units, DAV Central Florida Chapter and Unit 16, as well as the entire Department of Florida. (Applause) DAV and state Auxiliary members, please stand, if able, and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the member stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN ROSE: Thank you. It is truly an honor to serve as convention chairperson for this 100th DAV and Auxiliary National Convention. I can't be more excited than to welcome each of you to the "Theme Park Capital of the World."

This week, we're here to do the business of the organization we love. And what better location to do it in. The locals call it "The City Beautiful," so make sure you get out and enjoy it.

In 2021 alone, Orlando tourist attractions, restaurants, and events drew more than 30 million visitors. And this was considered a "down" year as this beloved city and the entire tourism industry continued to battle the COVID scourge.

Orlando has hung in there and continues to thrive in spite of these challenges. And it's no surprise why. There is so much to do in this town. And I'm not just talking about Disney World or Universal Orlando Resort or Sea World Orlando.

There's the new Flamingo Mingle at Discovery Cove, which is an exclusive animal experience where guests can feed and learn about flamingos in an outdoor setting.

And there's LEGOLAND Florida Resort, which includes the new Brickbeard's Watersport Stunt Show.

ICON Park on International Drive includes the Museum of Illusions Orlando, as well as "In the Game," a family entertainment center and arcade featuring 70 games, virtual reality experiences, themed escape rooms, and more.

And for the truly courageous, there's the 300-foot tall ICON Park Slingshot. (Laughter) This attraction launches riders out of an exploding volcano, 450 straight up, reaching 100 miles per hour. If you got motion sickness watching the "Top Gun" sequel, then I advise you to take a hard pass on this one. (Laughter)

There's The Mall at Millenia and, of course, that world-renowned park, Gatorland, featuring Orlando's most famous ambassadors.

And for all my fellow Marines who need a snack, Crayola Experience is only a 15-minute ride. (Laughter)

Of course, even a paradise like Orlando has its hazards. I want to warn my fellow veterans from more northerly climbs to be careful about the bugs you see in Florida. They are, unfortunately, a fact of life down here.

Just the other day we had a mosquito problem. I asked my wife to get me the phone book. She laughed at me and handed me her phone. (Laughter) "It's called Google," I was told. "You should try it some time."

Well, she was kind of right. In the end, the bug got killed, but her phone was broken in the process. And she sure got upset. (Laughter) I guess I might have asked, instead, for a fly swatter. When the phone gets fixed I'll ask her to order one for me. (Laughter)

And speaking of donating blood, we have a special opportunity to help veterans while you are here this week. OneBlood, the local blood bank serving Florida and much of the Southeastern United States, will be set up here throughout the convention.

They will be collecting blood donations in Barrel Springs 1, located on the level above the exhibit floor. You can make an appointment at the table in the exhibit area or online by scanning the QR code on the screen.

This blood drive will benefit Orlando-area VA medical centers and is being held to address shortages in the area.

The donation site will be open after this session and daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. throughout the convention. All donors will receive a superhero beach towel and a \$20 e-gift card.

I want to thank each of you who has or will be donating blood this week. So many of you have given in so many ways, and you continue to show your care and concern by giving the gift of life.

As we move forward into what will be an amazing four days here in Orlando, we should be excited, honored, and challenged by the mission.

We have much business to take care of over the next several days, in keeping our promise to the men and women who served our nation and sacrificed so much.

This is an unending task, because we are an unyielding group. Let's focus on our shared goal and make this a successful convention in this beautiful city. May God bless you and God bless America. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the convention chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: It is my pleasure to read a sort message from our governor, Ron DeSantis, a combat veteran, himself.

"Dear Friends, it is my pleasure to welcome the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary to Orlando for the 2022 National Convention. Thank you for coming together to celebrate the men and women who devoted their service to our nation in defense of our freedoms.

"As governor I appreciate the civic engagement of organizations like yours and your efforts to improve the lives of disabled veterans and their families.

"As a veteran of the United States Navy I understand the sacrifices our military makes to protect our state and our nation.

"As Floridians and Americans we must never forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure the freedoms we hold dear today.

"Best wishes for a memorable event.

"Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida." (Applause)

Mayor Jerry L. Demings is a native of Orlando. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in finance from Florida State University and his MBA from Orlando College, now Everest University. He served as Orlando's first African-American police chief and Orange County's first African-American director of public safety.

In 2008, he was elected the first African-American sheriff and constitutional officer in county history, and was reelected in 2012 and 2016. In 2018, he was elected the first African-American mayor of Orange County. He is the chief executive officer for over 8,000 county employees, with a budget of over \$4 billion.

Ladies and gentlemen, Mayor Jerry L. Demings. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the mayor advanced to the podium.)

THE HONORABLE JERRY L. DEMINGS: Good morning to all of you. It is indeed an honor and a privilege for me to welcome you here to the metro Orlando area. Of course, I am the Orange County mayor and you are here in the unincorporated area of our community in Orange County.

I get to do double-duty today because my wife is Honorable Congresswoman Val Demings who serves in the United States House of Representatives. (Applause) And I get to welcome you here to her district, as well.

We are honored that you selected our community to celebrate your 100th Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary National Convention.

On behalf of the nearly 1.5 million people who call Orange County home, we applaud you, the veterans, for the sacrifice that you have made for our country. You are truly our heroes and we thank you.

According to the Department of Veteran Affairs, we have approximately 19 million veterans in the United States and 27 percent of those veterans have a service-connected disability. Thanks to organizations like the Disabled American Veterans, these patriots and their families will never be alone.

The DAV provides lifetime support to our veterans and their families. Some of those are my family members who have served, as well.

Through your work you have helped more than one million veterans in positive, life-changing ways. I applaud you for providing transportation services and assisting with the coordination of benefit claims to hundreds of thousands of veterans.

In Orange County we are proud to have over 72,000 veterans who call our county home. (Applause) Additionally, Florida is known as one of the most veteran-friendly states in the nation.

In Orange County government we have over 700 veterans employed and over 300 who are now on active-duty service.

Orange County's Veterans Services Office was created in 1945 and assists our local veterans with their VA benefits and eligibility requirements. It also provides an array of services and direct access to organizations that support the veteran community.

We also have the Mayor's Orange County Veterans Advisory Council, which is comprised of over 35 veterans representing each branch of service, as well as active-duty personnel and organizations that support veterans and their families.

The council advocates for our local veterans and connects them with community resources, support and assistance. We are happy to have one of our council members here this morning. I would like to recognize retired United States Marine Corps Sergeant Fred Robinson.

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

MAYOR DEMINGS: Fred is co-chair of the Mayor's Orange County Veterans' Advisory Council.

Orange County, ladies and gentlemen, is proud to be a top destination for visitors worldwide and home to one of the largest convention centers in the nation, the finest of hospitality, existing theme parks, sporting venues and cultural attractions.

During your stay I hope that you take the time to explore all that our community has to offer. Again, on behalf of the nearly 1.5 million residents who call Orange County home, thank you for making Central Florida your destination for this year's convention.

I also have a proclamation that I'd like to present. I want to present this to your national commander, Mr. Andy Marshall. And let me just read what it says. It says:

"Whereas, Disabled American Veterans was founded by World War I veterans on September 25th, 1920, and was chartered by an act of Congress of June the 17th, 1932; and

"Whereas, the DAV is dedicated to a single purpose, which is to empower veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect, and dignity; and

"Whereas, DAV provides free professional assistance to veterans and their families to obtain benefits and services provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and other agencies; and

"Whereas, in 1921 the DAV held their first national convention in Detroit, Michigan; and

"Whereas, in 1922 the DAV San Francisco National Convention perfected plans to form the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary; and

"Whereas, the DAV National Convention and the Auxiliary is attended by members from across the nation and are supported by numerous non-profit organizations and government entities committed to serving veterans; and

"Whereas, the DAV and Auxiliary's 100th National Convention was held in Orlando, Florida, providing members and guests with informative seminars and workshops that benefit veterans; and

"Whereas, Orange County is proud to honor the members and families of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary;

"Now Therefore, I, Jerry L. Demings, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Orange County Mayor, do hereby proclaim Saturday, August the 6th through Tuesday, August the 9th as Disabled American Veteran and Auxiliary 100th National Convention Days in Orange County, Florida, and encourage residents to show their appreciation for the sacrifices disabled American veterans have made in defending and preserving our freedoms.

"Done and ordered this 6th day of August, 2022." (Applause)

God bless you all. God bless these great United States of America.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, sir.
(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken.)

MAYOR DEMINGS: Let me get out of the way.

(Whereupon, Mayor Demings withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And now your DAV Auxiliary staff and national officers: DAV National Auxiliary Adjutant Bunny Clos of Kentucky; (Applause) National Chaplain, Aura-Lee Nicodemus of New Hampshire; (Applause)

Judge Advocate Paula Raymond of Illinois; (Applause) Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Terry Grabowski of New York; (Applause) Third Junior Vice-Commander Melissa Pierce of Iowa; (Applause) Second Junior Vice-Commander Christopher Easley of Oklahoma; (Applause)

First Junior Vice-Commander Ann Marie Hurley of Massachusetts; (Applause) Senior Vice-Commander Darlene Spence of Texas; (Applause) Auxiliary National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser of South Carolina; (Applause) and Auxiliary Past National Commander Diane Franz of Florida. (Applause)

And now your DAV national officers: your Past National Commander and Chairperson of the Board, from Rosemount, Minnesota, Stephen "Butch" Whitehead; (Applause) hailing from Birmingham, Alabama, our National Chaplain, Debra Varner;

The pride of Grand Forks, North Dakota, our National Judge Advocate, Mike Dobmeier; (Applause) your Fourth Junior Vice-Commander from Conway, Arkansas, John Donovan; (Applause) your Third Junior Vice Commander from Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, Coleman Nee;

Your Second Junior Vice-Commander from Sherman Oaks, California, Dan Contreras; (Applause) your First Junior Vice-Commander from Kaysville, Utah, Nancy Espinosa; (Applause) and, finally, welcome to the stage your Senior Vice-Commander, from Great Falls, Montana, Joseph Parsetich. (Applause)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER JOSEPH PARSETICH: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER PARSETICH: It is my great honor to formally introduce a friend and great leader. National Commander Andy Marshall. He was an airborne infantryman, serving in the Americal Division in the Khe Sanh Valley in December of 1970 when he was first injured.

After his subsequent recovery, he was transferred to the 173rd Airborne Brigade. In 1971, he stepped on an improvised booby trap and sustained extensive damage to his left leg and foot, requiring 15 months of recovery at Walter Reed.

For his service, Commander Marshall received the Bronze Star, Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster, and the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device.

In 1975, he began what would be a 41-year career with DAV as a national service officer, holding numerous supervisory and leadership roles throughout. He also went on to become one of DAV's first national area supervisors and served at DAV's Judicial Appeals Office in Washington, D.C.

Commander Marshall held multiple department-level offices, including time as the commander for the Department of Florida. And he has also served for three years on the Florida Veterans' Advisory Committee.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure that I introduce your national commander, Andy Marshall. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thanks, Joe, for that very kind introduction. It has been my greatest honor to serve as your national commander for the last year. And it has also been a blessing to have served on DAV's national line during an historic time.

But before I go any further, I want to take a moment and express my gratitude to each and every one of you. DAV and Auxiliary members, friends, advocates and supporters, today, millions of veterans and their families have new hope and belief in legislative justice thanks to your hard work getting the PACT Act across the goal line. (Applause)

The focus might have been on Congress the past few weeks, but the work was really done by each of you, so thank you. (Applause)

I have been involved in DAV for the better part of a half-century. And I can honestly say that in those many years I've never been as excited as I am now about how we're evolving as a community of veterans.

In the years since I have been elected to national office, I've seen three important "firsts" lead our organization as national commanders:

Delphine Metcalf-Foster, our first female national commander; (Applause)

Dave Riley, our first quadruple amputee and Coast Guard veteran; (Applause) and

Butch Whitehead, our first post-9/11 veteran to serve in our top seat. And he served a rare two-year term because of the pandemic. (Applause)

I've also seen the first male elected national commander of the DAV Auxiliary with our good friend Craig Johniken, who we lost way too soon. (Applause)

I've served at a time when DAV led its first acquisition of another charity – Patriot Boot Camp – and am humbled by the impact that program is going to have empowering thousands of veterans and spouses on their journeys as entrepreneurs. (Applause)

We should all – all – feel proud of the direction we're taking in terms of the services we deliver and how we deliver them. (Applause) We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Marc Burgess, Barry Jesinoski, Randy Reese, and their teams nationwide for the constant push to make DAV the most effective charity serving veterans. (Applause)

I want to thank my steadfast chief-of-staff, Thomas Ayala, who has helped me tremendously. Thomas.

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

COMMANDER MARSHALL: And I want to thank the DAV Department of Florida. Are you guys and gals out there? Please – yes.

(Whereupon, the members of the Department of Florida stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: And, foremost, I'd like to thank my beautiful wife, Susan, and daughter Brittney.

(Whereupon, they stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: There she is. It has been a year of many highlights for me, personally. We celebrated our centennial belatedly, christened our new national headquarters, participated in the Grand Ole Opry, laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, testified before Congress, suffered through dozens of media interviews, participated in a rally supporting legislation for toxic exposures, and had breakfast at the White House. (Applause)

I even won an NCAA football bowl game coin toss. (Laughter) Let me explain that one. It was a game between Florida Atlantic University and a school you might have heard of called Marshall University. (Laughter)

The poor Owls may have seen that as an omen. I mean, it's hardly lucky when you're the home team and you have a Marshall from West Virginia handling the coin toss. (Laughter) The Thundering Herd prevailed, and I can only hope my fellow veterans from Chapter 133 in Pompano Beach still speak to me. (Laughter)

My greatest privilege and honor has been the opportunity to meet so many of you who make our mission happen where you live. You have inspired me and taught me a great deal about DAV and life, in general.

For any veteran changed in service, the road to recovery and growth is an ongoing journey. No matter what happens, that changes our lives.

Depending on the severity of an injury, you may experience every phase of grief that goes with a substantial loss. In the Kubler-Ross model, those stages, in order, are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

It's important to understand grief and post-traumatic growth. But, from the experiences I've seen from many Vietnam veterans, the concept of acceptance as a way to relieve grief may be overrated.

While it's important not to dwell on loss, accepting a disability as if it is a life sentence is not healthy. I've seen too many people get told they wouldn't walk, wouldn't work, wouldn't drive, wouldn't fly. And the anger of being discounted or doubted propelled them to overcome an obstacle.

That very thing happened to me. Fifty years ago while I was on crutches a doctor told me that I had better pick out a nice cane because that would be my new reality. But I fought that. And years into my recovery, in spite of the pain I felt almost daily, I decided to put an end to that and left the damn thing in the car one day. (Applause)

The quality of our lives improves dramatically when we are committed to achieving our maximum potential.

From my experiences and the words of wisdom I've heard from so many of you, beyond acceptance, the key to overcoming grief is finding meaning. For me that meaning wasn't truly apparent until my daughter was born.

In that moment, the very first time my eyes met hers I knew I had a purpose and it sustained me. And like so many of you here, that sense of meaning has also come through DAV's mission.

For the past several years, as I've traveled the nation spending time with you, I've made some mental notes from my experiences and the wisdom you've imparted to me. I've distilled those thoughts and want to share them with you all now.

So without further ado, I'd like to share with my "In Leadership and Life" list.

The first tip I have centers on the importance of knowing your ego. All of us have an identity. Being a DAV member is part of who we are. Being an airborne soldier who part of who I am.

Being a Marine is part of who some people are. It's hard to imagine they are actually proud of that but it's true. (Laughter) Right? They even admit it publicly. (Laughter) As if they want other people to know. (Laughter) I've seen it tattooed on their bodies. But maybe that's just because they don't forget. (Laughter)

Sincerely, though, our strength is dependent on our ability to share credit and care foremost for our fellow veterans. Colin Powell once said, "Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls you ego goes with it."

My advice is to recognize that you have an ego. We all do. But look outward and build consensus. Take pride in our charity and the work that we do as a team. Embrace your humility and know that truly great things happen when no one cares who gets the credit. (Applause)

The second lesson will be familiar to anyone here who has ever spent time in a hospital ward: it could be worse. In 1971 while I was at Walter Reed my friend, and longtime DAV leaders, Mike Walsh, and I were the only patients on our floor who still had their legs, though ours were pretty mangled.

On our worst days we could find inspiration from our fellow soldiers who had much more to overcome and did so with a quiet, resigned dignity. Sometimes that perspective is the pill you need to banish self-pity and focus on opportunities instead of your limitations.

Another important lesson: rule yourself. It's good to have standards. The Army teaches us that. Hell, even the Marine Corps has standards. (Laughter)

Make rules for your life and don't let your weaknesses rule you. This approach has made a tremendous difference for me, personally. It's something I've lived by – except for the cigars and scotch. I've got to be honest. My wife is here so she knows better. (Laughter)

But don't let your addictions or shortcomings overcome your potential.

The next one is very important: don't let your challenges influence your choices. The little decisions you make daily matter, regardless of your disabilities or your situation in life. There are times when we're confronted with a fork on the road. And we often put a lot of stock in the major choices we make in those moments. Or we consider our errors and live in the wake of regrets and failure.

The great artist and poet William Joel once said that "mistakes are the only thing that you can truly call your own." But whether you are talking about your situation in the world or the limitations of an injury in service, you won't make objective decisions while going uphill.

We need to settle on a course and destination for our lives, adjust when necessary, and attack our objectives one step at a time, regardless of the obstacles in our way.

Here's one I've been blessed to see from so many of you who have reconnected through DAV with a neglected part of yourself: you are a warrior.

At one point in our lives we, all of us in here, were young and brave. And we decided we wanted to be a part of something bigger than ourselves, an organization where courage and sacrifices were rewarded above all. That's even true for my crayon-eating friends who served in the Marine Corps. (Laughter) Gerald.

A physical setback does not make you less of a warrior. Asking for help doesn't make you weak. You are still part of a team. You're still in the fight. And you should never sell yourself short when there is so much left you have to give.

It's fine to get mad or be sad. (Laughter) It's okay to be angry. Don't bottle it up. Find a way to make your disappointment result in something positive. If we let a grudge or a gripe rule our behavior, we're letting the most toxic feelings in life determine our response to them. Don't hold on to your anger or grief. Don't yell at people or force your negativity on them. Learn the lesson negative situations or people teach you and move on.

The next one is one I want to share with anyone here who wears a "disgruntled veteran" cap and doesn't have a sense of humor about it: your recovery is your mission.

DAV has more than a million people who would be willing to help you when the chips are down. But that's not an excuse for you to avoid taking full ownership of your physical, emotional, and mental health. (Applause) Veterans who choose not to take medication they've been prescribed, and force others to wallow in their bad mood are essentially malingering.

Take ownership of your recovery. (Applause) Seek help when you're falling out. But don't be the one calling for a stretcher because of a dumb decision you have made to sabotage your well-being. (Applause)

The next one literally hits close to the bone for me: friendly fire is the worst kind. In DAV's Constitution and Bylaws there is one saying that covers a lot of ground. It's the words: "the good of the order." (Applause)

When you're working with a team of people who are volunteering their time, even a little negativity can derail all the good that can be accomplished. Inspire your people through your actions and clear guidance. Don't embarrass them or engage in any behavior that won't lead to positive outcomes.

In all my years at DAV, I'm proud to say I never yelled at anyone in a junior capacity. I always wanted to be on a team where people were inspired by the importance of our mission and not the fear of ridicule or failure. (Applause)

And my final tip is simple: give thanks. (Applause) The greatest weapon in DAV's arsenal is our thanks. We are obligated to use whatever power DAV vests in us to lift our organization and encourage people to look out for one another.

A well-placed "thank-you" can have an incredible effect on the veterans and the families we serve. It can mean more support from volunteers or donors. It can be the difference between someone leaving disaffected and demoralized or returning with a spirit of teamwork and camaraderie.

Employ DAV's gratitude daily. And when you thank people, tell them why their contribution was important.

Remind them, as you do, that the result of their effort supports a mission that brings hope to a deserving group of people and their families. In doing so, you can essentially employ the voice of one million veterans in a way that inspire action.

With all that said, I want to thank you. Thanks for all you do for our charity, whether that's getting veterans to their appointments or making sure they receive justice for the sacrifices they made for our nation. And the work we do is important. And being around so many of you this year has been the experience of a lifetime.

Our DAV is in great hands with tremendous leaders at every level. You prove to me the old adage: "Heroes don't wear capes; they wear dog tags." Got mine on. (Applause)

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve and for all you do to ensure promises are kept and justice prevails for America's veterans and their families.

God bless each and every one of you. (Standing Ovation) Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the senior vice-commander returned to the podium.)

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

MR. THOMAS AYALA: Thomas Ayala, Chapter 1, Florida, seconds.

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER PARSETICH: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the senior vice-commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Joe. 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 MARSHALL: And I ask that the Auxiliary National Executive Committee stand to be recognized.

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

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Since taking office in January 2021, President Joe Biden has focused on a number of priorities, but none as important to this body as taking care of those who served.

As parents of a service member who deployed to Iraq, he and his wife, Dr. Jill Biden, have said they fully acknowledge that it's not just military members who sign up to serve, it's their families, too. They are dedicated to fulfilling America's commitment to military families, caregivers and survivors.

President Biden has long pledged to expand VA benefits to ensure that victims of burn pits and other military toxic exposures, including Agent Orange and radiation, have access to the health care and compensation they earned and deserve. (Applause)

He has also prioritized expanding the VA's tele-health opportunities to improve access to health care for veterans, and to end veteran homelessness, giving them the attention and priority they demand. (Applause)

The Bidens have long been adamant that, as a nation, one of our truly sacred obligations is to properly prepare and equip our troops when we send them to war, and to take care of them and their families when they return.

And while he couldn't be with us in person today, he still wanted to make sure DAV got to hear from him.

Ladies and gentlemen, then 46th President of the United States, Joe Biden.

(Whereupon, a video address from President Biden was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. President. He is scheduled to sign the PACT Act on Wednesday. (Applause)

It gives me immense pleasure to introduce my leadership partner, a friend to all of our nation's veterans and their family members.

Lynn Helms-Prosser joined the DAV Auxiliary as an active life member in 1997. Her membership is through her late husbands, James E. Helms Sr., and Carroll E. Prosser. She was a caregiver for each, both of whom were Vietnam veterans who were 100 percent disabled. Each held elected offices.

She is also eligible for membership through her father, John B. Clark Sr., who was a World War II Navy veteran.

She is a life member of Unit 30 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. There, she has been an active member, serving as unit adjutant, unit treasurer, senior vice-commander, commander, unit SEC, and unit chair for membership.

She has been elected to all chairs on the Auxiliary state line, and has served on the National Executive Committee.

Lynn's tenure atop the Auxiliary has enabled her to share her passion for DAV's mission and Auxiliary's growth. She leads with her beaming smile, with a message of unity and staying true to our mission of being there for veterans and their families.

When not hard at work helping veterans and their families, she enjoys spending time with her family, planting flowers, and going to the beach.

Friends, please welcome DAV Auxiliary National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser.

(Whereupon, the DAV Auxiliary Commander advanced to the podium amid a standing ovation.)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER LYNN HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Commander Marshall. Good morning, everybody.

(Response of "Good morning.")

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: This has been a tremendous year and it is my honor to speak to you all here today about issues near and dear to veterans and their families.

I want to thank my fellow members in Unit 30 and our counterparts, DAV Chapter 30, in South Carolina, the State Department of South Carolina, and my district, District 9, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. Stand up to be recognized because you all deserve that. Thank you so much.

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

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I want to thank all of you, too, for being here today and making an effort to keep our mission going. Every single one of you has given me the support and unity to help me advance our shared mission. You are all an inspiration to me.

I have been honored to represent the Auxiliary at gatherings from New York to California to Montana. It was a special privilege to lay the wreath for the Auxiliary at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

I was thankful to represent the Auxiliary at the parade for Veterans Day in Birmingham, Alabama. (Applause) There you go. I met with legislators and lawmakers all the way across this country of ours.

I celebrated with all of DAV at the organization's centennial anniversary last year. And let us rejoice, as well, that 2022 is the Auxiliary's 100th year. (Applause) We have done so much, but we have to much more to do. But we need to do it together.

I will pause now to take a moment to remember our beloved DAV and our Auxiliary members who we lost during this last year, including our three national DAV Auxiliary commanders. They are Barbara Maldet, Betty Hall and Betty Wimmer.

We honor them by continuing our work and keeping their memories close to our hearts. I ask that we take a silent moment to remember those that we have lost.

(Whereupon, a moment of silence was observed.)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. We are all here because so many others have sacrificed their time and their energy for our common responsibility.

Our job is to know all aspects of our organization, how to connect to families, the resources, work together despite any differences that we think that we might have. We stand together focused on veterans issues. We will be there for each other and those that we have the honor to serve.

Caregivers and their families have been a major emphasis of our objectives, but working together with all eyes on our mission is of the utmost importance. And I can tell you that from myself today because I became that caregiver of a Vietnam veteran at 18 years old and it lasted the rest of my life so I say thank you for all the caregivers that are out there today. (Applause)

I ask that we continue to work in harmony among DAV chapters and Auxiliary units across our country. Our mission is the same as the DAV's. We are here to support. Please keep our four core principles in focus: comradeship, loyalty, devotion, and service.

We have loyalty and devotion to our organization, God and our country.

Service is giving our time and using our talents to show others that we love and that we care about them.

Comradeship is being there to support each other along the way.

We must grow our organization by employing each of these values. (Applause) I think so.

Membership is the key to our organization. New members move our Auxiliary forward. You can see the needs for our community when you see how the DAV Transportation Network continually needs willing volunteer drivers.

You see how important members are when you see the spirit of Auxiliary members giving their time at VA clinics and hospitals to help whenever they can.

The men and women that we are honor-bound to serve deserve our commitment. We must show up for them. (Applause) We must ensure more people will join in our efforts to make sure this happens. There are others who love veterans just as we do, because they are the husbands, the wives, the sons, the daughters. Show them that we invite them into our fold.

Invite those under 18 to become Auxiliary juniors to contribute through schools and community events. We have volunteer experience to offer them. And hundreds of future leaders have used the DAV Scholarship Program to achieve their goals. And the Auxiliary offers scholarships as part of our educational program.

We will continue to be here for veterans and their families by increasing numbers. We've got increase our numbers. We've got to. (Applause) And it's up to you to help us do that. So thank you so much.

And thank you for your attention and thank you for your service. We still have much work to do and let's do it together. Hold your heads high with pride because of all the work that we do.

Before I conclude, I have a very important and special presentation to make for the Outstanding Auxiliary Member of the Year Award. It recognizes the contributions and commitments to our top Auxiliary member. Their efforts further our shared goals and exemplify a spirit of service that is above and beyond the ordinary.

I'm pleased to announce that this year's recipient is Patricia "Patti" Whitlow, a member of Unit 50. (Applause) She is a member of Unit 50 in Prince George, Virginia. I think they already know that.

Patti has been a dedicated life member of the Auxiliary since 2015 and has served on numerous state committees. She currently serves as commander of Unit 50.

In just seven years' time she has already left a lasting mark on countless veterans and their families. Patti regularly volunteers at the Hunter Holmes McGuire Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, and travels throughout the area assisting veterans in need, always with a smile.

She organizes annual holiday events, helps place homeless veterans in housing, and always works to ensure that those with disabilities can live safer and more fulfilling lives. (Applause)

As a representative of the Auxiliary, Patti is a trusted leader, welcoming new members with open arms and showing them the meaning of service. Her love and pride for our country and for those who have served it are truly inspiring to all those around her.

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

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

MRS. PATRICIA "PATTI" WHITLOW: Thank you. Good morning, family.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MRS. WHITLOW: I see my husband. (Laughter) Wow. I am so honored and humbled to be receiving this award. I need to thank our immediate Past Adjutant Susan (Indistinguishable) from the great state of Virginia (Applause) for her kind words.

But I also need to thank Unit 50 for being so supportive of everything that has come to my mind and for bringing up ideas that I have not had.

But the real inspiration for the work I do is gathered here today and all around this wonderful country and across the world. So thank you so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mrs. Whitlow withdrew from the stage and the Auxiliary commander returned to the podium.)

AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Patti. And thank you Commander Marshall for your friendship and your partnership. It's been an honor to serve alongside of you. May God bless you and your family. (Applause)

I've always wanted to thank my family for understanding my often chaotic schedule over the years.

God bless all of you. I hope you will have a great convention. And may God always keep us America strong. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, the DAV Auxiliary commander withdrew from and Commander Marshall returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Commander, I am a member of Unit 18 in Florida. (Applause) DAV's commitment to ensuring promises are kept for America's disabled veterans is on proud display through the work of our nationwide Transportation Network. Throughout our 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 3,866 vehicles at a cost of more than \$90 million. (Applause) This is a major investment in helping our brothers and sisters get access to the care that they need.

Despite the obstacles and challenges of 2021, DAV volunteer drivers spent more 508,000 hours logging nearly 8 million miles providing no-cost rides for veterans to VA medical facilities. (Applause)

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

It's my pleasure to bring to the stage our longtime friend from the Ford Motor Company, Yisel Cabrera.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yisel Cabrera is the senior manager of Economic Mobility and Hispanic initiatives at Ford Motor Company Fund. In this capacity she is responsible for developing and directing philanthropic, charitable and social impact programs that increase economic mobility and opportunities for under-resourced communities around the world.

She also works to ensure that Hispanics in the U.S. have equitable access to high-quality jobs, and that youth are prepared for the future of work.

(Whereupon, Ms. Cabrera advanced to the podium.)

MS. YISEL CABRERA: Thank you, National Commander Marshall. I am so honored to be here with you and the longtime supporters, members, and staff of DAV this morning.

I've attended the DAV convention every year since I first joined Ford seven years ago, but unfortunately missed the last two conventions because of pandemic-related travel restrictions. It's so great to be back. (Applause) Yes.

I'm always incredibly impressed by the work DAV does day-in and day-out to help improve the lives of veterans and their families, from providing more than 163,000 rides to veterans attending medical appointments, and filing more than 151,000 claims for benefits last year, to advocating for the passage of the PACT Act, which will provide millions of veterans who were exposed to toxic substances during their service to our nation with the access to health care and the benefits that they have earned.

On behalf of the more than 87,000 Ford employees in the U.S., I want to thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your continued support of our nation's heroes and their families. (Applause)

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

And that is no surprise to us because since 2001 DAV members and their families have purchased more than 28,000 vehicles from Ford through the Ford X-Plan Partner Recognition Program, resulting in more than \$16.5 million in savings for DAV members through the years. (Applause)

And today be sure to stop by our booth where you will have the opportunity to win prizes, including a die-cast Model-T signed by Bill Ford, a Ford/DAV 100 Year T-shirt, and other great prizes by spinning the prize wheel. You'll also have the opportunity to get your photo taken in front of the Ford/DAV photo wall, and a Model-T this weekend. So make sure to stop by the booth to get more details about that.

As many of you know, Ford and DAV have a relationship that dates back to 1922 when Henry Ford provided 50 Model-T's for veterans to attend the second DAV National Convention in San Francisco.

And we're excited to have reached this 100-year milestone and that we are able to celebrate with all of you here today. Together, Ford and DAV have made an incredible impact supporting veterans over the past century.

Just recently, at the height of the pandemic, we supported DAV staff, volunteers, and veterans by donating one million face masks produced by Ford and our UAW employees. (Applause) We have also donated a total of 256 vehicles across all 50 states and Puerto Rico since 1996 to provide veterans with transportation to their medical appointments.

And our sponsorship of the DAV Night Out for wounded military members recovering at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center is an ongoing commitment we are proud of. (Applause) Thank you.

When we look back throughout history, Ford has always been there for our men and women in uniform. Starting with when Henry Ford began to hire disabled veterans returning from World War I and continued during World War II as Ford shut down civilian vehicle production to dedicate all of its resources to Allied war efforts.

And more recently, Ford has worked to support programs aimed at helping veterans train for new careers, receive mental health services, and the benefits that they have earned. We also support initiatives that honor past and present members of the military such as Honor Flights for World War II veterans and Original Rosie the Riveters.

Today, Ford employs more than 4,500 veterans who apply the same work ethic and leadership skills they learned in the armed services to their work at Ford. And I'm here to celebrate all that we've achieved together.

And now I'd like to ask National Commander Andrew Marshall and National Adjutant Marc Burgess if they would please join me at the podium.

(Whereupon, the commander and adjutant advanced to the podium.)

MS. CABRERA: Ensuring veterans have access to transportation for medical care and other fundamental needs means so much to us. For more than 25 years Ford has supported the DAV Transportation Network. And I am proud to announce today that we are donating eight new Ford Transit Connects for eight VA medical centers across the country. (Applause)

This year's recipients are in Grand Junction, Colorado; Iowa City, Iowa; Des Moines, Iowa; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; (Applause) Tomah, Wisconsin; (Applause) Newington, Connecticut; Billings, Montana; and St. Cloud Minnesota. (Applause)

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, an two ceremonial checks were presented and an official photograph was taken, after which the commander and adjutant returned to their seats.)

MS. CABRERA: We are also proud to support the families of DAV members through the DAV Scholarship Program. And we just presented that check, as well, so I will not ask you to do that again. But that check is in the amount of \$100,000 to support the outstanding academic program. (Applause)

On behalf of all of us at Ford, I want to personally thank you for your bravery, your loyalty, and your service. We know that our freedom depends on it. Please enjoy the rest of the convention. (Applause) (Whereupon, Ms. Cabrera withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: You know, I think we have two members in here – Al Labelle and Al Linden – who made that trip in 1922 in those Fords. (Laughter)

As we all know, Ford's support has been vital to the success of the DAV Scholarship program.

As veterans become a smaller and smaller part of the overall population of our great nation, it's critical that those who have worn the uniform work to educate future generations about service and sacrifice.

No matter what you may have heard, I can tell you without question that among the young men and women in this country there is a passion to help others. But sometimes passion requires inspiration and an incentive. That's where our DAV Scholarship Program comes in.

DAV is proud to incentivize and recognize these young men and women who have made a commitment to our cause through volunteerism. So we've increased our commitment to them. In 2021, DAV raised the scholarship amounts to \$110,000. (Applause)

As Yisel mentioned, this scholarship program is made possible, in part, by the continued support of the Ford Motor Company Fund. Together with Ford, DAV honors these newly-minted patriots with scholarships for higher education in recognition and appreciation of their voluntary services to our nation's heroes.

The award for this scholarship bears the name of Jesse Brown, one of the most revered leaders in the history of our cause. Jesse was a combat-wounded Marine veteran of Vietnam. But his injury 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 the first African-American Secretary for Veterans Affairs in 1993. (Applause)

This year we have selected ten of the nation's outstanding young volunteers to receive assistance pursuing their education through this program. The scholarships encourage volunteerism and connect future leaders with veterans, building a lifelong bond to our cause and the heroes we represent.

Now, let's get to know one of these young leaders, this year's top scholarship recipient.

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

COMMANDER MARSHALL: DAV National Voluntary Services Director John Kleindienst, will you please join me on stage. (Applause) And now it's my extreme pleasure to introduce our top recipient, Evan Osgood of Cincinnati, Ohio. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, John Kleindienst and Evan Osgood joined the Commander for the presentation.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Evan, a volunteer in the Greater Cincinnati area, has donated more than 345 volunteer hours serving veterans over the past two years.

He is set to graduate from Loveland High School and will take a gap year before heading to college to study business and computer science. His goal is to start a company that makes a difference in the lives of others.

With the benefit of a college education, Evan's volunteer work will be more effective than ever, and he'll be able to adapt as the needs of veterans and their communities continue to evolve. (Applause)

MR. EVAN OSGOOD: Good morning, y'all.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. OSGOOD: Anybody else here from Ohio? (Applause) Yes, there it is. There it is. Well, I'll be brief but I just wanted to say a big thank you to everyone here at DAV for making this program possible. This scholarship will be huge for me in my next steps of going to college and continuing to learn and grow and make an impact in our veteran communities all across the country.

I'd also like to say thank you to everyone who made my journey possible. Whether it's the thousands of volunteers in my own organization or the entire network here at DAV, I couldn't be here without you guys. You make up the backbone of the work that I do. And so, really, big thank you to all you guys. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Kleindienst and Mr. Osgood were joined by Adjutant Burgess and Commander Whitehead at which time an official photograph was taken, after which Mr. Kleindienst and Mr. Osgood withdrew from the stage and the commander returned to the podium.)

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

It is now my pleasure to announce the 2022 Volunteer of the Year. This year's DAV Volunteer of the Year resides in Wisconsin (Applause) and is a proud Navy veteran and DAV leader. It is my pleasure to introduce Robert Hilliard. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Mr. Hilliard and Mr. Kleindienst advanced to the podium, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Rob Hilliard is a member of Chapter 27 in Tomah and commander of the DAV Department of Wisconsin. He has volunteered for eight years and given more than 11,000 hours in service to his fellow veterans through DAV's Local Veterans Assistance Program and at the Tomah VA Medical Center.

MR. ROBERT HILLIARD: Well, welcome, Wisconsin. We're doing good. (Applause) Welcome, DAV. I want to thank, well, all my brothers and sisters that inspire me to do what I do. It's really therapy for me. And I've got to thank the DAV because without them I wouldn't be here.

As a matter of fact, you know, when I first did my paperwork it was like, "Who is going to represent you? Do you want the DAV?" I'm like, "Oh, I'm not disabled." (Laughter) But later on I found out I was. (Laughter) But I decided, you're not disabled; you're newly-abled. (Applause)

And so you take those new abilities and you push forward and you just help your brothers and sisters. And it just keeps me going. And I couldn't finish what I wanted to do in my early career but I found a new one. And I love helping my brothers and sisters. And it's what I do.

So thank you, everybody. I'm truly honored and I'm humbled by this wonderful award. And I just want everybody to keep on doing what we do for our fellow veterans. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Hilliard and Mr. Kleindienst withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: It is now my pleasure to introduce this year's DAV Auxiliary Volunteer of the Year winner, Michele Goings, a passionate volunteer from Virginia. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Goings, Adjutant Clos, and Commander Helms-Prosser advanced to the podium, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Michele Goings is a member of DAV Auxiliary Unit 47 in Petersburg, Virginia. She began her volunteer work through the DAV Local Veterans Assistance Program seven years ago. She has volunteered more than 12,000 hours through the DAV Auxiliary Department of Virginia and her unit to assist veterans and families in her community.

MS. MICHELE GOINGS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MS. GOINGS: First I have to give honor to God. I have to, (Applause) for being here. I want to thank DAV national, all the national officers, the DAV Auxiliary officers, national officers, but most of all I want to thank Virginia, Department of Virginia, DAV and my DAV Auxiliary officers. (Applause) and my unit, Unit 47, Petersburg.

And my commander is here from 47 Petersburg. My state commander is here. And I am just so thankful and blessed for this honor and recognition at this time.

Volunteering is dear to my heart. Being a veteran, military spouse and a mother for over 25 years, I know the needs of a military family, what the spouses need when the husband is deployed, what the children need when the husband and the maybe wife, as I have been there, been deployed.

So volunteering is what we all should be doing. It's not in how much money it is. It's not how much time. It's what you do with the time that you have. We are all blessed, all blessed. (Applause)

We are all blessed to be here. And when you bless somebody else and put a smile on that person's face, you will feel it warm, deep down in your heart. It will put a smile on your face. That's what we're here to help our veterans, our spouses, and especially our children because they are our future.

We're all getting up there in age and older. It's time for us to bring the young people in, get them started doing younger so they can be where I am, where that young man just was, and support the DAV and the DAV Auxiliary.

To God be the glory. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. Keep doing what we're doing. And when you feel good, you make somebody else feel good. And when you're blessing somebody else, you will be blessed. God bless you and thank you so much. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Ms. Goings and the Auxiliary officers withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you. Thank you for volunteering. At this time, DAV would like to express our gratitude for the generosity of the law firm Chisholm Chisholm and Kilpatrick in Providence, Rhode Island. (Applause) This past year the firm donated \$100,000 to support DAV's no-cost programs and services. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Chisholm Chisholm and Kilpatrick's founding partners, Robert Chisholm, Scott Kilpatrick and law partner Zachary Stolz. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the gentlemen advanced to the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: In 2008, Chisholm Chisholm and Kilpatrick began collaborating with DAV by representing veterans with their appeals before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, and the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

Since then, the firm has represented over 14,700 veterans in court with an overall success rate of 91 percent. (Applause)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you all so much for being here. Apart from your work with our service and legal departments, you have donated – listen to this – well over \$600,000 to DAV. (Applause) That support has helped with the care and maintenance of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial and DAV's many services and programs.

Zach, I'll turn it over to you for remarks.

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

MR. ZACHARY STOLZ: Thank you, National Commander. Thank you very much. I started my career with DAV so it means so much for me to be here.

Fourteen years ago DAV commenced an innovative program with us, partnering with CCK, to provide pro bono representation at the federal courts for DAV, veterans, and their families.

After starting with a handful of cases, today that partnership has resulted in nearly 15,000 appeals being filed at the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims, with an overall success rate of more than 90 percent.

And dozens of these have resulted in precedential decisions from both the Veterans' Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, making it easier for veterans to obtain the benefits they have earned.

We are honored by our partnership and our friendship with DAV and all of you. And we are humbled by the trust DAV has placed in CCK.

Today, we are proud to present this check for \$200,000 (Applause) to support DAV's continuing mission serving our nation's veterans. Thank you all so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken, after which the gentlemen withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Pretty nice, huh?

(Response of "Yes.")

COMMANDER MARSHALL: For more than a century, DAV has led the fight in a seemingly endless number of legislative battles that have resulted in victory after victory for our nation's veterans and their families.

This continues today with our unyielding effort to ensure those men and women who were exposed to toxins during service have access to the critical health care they have earned and deserve.

What you may not know is that DAV has been there from the beginning. DAV was a leading voice for veterans suffering from the encounters with Agent Orange and other exposures throughout history.

In 2008, DAV brought the subject of burn pits to the public's attention and began our advocacy for the many we knew. We encouraged research and established the forerunner to the VA's burn pit registry.

But we have gained allies over the years. In addition to a coalition of veteran and military groups, compassionate and patriotic Americans have also lent their voices to the cause, perhaps none more so than comedian and activist Jon Stewart.

He has been a longtime supporter of veterans and legislation aimed at those who have served, including The Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, better known as the PACT Act.

His support included participation in a rally held at DAV National Headquarters in April.

It's that sort of teamwork between veterans and longtime supporters, like Jon, that led to the legislative victory earlier this week when the Senate had a sudden change of heart after voting down the legislation a few weeks ago.

Jon is joining us this morning virtually. Don't worry, I've already warned him that our bleep-button doesn't work so he has to keep his remarks as PG-13 as possible. (Applause) But given his passion to our cause, I can't make any promises. (Laughter)

Jon, it's good to have you here with us this morning. Take it away, Jon.

MR. JON STEWART (VIA ZOOM): Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, National Commander Marshall. I much appreciate it. I am honored to be here today at the DAV convention to announce I am joining Chisholm Chisholm and Kilpatrick. (Laughter) I'm not a lawyer but that's – no, I'm not. And I didn't bring a giant check so I apologize. (Laughter)

I was actually going to be coming here to rally you, once more, to try and get you guys behind the PACT Act, behind our veterans, but the purpose of appearing today is a slightly different one as the Senate had a change of heart.

So today I'm really here just to thank you, just to say that your efforts, man, you should be so proud. DAV's work in getting this legislation passed, and so much legislation before it, has been remarkable.

Your tenacity in calling your representatives, in writing your representatives, your man Shane Liermann who has been there at every meeting we've had over these past few years, back before when we could do it in person and then on ZOOMS and all the way through.

This never should have happened. And my hope is that it doesn't ever happen again. My goal all along has been to turn the VA from an obstacle to an advocate. That's what you deserve.

When you are in the position that you are in and the stresses of your service, you should never have to become your own lawyer, doctor, advocate. You've earned the benefits that come to you and it's my hope – and I say this with all due respect to Chisholm Chisholm and Kilpatrick – but my

hope is that we won't need them at some point, that this country will recognize that the sacrifices that the men and women who go to war for this country and serve for this country shouldn't be ignored when they come back.

We can't always have money for the war and not enough for the veteran because the power of the United States military, it's not in the toys, it's not in Raytheon, it's not in MacDonald Douglas, it's not in those places, it's in the men and women. It's the most valuable asset we have. And if we don't take care of it properly, to me that's the biggest national defense issue that we probably have.

So I am honored to be a small part of this. It has been an incredibly powerful and at times stressful and profanity-laced time. (Laughter) But, unfortunately, sometimes the United States government doesn't hear you until you yell so loudly that you can't be ignored.

And you all yelled so loud that they couldn't help but hear you. And I'm so proud to be a part of it and so honored to stand with you during this and truly hope that this never has to happen to you again. (Applause) Thank you guys so much. You keep it going, man. (Applause)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Jon. Appreciate your efforts on our behalf and on behalf of the nation's veterans. (Applause) It's nice when we have someone who can stand up for us that has a spotlight in the public.

In times of great uncertainty, it's always nice to be able to count on your longtime friends. Next, we'd like to take the time to thank a great friend to our organization and the men and women that we serve – Golden Corral. (Applause)

Golden Corral was the groundbreaking restaurant that was the first to honor veterans nationwide with a free meal in conjunction with Veterans Day less than a month after the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

DAV is extremely grateful for our two decades of partnership, through which Golden Corral has steadfastly supported services offered by our chapters and departments. Golden Corral has transformed Military Appreciation Night into the largest veterans' reunion in the nation, and has provided DAV with opportunities to connect millions with information and resources on the services we offer.

In 2021, despite the challenges of the pandemic, the DAV was able to reach out to more than 100,500 veterans who received free meals. Even with many restaurants still working to reopen, we were also able to raise more than \$500,000. (Applause)

This next one is important. Since the program's inception, over 6 million free meals have been served to veterans and more than \$17 million has been raised to support state and local service programs. (Applause)

It has also been our pleasure to join our friends at Golden Corral in supporting Camp Corral since it was founded in 2011. Camp Corral provides free – free – life-changing experiences to the children of wounded, injured, ill and fallen military heroes by providing a unique summer camp experience.

The camps have grown tremendously in scope and popularity and now have a waiting list. It is our goal to 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, along with our Auxiliary, have raised significant funds to get kids to these camps.

In recognition of your hard work, these funds will be matched up to \$300,000 by the national organization. I am happy to present a check totaling \$600,000 to Camp Corral today. (Applause)

Combined, these funds will provide scholarships for more than 1,000 camp attendees. (Applause)

We'll now invite to the stage Golden Corral's Travis Caison and Camp Corral's Phil Kowalczyck and send them to the bank with this special gift made possible by all of you.

(Whereupon, Mr. Caison and Mr. Kowalczyck advanced to the podium, at which time an official photo was taken.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Representing our partners at Golden Corral is Travis Caison, associate director of marketing. In this role, he oversees Golden Corral restaurant fundraising campaigns, including Military Appreciation Night. He has been employed by Golden Corral for over four years, with three including direct work on military fundraising initiatives.

Joining him is Phil Kowalczyck, CEO of Camp Corral. In this role, he is responsible for creating and implementing the strategic vision, as well as executing the operational priorities of Camp Corral.

Kowalczyck brings a wealth of experience in leading teams and national organizations, and his track record for creating growth in for-profit and not-for-profit organizations will set a foundation for helping Camp Corral grow and send more kids to camp in the coming years. (Applause)

MR. PHIL KOWALCZYCK: I wish I could say I was completely speechless by what I've just witnessed but thank you. Thank you to the DAV, to the DAV Auxiliary, all the DAV departments and chapters. On behalf of the children from military families that we sponsor at camps, they say thank you.

The lives of these children are changed because of your hard work and generosity. We are grateful for the support that you provide and, importantly, for the years of the partnership that Golden Corral, DAV, and Camp Corral have built.

We at Camp Corral know the effort that goes behind a gift of this magnitude. It is you spending your afternoons and evenings at car washes and yard sales, staffing a table at the local Golden Corral with a collection bucket. For some, it means collecting items for a silent auction or hosting a golf tournament or a barbeque. I am humbled by you, vigilant supporters of these children of military families, and who continue to ask "What more can I do?"

You have taken as a part of your personal mission our mission to transform the lives of children of our nation's wounded, ill, and fallen military heroes through unique camp experiences, through advocacy programs, and also through our enrichment programs. Every dollar you raise and contribute is a demonstration of your commitment to these kids.

Let me share with you an important number – by the way, 600 is a really important number – 30,000. Since the founding of Camp Corral, 30,000 children have been sponsored to attend camp. (Applause) What started in 2011 with one camp and about 200 kids has grown to more than 17 camps in 14 states. (Applause)

And the number of 30,000 kids is really great, but you know the important number? It's one – one child who can have a great experience, to get a real break from their daily life, to connect with our children who also come from military families, to build friendships with groups of kids who understand that service involves the entire family; one child who can grow in confidence, connectedness, and coping skills through their experiences at camp.

Furthermore, we know that Camp Corral has a real impact because we research, we talk to the kids and their families to make sure that we're having a positive impact on these kids long after the camp is over.

And if that weren't enough, your support over multiple years means that many of these children have been able to attend camp for multiple years. For some of these young people who started as first-time campers, and have attended for multiple years, they're now counselors at these camps. (Applause)

This year Camp Hanes, one of our long-standing camps, has three counselors who started as Camp Corral campers and they have shared that this is their way of giving back to all that has been invested in them during the years at Camp Corral. (Applause)

Here are a few quotes from the campers-turned-counselors. And I think they help tell the story. They talk about bonding over family similarities. They talk about celebrating military service. They talk with authentic gratitude and a desire to pay it forward. And I couldn't have said it any better. "Thank y'all for what you do for these kids." (Applause)

Not only are we helping transform the lives of these children through the exciting and nurturing experiences that happen naturally at camp, but we also know they are being supported through these camps as they learn to navigate the challenges that come with life at home.

Our campers are kids who have one or more parent that wore the uniform and who now carries the physical and mental injuries of war after they served. You know exactly how tough that is, both on the veteran and the child.

But for every dollar you generously provide, there is a three-fold payback on that investment – the kids, their families, and our communities as we build future citizens and heroes, together.

This year 1,700 children of military families are going to attend camp. And our waitlist is still in the thousands. But together we can tackle that waitlist. Your ongoing support is changing lives. Because of you they have a place to go; they have a place to grow, for every year if they choose.

You know, "thank you" is just eight letters but our heartfelt gratitude to you is much bigger than those eight letters might convey. We are honored to have this partnership and we're grateful for your generosity. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Caison and Mr. Kowalczyck withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: DAV has continued to prove its strength, resilience and adaptability, even in the face of pressing challenges. With a leader like Marc Burgess at the helm, it's no surprise why.

As national adjutant, Marc has helped ensure that DAV continues to innovate and deliver on our promise of timely and direct services to positively affect the lives of veterans and their families.

He is a dedicated professional and passionate leader with the skills necessary to oversee our day-to-day operations.

Like a great sailor, Marc knows that to steer a ship, one must look at hazards closest to the bow, while keeping a watchful eye on threats as they emerge on the horizon.

Our staff and fellow members can rest assured that he is at the helm, offering insight, methodical leadership capabilities, and the passion to bring it all together.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome DAV National Adjutant J. Marc Burgess. (Standing Ovation) (Whereupon Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium amid a standing ovation.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you for that introduction, Commander. And, of course, thank you for all that you have done over the past year to ensure DAV continues to provide a lifetime of support to veterans and their families.

As a proven leader on the battlefield and career NSO, you have the perfect DNA to steward DAV at such a critical time. Time and again we have all been impressed by your steadfastness and your poise. Truly, thank you for an amazing year as our national commander, Andy. (Applause)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Marc.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thanks in no small part to Commander Marshall's leadership, DAV has reached a new pinnacle of success and added yet another incredible chapter to our long and proud history. Let's take a look back over this amazing time.

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

ADJUTANT BURGESS: And there you have it, proof of yet another big year not only for DAV but for all the veterans and family members that we serve, as well.

As we look to the future, we will continue to rely on your hard work and dedication to DAV. Through our collective strength we will persevere in our ongoing battle to ensure health care, benefits, and services are accessible to our fellow veterans and their families.

That strength is borne not only of your efforts but also from our fellow veterans across the nation. In countless cities, counties and small towns all across the country, service officers, volunteers and other advocates do the work that makes DAV such a powerful organization – and one of the most forceful voices in Washington, D.C.

This is the true key to our success: the work we do together. As long as we can remain in lockstep and focused, we can do anything we set our minds to.

I have full faith and confidence that DAV will continue to remain the nation's premier veterans' service organization and continue to empower our nation's heroes and their families.

I am honored to serve with each of you and join in this fight. We form an organization that Judge Robert Marx envisioned and yet still one whose greatness he could never have dreamed possible.

I'm certain we will continue to have great challenges in the months and years ahead. Standing shoulder to shoulder with each of you, I'm equally certain we will have great success, as well.

Commander Marshall, that concludes my report. (Applause)

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

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

MR. KEVIN WOLFE: Kevin Wolfe, newly-elected delegate from (Indistinguishable) 101, Florida, proudly makes that motion. Thank you.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: May I have a second?

MR. JOHN MAKAS: John Makas, Chapter 4, Florida, seconds.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: John Makas, Chapter 4, Florida, thank you. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Thank you, Marc. (Applause)

Humana is one of the nation's leading health and well-being companies and DAV is blessed to have them as a partner.

Their relationship with DAV aligns with its rich history of supporting the men and women who served. It expands Humana's growing commitment to organizations that provide critical programs and services to veterans and their families.

Joining us today from Humana is Stephanie Muckey.

(Whereupon, Ms. Muckey advanced to the podium, amid a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Stephanie Muckey is a population health strategy lead for Humana's Veteran Bold Goal, a population health strategy focused on both community and business integration to improve health outcomes for veterans and their families.

A 20-year military spouse, she navigated career progression while balancing the demands of wartime military life. The 2016 Military Spouse of the Year for Marine Corps Base Hawaii has moved 11 times and supporter her family through her husband's eight deployments: three to Iraq, one to Afghanistan and four to the Pacific. (Applause)

MS. STEPHANIE MUCKEY: Thank you. Good morning, everyone. My name is Stephanie Muckey. I'm a proud Marine Corps spouse, caregiver, DAV Auxiliary lifetime member, and population health strategy lead for Humana's Veteran Bold Goal. (Applause) Thank you.

Commander Marshall, Adjutant Burgess, DAV and Auxiliary members, honored guests and friends, it's an honor to be here with you today. On behalf of Humana we salute you during this 2022 national convention.

As a military spouse I am proud to work for an organization and leaders who support and invest in the health of our veterans and their families.

At Humana we recognize that the life of a veteran or veteran family looks a lot different from our civilian counterparts. Lots of change. Holidays and family time missed. Deployments. Frequent moves. Transitioning from service to civilian life. Both visible and invisible injuries of war.

All of these challenges leading to resiliency and self-sufficiency but also leading to risks of loneliness and social isolation, risks of food insecurity. There are veterans struggling with transportation barriers, homelessness, and financial strain.

These health-related social needs are why we're on a mission, a mission to remove barriers to good health, one veteran at a time, by uniting with DAV and other like-minded partners to combat these risk factors to veteran's suicide.

Humana's Bold Goal is to improve the health of the communities we serve by making it easier to achieve their best health. We want our agents, associates, clinicians, providers, communities and, frankly, our nation to understand our veteran population the same way those of us in this room do. And we want them to take action to address the needs of our veterans and their families.

Did you know that the primary enemy most veterans face after service is not war-related trauma but loneliness? Loneliness is a top predictor of depression and suicidal thoughts. It ranks higher than post-traumatic stress disorder, disability or psychiatric problems in contributing significantly to the risk of developing suicidal thinking.

In a 2021 survey conducted by Military Family Advisory Network, 27.9 percent of veterans reported having suicidal thoughts in the past two years. If social connections dwindle in our veteran population, this can pose serious health-related issues, which could be a contributing factor to the gut-wrenching veteran suicide statistic we all know too well.

One way we're tackling this loneliness epidemic is in partnership with DAV on our Far From Alone campaign. We're working together to help normalize the issue of loneliness, raise awareness about its negative health consequences, and provide resources to improve mental health and wellness.

We also recognize and want to raise awareness of the valuable role a veteran's service officer plays in a veteran's health care journey. Veteran service officers advocate and assist veterans with essential services that support their health care, because no veteran should have to go it alone.

To all of the service officers here today, we thank you for the critical work you do, and we value your partnership in helping veterans access the health care, disability, employment, education, and financial benefits they've earned. Thank you. (Applause)

And to further strengthen our commitment to DAV, we're pleased to make a \$25,000 donation to DAV's national service program to help support the mission of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Muckey presented the check at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MS. MUCKEY: We are committed to working hand-in-hand to connect veterans to veteran service officers and other resources to help address their unique health care needs.

We all have a role to play in ensuring our veterans feel far from alone. And as a call to action I challenge all of us here today and throughout the week to check on one another. Reach out to a battle buddy, friend or family member, and let them know you're there for them. Suicide prevention is everyone's business.

It is truly an honor and privilege to work alongside DAV. And we look forward to all we can accomplish together in the months and years to come. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Muckey withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, again. It is our distinct honor each and every year to recognize a veteran who, despite their illness or injuries, goes above and beyond in exhibiting DAV's commitment to supporting their brothers- and sisters-in-arms.

A Wisconsin native, Adam Alexander enlisted in the Army Reserve in 2008. While he was deployed to Afghanistan in 2011 as a civil affairs specialist, enemy forces attempted to overrun his remote outpost. Now, let's find out how he got there, what happened, and how he has responded in the years since. (Whereupon, a video outlining Mr. Alexander's service was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Ladies and gentlemen, for his awe-inspiring work in giving local veterans a platform to share their stories and his efforts advocating for his fellow disabled veterans, we're proud to introduce our 2022 Disabled American Veteran of the Year and DAV life member of Chapter 17 in Winnebago County, Wisconsin, Adam Alexander. (Standing Ovation)

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

MR. ADAM ALEXANDER: I've never been much for speeches but I'll do my best. Hello. It is great to be in a room filled with so many of my fellow veterans.

The past few months have certainly been a whirlwind. And I cannot believe that I am Disabled American Veteran of the Year. When Commander Marshall called me to inform me that I would be receiving this great honor, he asked me if I knew who he was.

And, obviously, I was familiar with the leader of our outstanding organization, but also very much in shock that anybody at the highest level of DAV had any idea who I was or what I was doing. (Laughter)

I am incredibly humbled to stand before you today. And I wholeheartedly believe that there are no fewer than 10 more deserving veterans in my chapter, alone, that deserve this award, and dozens more within the Department of Wisconsin.

When I take a moment to think of what the Disabled American Veteran of the Year award means, it becomes overwhelming.

For me to be thought of as the most outstanding anything in the best veteran's organization in the greatest country in the world, it's really hard not to get caught up in the emotion of it all.

I want to thank the DAV for this immense honor and, of course, the Department of Wisconsin, Chapter 17, and my gracious cohost, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Hert, retired, for nominating me. (Applause)

But, most of all, I want to thank my wife, Kate, and my mother who made sure that I could come here to accept this award by taking care of our newborn baby daughter, Stella, back home. Thank you all. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, an official photograph was taken, after which Mr. Alexander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Very impressive. Our next guest represents a company that goes above and beyond the call of duty to serve those who served. The United States Automobile Association, better known as USAA, has been a steadfast supporter of veterans, service members and their families, dating back to its founding in 1922.

I'm proud to welcome our next guest, USAA's affinity account manager, retired Colonel Rafael "Gino" Montagno.

(Whereupon, Retired Colonel Montagno advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Rafael "Gino" Montagno is a retired Army colonel and disabled veteran who served over 30 years as a Medical Service Corps officer and as a Medevac pilot.

In addition to accumulating more than 2,500 flight hours and piloting more than 400 life-saving missions as a DUSTOFF aviator, he has extensive experience in health care administration, medical evacuations, recruiting, logistics, and training.

Before his retirement, he served as chief-of-staff of the Medical Education and Training Campus as well as other command positions at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and Joint Base San Antonio.

Colonel Montagno has been with USAA for eight years and has worked as a senior business architect and as a lead business advisor. He is currently the affinity account manager, responsible for the DAV-USAA partnership.

COLONEL RAFAEL "GINO" MONTAGNO: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COLONEL MONTAGNO: And I want to say good morning to the DAV, especially, and then the wonderful partners in the DAV Auxiliary. I truly appreciate this opportunity to address this audience of great Americans. I can say that on behalf of USAA's 36,000 passionate and dedicated employees it's truly an honor.

There is no finer calling than serving one's country, particularly during the times of conflict and unrest. And I just want to say, again, thanks to the DAV, the Auxiliary and their families for your dedicated

service. Our nation owes you so much for it is you, your service and sacrifices that have continued to keep our country safe and free.

When I first entered the Army many years ago, my company commander spent a lot of time educating and mentoring me on being a good lieutenant. Let me tell you, that was a monumental task for her. (Laughter)

I can't say that I remember everything she said, or taught me, but I do remember her saying this, she said, "Our world consists of three types of people: Number 1, there are those types of people that watch things happen; and, 2, there are those people that make things happen; and, finally, there's a category of people who say, 'What happened?'" (Laughter) I hope that doesn't resonate with my Marine Corps buddies too much. (Laughter)

So over a century ago DAV, then known as the Disabled American Veterans of the World War, was just starting its journey. Your founder, World War I veteran, Judge Robert Marx, was beginning to shape the DAV mission that would affect the lives of countless veterans their families for generations to come. I would say that Judge Robert Marx made things happen.

Similarly, a century ago, USAA started on its own journey, developing its mission. USAA was founded by the military, for the military. In 1922, 25 officers came together with the goal of insuring one another's vehicles when no other insurance company would. These military officers and their military lifestyle were seen as "too risky" so together they founded USAA. I would say that these 25 officers made things happen.

Nearly a century later, USAA is 13 million members strong and still committed to the mission: facilitating the financial security of our members, associates, and their families through provision of a full range of highly-competitive financial products and services.

In so doing, USAA seeks to be the provider of choice for the military community; all this, while staying true to our values: service, loyalty, honesty and integrity. In this short video you'll see this come to life. Please enjoy.

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

COLONEL MONTAGNO: Together, DAV and USAA share many of the same values, and we are honored to be in this partnership. We value this partnership, and we will move forward with both of our missions. It is without a doubt that both of our organizations fall into that category of people that make things happen.

In closing, I want to thank and highlight the professionally trained national service officers and the transition service officers, alongside the department and chapter service officers, who are on the front lines serving veterans and their families every day.

And, once again, thanks to our counterparts in the Auxiliary who serve alongside and are a critical part of the mission. We have no better allies who understand service and sacrifice on a level that is unique and noteworthy.

It has been an absolute honor talking with you this morning. And I look forward to meeting more of you this week.

God bless all of you. God bless this great country. Please stay safe out there and remember "keep making things happen." (Applause)

(Whereupon, Colonel Montagno withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

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

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I would now like to read into the record National Commander's appointed Convention Committee Advisors: for the Credentials Committee, Doug Wells and Mike Dobmeier; for the General Resolutions and Membership Committee, Scott Hope and John Retzer; Legislation and Veterans Rights Committee, Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann;

Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Ed Hartman and Rob Reynolds; the Employment Committee, Rob Lougee and Anthony Lewis; Hospital and Voluntary Services Committee, John Kleindienst and Marquis Barefield; and Nomination of National Officers, Joe Johnston and Al Church.

The Advisors can pick up their Committee folders from the Corral Spring II located on the Regency Lobby Level.

I do have a few other announcements. At 2:00 this afternoon we will host the Service and Legislative Seminar, in which we'll welcome Matthew Quinn, Under Secretary of Memorial Affairs for the Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Shereef Elnahal, Under Secretary for Health for the Veterans Health Administration; and Josh Jacobs, Acting Under Secretary for Benefits for the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Those who are interested in attending should be in their seats by 1:45 so that the seminar can begin promptly at 2:00 o'clock. You do not want to miss this important discussion.

Tonight we will be honoring our top elected leader and your service during the National Commander's Reception held right here in the Regency Ballroom T through U at 7:30 p.m. And, remember, you will need your credentials to gain entry so bring your lanyards.

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. And we ask that the committees complete their work as soon as possible.

Every year A&W celebrates National Root Beer Float Day on August 6th. In exchange for a free root beer float, A&W asks their guests to pay it forward. Together with franchise partners they have raised over \$450,000 since 2013.

Thanks to our great partners at A&W, immediately following our opening session, free root beer floats will be made available to all of you in Regency T, which is located through the doors at the back of the room.

The root beer floats were also made possible by our friends from Hyatt who donated the ice cream and the labor to make it happen. Please be sure to thank them when receiving your free root beer float.

For Fun Night on Monday at 8:00 p.m. we are thrilled to welcome back our old friend and longtime veteran supporter, Gary Sinise and the Lieutenant Dan Band. (Applause)

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

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

As Laymond mentioned in his convention chair remarks, OneBlood will be collecting donations in Barrel Springs 1, located on the level above the exhibit floor. You can make an appointment at our table in the exhibit area or online by scanning the QR code on the screen. This blood drive will benefit the Orlando-area VA medical centers and is being held to address blood shortages in the area.

They will be open after the session and daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. throughout the entire convention. All donors will receive a superhero beach towel and a \$20 gift card. And who doesn't need a superhero beach towel. (Laughter)

The My Journey Workshop for Women Veterans takes place from 3:45 to 5:45 p.m. tomorrow in Regency Ballroom T through U. This goal and action plan creation workshop will help women veterans envision and plan for significant life events pre- and post-separation, and offers women the opportunity to connect with, and learn from their fellow sisters-in-arms.

Our first business session will convene tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. At that time we will hear reports from our headquarters executive directors and the Board of Directors' treasurer. We will also honor employers, VA employees, volunteers and our top recruiters.

Also, you who wish to donate to any DAV entity, in the interest of time, you are encouraged to fill out the form that is in your bags before making your way to the donation space at Registration Counter 3 located near the will call on the convention level

We are giving away three \$50 gift certificates that can be redeemed at the DAV store online or here at convention. All registered convention attendees are eligible but must be present to win. So I'm going to call your names and if you are in the room, please come up to the stage as we adjourn and our Membership Director Doug Wells will make sure you get your gift cards.

And the lucky winners are Kim Felton, California, Los Angeles Chapter Number 5; Ann McCoy, North Carolina, Chapter Wake County Number 1; and Will Robinson, South Carolina, Alvin L. Wilson Chapter Number 1. (Applause) Commander.

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

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Marc. Ladies and gentlemen, if able, please rise now while I ask Chaplain Varner to lead us in a closing prayer.

CHAPLAIN VARNER: Let us pray. Almighty God, All Creator One, we truly thank you for this part of our session of this great convention. We also thank you for the wisdom that has been expressed by our commander and all of those who imparted into us to be released from this session to go forth to empower one another, to strengthen one another, to know that we have only just begun. The best is yet to come.

We do give you thanks and praise that all things have now been made ready as we take our position to continue to serve this great nation, our American veterans, and their families.

And the people said Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you. The convention stands in recess until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 11:34 o'clock, a.m. on Saturday, August 6, 2022.)

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FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

August 7, 2022

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The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 100th National Convention convened in the Regency Ballroom O-S on the Convention Level of the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Sunday, August 7, 2022, and was called to order at 9:00 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Andrew "Andy" Marshall.

COMMANDER ANDREW "ANDY" MARSHALL: 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 MARSHALL: Chaplain Varner.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DEBRA VARNER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN VARNER: May we bow our heads for a moment of prayer. Oh, Heavenly Father, Heavenly Creator, we once again thank you as we move into this part of our business session. We ask for wisdom and guidance. Help us to know and to understand that which is given before us as we recognize and award those who are deserving of all honors.

We thank you for your presence. We thank you for being in the midst of these, your people. And the people of God said amen.

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

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Chaplain. Please be seated. (One rap of gavel.) 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 Chairperson Brenda Reed for the Credentials Committee report. Chairman Reed.

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

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON BRENDA REED: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON REED: National Commander Marshall, National Adjutant Burgess, officers, members and guests, Credentials Committee met in the Florida Ballroom A at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Orlando yesterday for the first time at 1:00 p.m.

The first order of business was to elect a chairperson and a secretary. I, Brenda Reed, Department of Florida, District 7, was elected as the chairperson. Warren Tobin from North Dakota, District 14, was elected as the secretary.

We met again this morning at 8:00 a.m. The roll call showed 969 delegates and 63 alternates have registered, which includes 45 departments and 339 chapters registered. There are 9 national officers, 21 National Executive Committee members, and 6 past national commander currently registered, for a total of 7,669 votes.

The partial report is for informational purposes only and it reflects the registration at the close of business at 4:00 p.m. on August 6th, 2022. Commander, this completes our partial report.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Brenda.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON REED: You're welcome.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: At this time I would also like to introduce and recognize three people. Would you stand when I call your names? My National Chief-of-Staff Thomas Ayala; (Applause) Officer-of-the-Day John Makas; (Applause) and Sergeant-at-Arms John Raber. (Applause) Thank you for your support as it has made my job easier.

Before I introduce our first speaker this morning I'd like to make a special announcement that would be of interest to our members. The governor of Florida, Ron DeSantis, has declared today, August 7,

2022, Florida Purple Heart Day in recognition of the 1.8 million Purple Hearts that have been awarded since 1782. (Applause)

To my fellow Purple Heart recipients, please know that your sacrifices are recognized and appreciated. For those who have received a Purple Heart, I ask you to stand, if able, and to be recognized now on Florida Purple Heart Day.

(Whereupon, Purple Heart recipients were honored with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: As you can see, I wear my Purple Heart tie proudly, a gift from our National Adjutant. (Applause)

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

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

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

Randy went on to earn his paralegal degree from Kaplan College for Professional Studies and has become a nationally-recognized expert on veterans benefits and services since he joined DAV as a national service officer the year of his discharge.

In December 2018 Randy was appointed the executive director of DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he serves as 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, keeping us at the forefront of the fight on Capitol Hill for veterans' rights.

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

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS RANDY REESE: Good morning, everybody.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS REESE: National Commander Marshall, National Adjutant Burgess, distinguished guests and delegates I am honored once again to be with you here in Orlando to report on the activities and accomplishments of DAV's national service and legislative programs over the last year.

Since we last convened in Tampa, DAV has had another successful year fighting to secure benefits and health care for veterans and their families and their survivors, despite the very difficult challenges and confronting year our nation has had.

While it appears that the worst of COVID is behind us, the damage and disruption caused by the pandemic continues to impact VA's health care and benefit programs.

With economic problems at home, a war in Europe, the divide in politics has become increasingly difficult in our nation's capital and to get anything done is almost laughable.

In fact, more and more I hear people refer to Washington, D.C., as the "land of Oz." (Laughter) People say it's a place to go, people who have no courage, no brains, and no hearts. (Applause)

But even with all of the political turmoil, DAV's service program this past year was able, once again, to help hundreds of thousands of veterans seeking benefits.

Thanks to our early and aggressive transition to digital and virtual technologies, DAV has been able to adapt to readily changing conditions on the ground.

Throughout the pandemic we've expanded our ability to meet veterans where they are, whether that's online, over the phone, in their communities. And I'm very proud to say that today our national service officers are open and providing face-to-face benefit counseling, even if they're the only ones working in the VA regional office. (Applause)

With over 3,400 DAV accredited or certified service officers, led by our national, department, chapter and transition service officers, DAV last year took over 2.1 million actions to help veterans and their families.

And as a point of privilege I'm going to ask all of our service officers to stand and please be recognized.

(Whereupon, service officers present stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS REESE: All totaled, the veteran and survivors represented by DAV obtained more than \$25 billion in benefits. (Applause)

Thanks to the continued development of our iTRAK learning management system we have the best trained and most knowledgeable corps of national service officers and advocates in the nation, and it's going to stay that way.

We're continuing to invest in our people, invest in our new technologies to ensure that DAV remains the leader in assisting veterans with their claims. That's why more than 1.1 million veterans and survivors today choose DAV to represent them.

As I've said before, and, obviously, I'm going to say it again, when it comes to helping veterans secure their benefits, DAV remains second to none. (Applause)

Our national service staff has been collaborating closely with the leaders of the Veterans Benefit Administration, VBA, to help address the rising backlog of disability compensation claims.

The work our service officers do assisting veterans in developing and perfecting their claims helps to reduce the workload on VA claims processors.

We're also working with VBA on their new automation pilot program, which uses artificial intelligence and other technologies to reduce the time it takes to process claims.

DAV will continue working to reform the VA claims processes so that every veteran receives their full benefits without having to endure unnecessary waits. (Applause)

And just as our service team advocates on behalf of individual veterans, our legislative team has had another successful year advocating and strengthening and trying to expand VA health care services and benefits for all veterans.

Since we last met, DAV has participated in more than two dozen congressional hearings, roundtables, and forums, both in person and virtually, advancing our critical policy goals and promoting legislation to fulfill our national resolutions.

In coordination with Benefit Protection Team members across the country who took our message to Congress in meetings, through the phone calls, and the emails, and on social media – Facebook and Twitter – our communications team has created powerful content to educate and mobilize veterans and the American public behind our critical policy goals, particularly on toxic exposures.

Take a look at this video.

(Whereupon, a video on toxic exposure was viewed.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS REESE: For more than a decade DAV has been warning veterans and the public about the dangers of burn pits in Afghanistan, Iraq and other locations.

From bringing the subject to the public's attention, to the creation of the burn pit registry, to drafting the Veteran Burn Pits Exposure Recognition Act, DAV has been on point in the fight to aid veterans harmed by toxic exposures of all generations.

Over the past couple of years we've helped build and lead a veterans' coalition. We have mobilized a massive grassroots lobbying effort; conducted hundreds of meetings with the House and Senate members; testified multiple times at congressional hearings; and participated in numerous press conferences and rallies, including many with our friend and fierce veterans advocate, Jon Stewart, who joined us virtually yesterday morning.

And throughout all of this, it has been our DAV members, working through our Commander's Action Network, DAV CAN, and our benefit protection team leaders who made all the difference.

Let me share with you, in just the past few weeks you made thousands of phone calls and sent tens of thousands of emails to Congress. And as most of you have probably heard by now, the Senate gave final approval to the Honoring Our PACT Act. (Applause)

By the time we're done with the convention the PACT Act should be signed. If not, we're hoping as soon as you get home. On Wednesday, while you're in flight, that signing ceremony is going to happen. (Applause)

The PACT Act, once enacted, will begin to extend health care eligibility to millions of veterans and extend eligibility to create dozens of new disability presumptions to burn pit exposed items.

And, finally, at long last, it will add hypertension to the list of presumptions for Agent Orange for all of our Vietnam veterans. (Applause)

And while we strongly supported the PACT Act, like almost all laws, it took compromise. There is still more to do, ladies and gentlemen. After the law is signed we will continue to work with Congress and the VA to ensure there are sufficient resources to fully and faithfully implement the PACT Act.

And rest assured, we will not give up the fight until every veteran and survivor receives the toxic exposure benefits they have earned and deserve. (Applause)

With the PACT Act expanding health care eligibility to millions, in the coming years it's essential that we continue to strengthen the VA health care system.

We know that VA care is as good as or better than private sector care. But a shortfall of doctors, nurses, and other clinicians, combined with aging, inadequate and often mis-located VA facilities has resulted in too many veterans having to wait too long or travel too far for their care.

That's why back in 2018 we supported legislation to establish the Asset and Infrastructure Review Act, or AIR, to create a comprehensive plan to repair, rebuild, realign, and modernize VA hospitals, clinics and other medical facilities.

However, the pandemic did happen and, unfortunately, that legislation did not happen as last month a bipartisan group of Senators announced their opposition to the AIR process, which effectively ended it.

However, considering the flawed data and assumptions underlying some of the VA's recommendations, this might have been the right decision. But although the AIR process may be over, our efforts to ensure that the VA health care system has the people and the infrastructure necessary to provide timely care to all enrolled veterans, especially disabled veterans, simply will never end. (Applause)

Another critical policy goal we're also making progress on is shortening or strengthening the mental health care and reducing veteran suicide. According to the VA's own report, suicide, there has been a decrease, but, listen to this, down to 17.2 a day, still too high. Still too high.

And that's why we're supporting the STRONG Veterans Act, which is short of Support the Resiliency of our Nation's Great Veterans, to improve mental health services and add new tools and resources to VA's existing suicide prevention efforts.

With your help, we hope to see this important legislation signed into law later this year. But ending this national tragedy will take all of us getting involved.

Just a couple weeks ago the new 9-8-8 National Suicide Crisis Line went live. Since then it's already resulted in more veterans reaching out for potential life-saving help. Veterans seeking help can call 9-8-8 and press 1, or you can text 9-8-8.

We can all help promote the new number. Take note of it. Share it. Share it with everybody that you know. Together we can, and we must, do everything in our power to end veteran suicide. (Applause)

Following up on the landmark Deborah Sampson Act from the last Congress, I am pleased to report the enactment of two additional laws to support women veterans.

The Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act will help to expand and prioritize mammography screening for veterans who served in toxic exposed locations, particularly for those with disabilities. The second is the MAMMO Act, which stands for Making Advances in Mammography, will also improve cancer screening and treatment options for women veterans.

You know, with women veterans continuing to be the fastest growing segment of the veterans' population, DAV will continue fighting to ensure they have equitable access to VA care and benefits, including world-class gender-specific care. (Applause)

We are always making progress and we are also making progress on the new legislation packages that comes out regarding VA's long-term care option and programs for you.

The Elizabeth Dole Home and Community-Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act and the Expanding Veterans Options for Long-Term Care Act would expand home, community and assisted living options for veterans, helping to keep them out of nursing homes whenever possible. Trust me, I'm going to need it. (Laughter)

And while the calendar is short this year, moving into the mid-terms, both of these bills still have a chance of passing. And we will be reaching out for your support.

And we are continuing our efforts to expand and fix eligibility problems with the VA's comprehensive family caregiver program.

As most of you know, when Congress created the caregiver program over a decade ago, it was limited just to those post-9/11 veterans. In 2017, DAV launched the Unsung Heroes Initiative to make veterans from all eras eligible for this program.

Thanks to our efforts, two years ago veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam became eligible for the program, leaving out one last group – those who served between Vietnam and 9/11, like Past National Commander Dave Riley and his wife and caregiver, Yvonne.

Let's take a look at those impacts.

(Whereupon, the video "Day in the Life of a Caregiver" was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS REESE: Thank to Dave and Yvonne, Dennis and Donna Joyner, and so many others in DAV and the Auxiliary, beginning October 1st, just 55 days from now, veterans of all eras can apply to the caregiver program, giving us another victory for veterans. (Applause)

You know, President Abraham Lincoln wrote:

"Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves, as best he can, the same cause."

The best way to honor them is to ensure that we never forget what they did. That's why great nations take actions to memorialize and remember their heroes.

On this day, 240 years ago, President George Washington created the Badge of Military Merit, which exactly 150 years later, became the Purple Heart, a medal that many in this room have been awarded and was just recognized moments ago.

A hundred years ago the Lincoln Memorial was dedicated in remembrance of perhaps America's greatest president. Carved into the walls of the memorial are Lincoln's two most famous speeches, both of which talk about honoring and caring for those who defended our nation.

Today, I also want to honor and remember two of my predecessors as executive director of Washington headquarters. First, Garry Augustine, my dear friend and colleague, who dedicated his entire life to DAV and caring for disabled veterans.

After retiring as Washington executive director just a few years ago, Garry tragically passed away earlier this year, after a vicious cancer swiftly took him from us far too soon.

Many of the accomplishments that I talked about today, particularly expanding the caregiver program, would not have been achieved without the work that Garry had done.

We send our prayers and condolences to his wife Kelly, his daughter Chelsea, and his son Kyle. (Applause)

And, finally, next week will mark the 20th anniversary of the passing of our beloved Jesse Brown. He, too, dedicated his life to DAV and, like Garry, rose to become the executive director of our Washington headquarters.

Jesse was then called to serve as the Secretary for Veterans Affairs, the first African-American to hold that position. Like Garry, his life was also cut too short at far too young of an age after struggling with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

But before he departed, Jesse embarked on one final mission, to build what would eventually become the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. Though he never got to see the finished Memorial, we can still see Jesse there in his words etched in the Memorial's glass walls.

Jesse wrote:

"There are life-threatening injuries to confront and surmount, life-changing disabilities to meet and to master, and life-shaping experiences to make peace with and understand.

"For every tragic story of a life unraveled by military battle, there are a dozen tales of individuals who have managed to triumph over the harrowing experiences of war and ruin."

Jesse was one of those individuals, so was Garry, and so, too, are many of you setting in the audience today.

It is because we remember and honor our past that we act in the present to create a better future.

Abraham Lincoln said, "The best way to predict your future is to create it." And working together, that's exactly what we'll do.

Thank you and may God continue to bless DAV and thank you for all the work that you do. (Standing Ovation)

Commander, that completes my report. And I ask that it be accepted by the convention.

(Whereupon, the Executive Director Reese withdrew from and the Commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Randy. Good job. Thank you, Randy. May I have a second to accept Mr. Reese's report?

MR. ALBERT J. BACON, SR.: Mic 3.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MR. BACON: Mic 3, Albert J. Bacon, Sr. from the great Sunshine State of Florida, Chapter 17, so moves.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I have a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion carried.

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

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

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

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

He serves as DAV's chief financial officer and chief operating officer. And his responsibilities cover all national headquarters' departments, including Employment initiatives, Voluntary Services, Communications, Membership activities, Fundraising, Accounting, Administration, Human Resources, Information Technology, outreach and logistics of one of America's largest non-profit organizations.

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

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BARRY JESINOSKI: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS JESINOSKI: Thank you, Commander. Before I begin let's not pretend I'm going to forget about how rough you've been on Marines the last couple of days. (Applause)

I understand there is a past national commander convening tomorrow and they're going to talk about your acceptance into their club. (Laughter) I also heard that Dennis Nixon and Don Samuels are going to co-chair that meeting so, both Marines. (Laughter)

I'd better get on with business before the commander loses his sense of humor. (Laughter)

Thank you, all. Thank you so much for all that you do and your great service that you offer our fellow veterans. As we mark our first full year in our new national headquarters facility, being here among you is another reminder that our cause is not tied to brick and mortar, but to our members, the veterans we represent, the families who sacrifice alongside them, and our sacred charge to ensure our promises to them are kept.

The more in-depth your path within DAV takes you, the more focused you can become on a single aspect of our mission. Whether that is our transportation network, veterans benefits, community service, leadership, legislative advocacy, or through any other area where you might have an intensive interest.

But what we cannot forget is that no matter how we experience or serve our DAV, at the end of the day our core objective is to ensure promises are kept to America's veterans. And that means ensuring we understand, at least at a very basic level, what the promise is.

This year, DAV partnered with Military Veterans in Journalism to help educate a core group of disabled veterans for a speakers' bureau that was created to provide outreach to newsrooms across the country and to ensure that veterans are covered fairly and appropriately. And we had to again examine, at a foundational level, our sacred charge to honor the sacrifices of the veterans we serve.

What is this promise?

The agreement that binds our nation with its defenders is elegant and simple when distilled. If a man or a woman is changed while shouldering the burden of our national defense we, as individuals, and our government have a patriotic obligation to ensure we do our utmost to make them whole.

As the Marine Corps noted decades ago, we don't promise you a rose garden. No one expects the military life to be one of luxury and serenity. But if your time in service impairs your ability to otherwise care for yourself or your dependents, we have a promise to uphold.

The benefits and health care system we've fought to establish and maintain for these many years mean a lot to those we assist. In some cases, the award of benefits is a validation, the recognition of a sacrifice. In other cases, it's a reprieve from destitution. And in others still, benefits and care represent hope and provide veterans with a precious hand up to pursue their maximum potential.

And all those things are important. But at the end of the day it boils down to a promise – and justice. Anything short of meeting that promise to the utmost of our abilities is an injustice to those individuals and families whose lives are forever changed.

And when we think of the awesome responsibility that comes with this charge, it is fair to ask who is responsible for keeping our promise.

Some would say it is primarily the responsibility of our government. Others might say it's incumbent upon the industries and individuals who benefit most from our national prosperity. And others think it should fall almost exclusive on the purview of charity.

But from what we've seen over the past two decades, years we have spent mostly at war, the promise belongs to every American, our government, charities, and all who enjoy the liberties and opportunities our nation affords.

And when it comes to keeping our promise, today your DAV is going further than ever before in our long and storied history. If we go back just ten years into our past, DAV's focus was almost exclusively centered on ensuring the government was upholding its end of the bargain.

From DAV's earliest beginnings, we advocated for employment training and preference so veterans changed in wartime service could achieve maximum independence. And it worked in a way that brings great credit upon our organization.

From the start we have said, "For those who are able, the transition from the military to civilian life is not complete until a veteran has meaningful employment."

This year, less than a decade after the creation of DAV's National Employment Program, we can mark 162,132 job offers for veterans, transitioning military members and their spouses. (Applause) Since we last met, DAV has co-facilitated 90 career fairs, helping veterans pursue a new mission after service.

Our focus is on empowerment. Helping veterans receive the benefits they earned based on the abilities they sacrificed in the military is important. It remains the most important and worthy service in DAV's arsenal.

But as Commander Marshall so eloquently pointed out yesterday, a key to recovery is having a mission that you believe in. We here have found that through our involvement in DAV, of course. But complete self-sufficiency requires even more.

Helping veterans connect with meaningful employment provides them with a sense of confidence and independence that nothing else can.

But something came up last year that piqued our interests. We asked ourselves, what if we were able to provide veterans with a new mission, help them get jobs, ensure they get their earned benefits, and then had the capability to help them become job and benefits creators?

When we became aware of Patriot Boot Camp several years ago, we were presented with an opportunity to support an effort that empowers veterans and spouses on an entirely different level.

As of January 1st, as you know, our newly-acquired DAV Patriot Boot camp enlists a vibrant community of veterans and business leaders committed to enabling people in our community to become entrepreneurs.

We have undertaken this new mission with an almost selfish and single-minded intent: if we can make our fellow veterans millionaires, that's fine. But what we want most of all is to give them the opportunity to employ their creativity, to develop creative solutions to the challenges our nation faces in the world and, foremost, to create opportunities for other veterans.

Our first event last month drew alumni with incredible ventures already under their belts. And if you look throughout that community we have inherited, the ventures founded through Patriot Boot Camp find extremely meaningful ways to give back to their fellow citizens.

Alumni have raised over \$150 million in venture capital. They employ at least 1,900 individuals. And we know that when they hire, they are looking to our fellow veterans and their spouses to fill their ranks.

While the acquisition is the first in our organization's history, it is just one way your DAV is evolving in terms of the services we deliver and the way that we conduct our business these days.

Within the last decade every program and process at DAV National Headquarters has undergone an evolution, one that is still underway as we speak.

We continue to diversify our fundraising, take on exciting new initiatives based on DAV's strategic objectives, and look for sustainable ways to meet the most important needs our veterans face. We are rapidly taking on new capabilities to help maintain our membership and efficiently recruit and replenish our ranks.

Throughout the pandemic, our transportation network was limited, but DAV vehicles were on the road making sure patients received the care that they earned in service.

Last year we provided more than 163,000 rides. Now, while that's a fraction of the impact we made pre-COVID, or that we will make again, it, alone, is more than many major charities in our sector contribute in a year.

We will need to make a concerted effort as we drag ourselves free from the coronavirus doldrums to revitalize that critical program. But we have the resources to do it. And we must not overlook the lives that were saved or sustained by our selfless volunteers.

If we take a moment to reflect, which is something we may not do often enough, we've already talked about some of the most significant ways to help veterans achieve self-determination. For most who suffer a major setback in their health in uniform, benefits, employment and opportunities to pursue autonomy are key pieces in making veterans whole.

But while these tangibles are obvious, they alone cannot fully equip veterans with all they need to overcome the adversity that comes with a life-changing and profoundly devastating illness.

Technology has made it possible for us to go further than ever before in replacing limbs lost in war and providing prostheses that allow veterans to overcome challenges in ways that would absolutely boggle the minds of DAV's founders.

But sometimes the greatest challenges veterans encounter come from limitations their experiences have caused deep within themselves.

In the last several years, DAV has expanded our role in adaptive sports. The National Disabled Veterans Winter Sport Clinic, an event we've co-presented for 35 years, remains a world-class event that barreled through COVID in Snowmass early this year.

The National Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic, which will be held in Iowa next month, though comparatively new to DAV, is showing signs of growth and stability thanks to our partnership with the VA.

Supported in large part by contributions from DAV chapters and departments, these events help the veterans we serve by giving them the opportunity to challenge the limitations their most profound disabilities can cause.

But through collaborative relationships with other entities, DAV is becoming intimately involved in new initiatives that address the deeper concerns that impact our community and contribute to the alarming statistics we've seen of veterans choosing to end their own lives, as Randy just explained.

That includes Save A Warrior, who you will meet in person on Tuesday morning. Both through a significant grant from our Charitable Service Trust and a partnership with DAV, Save A Warrior takes an extremely intensive, innovative approach to drilling down into the issues that plague our veterans' mental health and limit their capacity to embrace their post-service lives.

The Trust's \$1 million grant is a primary source of funding for Save A Warrior's National Center of Excellence for Complex Post Traumatic Stress, which carries DAV's name as a sponsor.

We also continue to build our relationship with Boulder Crest. There, too, a grant is accompanied with the participation of DAV mentors working hands-on to address the needs of veterans paralyzed by trauma that is invisible to the eye but an absolute impediment to their achieving full quality lives.

Through both programs, all-female-veteran cohorts are in place to ensure effective outcomes for women who struggle as a result of their service.

Another partnership, with a charity called Operation Honor, gives veterans new skills and therapy through woodwork. A \$148,000 grant is helping fund the construction of its new home, called Patriot's Landing, in Kentucky.

In each case, the Trust and DAV are more than a source of funding. We are true partners. We support the services they provide and, in doing so, introduce their participants to the many services DAV offers that can help them beyond the tremendous hurdles that they can overcome with the tools and confidence each provides.

We also continue to see incredible momentum in our efforts to educate the public and our fellow veterans about the services we offer. We closed 2021 with more than 8.2 billion impressions for our PSA campaign.

Over the course of more than 180,000 television and radio airings, 564 print placements, and 5,000 out-of-home items promoting our message, DAV achieved nearly \$100 million in donated media. (Applause)

That includes a special partnership with Sinclair Broadcast Group that resulted in more than 100 stations airing our centennial documentary, "The Battle Never Ends," a significant donation of PSA airtime and 661 special live and recorded media segments focused on DAV, our programs and our services.

We will likely face a very challenging year in terms of the fundraising climate that is impacting charities in nearly every sector this year. Inflation, uncertainty, and the focus on international efforts related to Ukraine are going to undoubtedly influence our ability to generate support.

This isn't a "sky-is-falling" prediction by any means. However, we remain, of course, thoughtful of this and appropriately prudent in our investments and management of donor dollars.

And I can say with absolute certainty that the state of your DAV National Headquarters, the programs we oversee, and the mission we support are as strong as they have ever been at any time in our history, as is our steady and consistent financial footing, in spite of what is going to be a challenging fiscal time for our nation.

We are a better charity this year than last. We continue to move in the right direction. And, combined with the amazing work each and every one of you do every day in chapters and departments throughout our great land, we're going to remain the finest, most relevant charity in the nation serving our most deserving and patriotic individuals and families. (Applause)

Thank you all for your time, for all that you accomplish in service, and for all we'll do together in the year ahead to keep our sacred promise. God bless each and every one of you.

Commander, this concludes my report. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Executive Director of National Headquarters Jesinoski withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

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

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

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Mic 4.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 4.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Mic 4, District 13, makes a motion to accept Barry's report.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I have a motion. May I have a second.

MR. ROBERT GRIBBS: Mic 1.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 1.

MR. GRIBBS: Robert Gribbs, Department of California, Chapter 5, Los Angeles, makes the second.

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

Thank you, Barry. (Applause)

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

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

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

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

This award recognizes a disabled veteran who has taken on the challenge of starting their own business and has set an example for others. I'm happy to announce that this year's winner is Ericka McKim of "And I Like It" bakery in Dallas.

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: After medically retiring in 2014, Navy veteran Ericka McKim founded "And I Like It," a bakery focused on keto-friendly treats made with all-natural sweeteners.

She discovered the health benefits of low-carb foods after a change in diet that alleviated many severe health issues that had forced her to retire from the military.

And I Like It sells cheesecakes in 11 stores across the Dallas-Fort Worth area, along with three different all-natural sweeteners. Her customers include people battling health issues and dietary restrictions of their own.

MS. ERICKA MCKIM: Thank you so much for this opportunity. This has been an amazing year and getting this award from you guys has – it was the key point that has helped me get to the next stage.

We had a – we make our own all-natural sweetener blends. And we have a limited capacity on how fast we can make it. And we couldn't keep up with demand. And with this award we have been able to buy equipment that's going to help us produce our sugar substitute 650 percent faster than what we've been doing. And we're hoping now to be able to bring it nationwide.

So I just want to thank you guys so much. (Applause) This has made a huge difference in our business and I'm just, I'm so blessed to receive it. So thank you so much.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you.

MS. MCKIM: Thank you.

(Whereupon, Ms. McKim withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I'll ask National Employment Director Rob Lougee to join me on stage, please.

(Whereupon, Mr. Lougee joined Commander Marshall at the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: It is now my pleasure to recognize the Outstanding Local Veterans Employment Representative and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist recipients of 2022.

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

The award for Outstanding Local Veterans Employment Representative is presented to Navy veteran and DAV member Serena Bermudez. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Serena has been with the Virginia Employment Commission Jobs for Veterans State Grant since 2015 and has helped more than 200 veterans find successful employment.

She has established strong relationships with local employers in the public, federal and private sectors to provide veterans with what she calls a “hand up and not a handout.” This didn’t stop during the COVID-19 pandemic, pivoting to video chats and sites like LinkedIn to stay connected with veterans and employers.

MS. SERENA BERMUDEZ: First of all, I’d like to thank DAV for this award. So I will say when you look to your left and you look to your right, we all, as veterans, and our military spouses, also, deserve a quality living wage.

So I will keep leading that charge. I will keep focused. I will keep educating. I will keep providing knowledge to our veterans and our spouses to be able to gain that gainful employment. Just remember that you are not alone and my motto is that “I provide a hand-up, and never a handout.”

So with that saying I could talk all day but I know I’m limited on time. (Laughter) But I will say that God bless, for love of our country, and God bless the United States of America, and God bless the DAV. Thank you for this award. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Bermudez withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: The 2022 Outstanding Disabled Veteran’s Outreach Program Specialist is a passionate advocate for Wisconsin veterans. This year’s recipient is Nancy Brown. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nancy Brown, a Navy veteran, has been with Wisconsin’s Department of Workforce Development since 2013. Throughout the years she has built strong relationships with employers in her area and has educated many of them on the merits of hiring veterans.

This effort has led to many veteran success stories. Just in the past year she helped 31 veterans find gainful employment in North Central Wisconsin.

MS. NANCY BROWN: Good morning.

(Response of “Good morning.”)

MS. BROWN: Thank you all so very much for this award. It’s amazing to be recognized for something that you love to do. I’ve been with the State of Wisconsin for almost 10 years. And every day is something new so it keeps the job very, very – well, you know, not continuously the same thing. It’s not redundant in any way, shape or form.

It’s so fun to hear the successful outcomes that we’ve provided. And I couldn’t do any of my job without the support of my team back in Wisconsin and organizations like the DAV. So thank you. Thank you very much for this honor. Hi, Al. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Brown withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Each year DAV recognizes companies that go out of the way to recruit, hire, and invest in veterans. These companies are crucial in our mission to ensure veterans can lead fulfilling lives after service.

So it is my pleasure to announce the DAV Patriot Employer of the Year Awards for three outstanding organizations.

The 2022 DAV Small Patriot Employer of the Year Award goes to a company that truly values what veterans bring to the workforce. And it just happens to be a stone’s throw away from our DAV National Headquarters in Erlanger, Kentucky.

Congratulations to the 2022 DAV Small Patriot Employer of the Year, Aristech Surfaces. Aristech Services, LLC, now part of Trinseo, manufactures and distributes surface and design materials around the globe.

In 1996, Aristech was proud to have contributed materials to the original traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, The Wall that Heals.

Today, Aristech actively recruits veterans and fosters their success with thoughtful policy that celebrates service and recognizes military experiences as an asset to be valued.

More than 10 percent of Aristech employees at its Florence, Kentucky, branch are veterans, with plans to continue growing recruiting efforts.

Because of Aristech leaders, hiring veterans isn’t just good for business. It’s a way to honor those who served and sacrificed so much.

While our friends from Aristech couldn't make it to Orlando, they still wanted to thank DAV for their honor.

(Whereupon, the following remarks were via video.)

MS. RUTH MOORE: Hello, my name is Ruth Moore and I am the VP of Human Resources for Aristech Surfaces in Florence, Kentucky, now a part of Trinseo. Today we are so honored to be here and to be recognized by the DAV for our Employer of the Year category in the Patriot Award.

Thank you so, so much for honoring us in our efforts to recruit and retain our military veterans. We are so pleased to be able to offer employment and career opportunities to them and are very committed to their success at Aristech.

Again, thank you for this honor. We appreciate it so much. And in honor to both of my brothers who both served, go military, go Navy, go Army. Thank you, again, on behalf of Aristech Surfaces. (Applause)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Our 2022 DAV Midsize Patriot Employer of the Year is a service-disabled veteran-owned small business based in Virginia. Please welcome to the stage Sierra7 founder and CEO Rafael Fagundo.

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sierra7 provides an array of tech support and solutions in the health care arena. Rafael Fagundo, its CEO and a Navy veteran, founded the company with a simple but noble mission: Serve those who served. In pursuit of that mission, Sierra7 utilizes veterans' unique experiences and qualifications.

Since 2020, Sierra7 has hired 166 veterans, over half of whom are disabled veterans. Around 25 percent of its total workforce is made up of veterans.

Seeing the immense potential of what veterans can bring to the field, Sierra7 recently implemented a Veterans Leadership Program designed to empower veterans in their personal and professional growth.

That is commitment, not just to a mission but to people, to those who served.

MR. RAFAEL FAGUNDO: Welcome, fellow veterans. On behalf of Sierra7 we are absolutely honored to receive the award of Midsize Employer of the Year from the DAV, an amazing organization that we're so happy to be tied to.

At Sierra7 our company motto is "Serving those who served." And there is no better way for us to do that than by identifying, recruiting and hiring veterans.

You ask the question, "Why." Amongst all the altruistic reasons, at the end of the day, we run a business and in our business two characteristics are incredibly important in this fast-changing environment and that is the work ethic and adaptability.

And I can't think of any other community or cohort of individuals beyond the veteran community that are best suited for that, given that we've all learned that during our time in active duty.

So, again, on behalf of Sierra7 we are thrilled to receive this recognition. Thank you guys. Thank all of you for your service. And God bless America. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Fagundo withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: The 2022 DAV Large Patriot Employer of the Year is a company that, like DAV, was born out of a calling to serve ill and injured service members returning from a World War.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome WPSA Health Solutions Military and Veteran Inclusion Lead Timothy La Sage to accept the DAV's Large Patriot Employer of the Year Award. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Founded in 1946, Wisconsin-based WPS Health Solutions is a nonprofit health insurer that serves millions of service members, veterans, and their families through TRICARE and Veterans Affairs programs. And WPS has not forgotten its roots.

The company's initiatives to recruit and retain veterans include a dedicated military and veteran inclusion manager, and a hiring panel with at least one veteran present. Once hired, WPS supports its veterans with a Veterans Enhancement Team meant to build camaraderie and offer mentorship.

WPS also invests in the wider veteran community outside of the company. It proudly supports the University of Wisconsin's Missing-in-Action Recovery and Identification Project and has partnered with the Green Bay Packers to recognize veterans before kickoff.

MR. TIMOTHY LA SAGE: Good morning and to the one Marine in the audience – Hooah. (Hooah) There he is. (Laughter) First off, thank you very much for this award. It's amazing to be affiliated with such an amazing group.

After 22 years of active duty service, a couple Purple Hearts, the scariest thing I've ever done in the military was get out, (Laughter) not knowing what comes next. It takes a new unit such as the DAV for veterans to transition into, and a new team, like WPS to really assign ourselves to, to give us morale and boost our mission in life.

I want to thank WPS. As you heard, we came together in 1946. Physicians saw a gap in the need for service to our veterans coming home from World War II. And we have the TRICARE contract and assist with that processing claims, TRICARE East, TRICARE Overseas, TRICARE for Life.

It's an amazing work environment at WPS and I'd be remiss in my duties if I didn't thank our CEO and president in the audience, Mike Hamerlik. It would also be painful for him but please stand and be recognized.

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

MR. LA SAGE: Yes, thank you. As you can see, at WPS, you know, the CEO and president puts all of the effort into the team players that make the mission happen every day; hence, me being up here today as the Military and Veteran Inclusion Lead.

Our DEI team is here, also. And very thankful to DAV and our team at WPS for the work that we do, the mission that we have in supporting our veterans for claims and everything that you all do in order to help veterans like myself transition into your new unit. So thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Lougee and Mr. La Sage withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Through our substantial outreach and collaboration with companies who participate in career fair, every year DAV receives numerous submissions to the Patriot Employer program.

We ask anyone who knows a company that makes hiring veterans a priority to nominate them, to encourage them to nominate themselves, at PatriotEmployers.org.

In addition to our top award recipients, we've added categories for additional ventures who excelled in specific categories, including: hiring and recruiting; career building and retention; excellence in community support.

The names of these outstanding employers will be submitted for the record. Also, they and all who were recognized through PatriotEmployers.org will receive digital badges to promote their excellence in hiring our nation's heroes.

Listed are the winners of the Patriot Employer program in the 3 categories. The Small Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Veteran Hiring goes to Veterans Moving America, the Midsize Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Veteran Hiring goes to Whitehawk Worldwide Security and the Large Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Veteran Hiring goes to Leaf Home. The Small Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Career Building goes to Virtual Service Operations (VSO), the Midsize Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Career Building goes to Amphenol Borisch Technologies and the Large Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Career Building goes to Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The Small Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Community Support goes to ANASEC, the Midsize Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Community Support goes to 4Imprint Inc and the Large Patriot Employer Award for Excellence in Community Support goes to Xcel Energy.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Please give these and all employers who support our community one more round of applause. (Applause)

In 2007 DAV created the Local Veterans Assistance Program, or LVAP, giving volunteers nearly unlimited opportunities to serve and receive the same recognition and incentives as those available to traditional VA and Transportation Network volunteers.

Under LVAP opportunities abound for individuals to assist veterans and their families. From something as precise as building a wheelchair ramp or setting up computer software to basic tasks such as grocery shopping or running other errands, volunteers perform any task that may help improve a veteran's life.

I'll ask John Kleindienst and National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski to the stage for their assistance, please.

(Whereupon, Mr. Kleindienst and Mr. Jesinoski joined Commander Marshall on the stage.)

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

The Division One Local Veterans' Assistance Program recipient – I hate to say this – is the Department of Virginia, (Applause) Past Department Commander Cynthia Bailey with 236,408 hours. Here to accept the award is Assistant Department Adjutant Lisa Gregory. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Assistant Adjutant Gregory advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which Assistant Adjutant Gregory withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Two Local Veterans Assistance Program Winner is the Department of South Carolina, Past Department Commander Joyce Roberts, with 190,607 hours. (Applause) Here to accept the award is Department Adjutant Andy Miller. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Three Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of Wisconsin, Past Department Commander Michael Kampainen, with 77,859 hours. Here to receive the award in his new role is Department Adjutant Matthew Kampainen. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Four Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of Nebraska, Past Department Commander James Jakub, with 40,119 hours. Here to bring home the award is Department Adjutant Jamie Jakub. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division Five Local Veterans Assistance Program winner is the Department of South Dakota, Past Department Commander Dick Turnwall, with 30,394 hours. Here to receive the award is Department Commander Dan Francis. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Commander Francis advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, then Commander Francis withdrew from the stage, along with Mr. Kleindienst and Mr. Jesinoski, and the commander returned to the podium.)

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

For our next order of business I'll ask Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy Reese and National Service Director Jim Marszalek to the stage for our next important presentation.

(Whereupon, Mr. Reese and Mr. Marszalek advanced to the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: DAV partners continuously across the country with thousands of passionate VA employees to ensure the promises to our men and women who served are kept. Together, we ensure veterans get the resources they need and the assistance they have earned.

We stand together to improve the delivery of services wherever they are needed for the benefit of all veterans.

It is my distinct pleasure now to present the National Commander's Outstanding VA Employee of the Year awards to three remarkable VA staff members. These awards recognize their leadership, compassion, and dedication to supporting our ill and injured veterans who have given so much for this nation.

The 2022 Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee of the Year is Iraq War Army veteran Ashley Lowry. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ashley Lowry is a dedicated intensive care unit nurse at the John J. Cochran Veterans Hospital in St. Louis.

After leaving the Army, she has continued to show a commitment to helping others.

Ms. Lowry spent countless hours at the sides of veterans during the COVID-19 pandemic. She volunteered for extra shifts. She did not let the virus come between her and the patients.

When she is not at the hospital, she helps her fellow disabled veterans as an active DAV member. She remembered how DAV assisted her and continues to help others connect with DAV resources.

She is a prime example of selfless service and passion for her fellow veterans.

MS. ASHLEY LOWRY: Hi. I just want to say thank you for the DAV for being such an amazing organization and helping veterans like myself. Also to Thomas Becker and St. Louis DAV office who have been extraordinary in helping me and being an advocate for me, and all veterans in the area.

For the VA for letting me serve the heroes who served. And for my mom, somewhere, she's out there, and my biggest supporter and best friend for the past 30-plus years. So thank you guys so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Lowry withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the 2022 Outstanding Veterans Benefit Administration Employee of the Year, Rebecca A. Brenen. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Rebecca Brenen is recognized as going above and beyond in her position as Veterans Service Center manager at the VA in Los Angeles. It was a very short time after she started in her position in 2020 that DAV service officers connected with her.

Through collaboration, DAV, veterans, survivors, and their families have found a tremendous friend and partner in Ms. Brenen. She has gone out of her way to work with service officers to enhance DAV's capabilities. She has a true open-door policy with DAV, ensuring there is accurate awareness of delays and backlogs of VA disability claims pending decisions.

Ms. Brenen oversees the workload of 13 teams. She provides leadership for nearly 270 employees. Yet she will stop what she is doing to help a veteran on a call with DAV to resolve an issue and even reopen claims on the spot. She does this even if the veteran lives in another state. (Applause)

MS. REBECCA A. BRENEN: Wow. Thank you for this amazing honor. A very special thank you to Adam Barnes and LeRoy Acosta for the recognition and nomination.

As the veterans service center manager at the L.A. regional office I also need to thank my entire division. My team is always ready and willing to assist with any inquiry I send their way so I cannot do what I do without them.

I have worked for VA for almost 14 years and in three different offices. And I truly value the dynamic partnership DAV has with the VA. I will cherish this award forever.

Thank you, again, for naming me this year's VBA Employee of the Year. It is my privilege to serve you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Brenen withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you. Now, I ask Legislative Director Joy Ilem to come to the stage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Ilem joined the others on the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: The responsibility of ensuring our fallen heroes are honored and their survivors are supported in their times of grief is a sacred job. Our next honoree has enabled many to say goodbye in their own words. We are honored to present the 2022 VA National Cemetery Administration Employee of the Year award to James LaPaglia. (Applause)

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

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel LaPaglia is Digital Services Chief of the National Cemetery Administration.

The 2019 launch of the Veterans Legacy Memorial was just in time for people to remember loved ones lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Memorial is a single place online to honor the more than 4.3 million veterans interred in VA national cemeteries and at VA grant-funded tribal, state, and territorial veteran cemeteries.

We have Colonel LaPaglia to thank for this resource. An information technology professional, he led the initiative to make the website interactive by leading IT developers and stakeholders to ensure the system worked and that the wider public was aware of its availability.

Grieving sons and daughters have left heartfelt letters for their departed parents. People who could not hold funerals because of COVID-19 were able to mourn and salute veterans anyway. This is truly a resource that honors our veterans and their survivors.

Accepting the award for Colonel LaPaglia is National Cemetery Administration Executive Director Danny Devine. (Applause)

MR. DANIEL DEVINE: Thank you on behalf of James. You know, that guy sounds really good. I'm glad he's working for me. (Laughter) James is kind of embarrassed that he's not here, personally. He's with his family, instead, having the final vacation of the year, so he means absolutely no disrespect.

This honor is a big deal to him. And I thank the body and I thank the commander for what you've done in honoring James. He's a really good employee. And I'm glad I'm able to keep him this way. So thank you very much, DAV. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Ilem, Mr. Reese, and Mr. Devine withdrew from the stage and the commander returned to the podium amid a round of applause.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: DAV is bolstered by the efforts of nearly 2,000 members dedicated to recruiting veterans into our organization to help maintain a strong voice with lawmakers and keep DAV at the pinnacle of excellence as our nation's premier veterans group.

Even as technology and changing demographics continue to affect the way we do all of DAV's business, our dedicated recruiters stay ahead of the curve by working diligently to welcome new members into our ranks. This unyielding effort helps to ensure DAV's legacy lives on for future generations of veterans.

I'll invite Executive Director Barry Jesinoski and National Membership Director Doug Wells to the stage as we recognize our top division winners in recruiting for 2021 and 2022.

(Whereupon, Mr. Jesinoski and Mr. Wells joined the Commander 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 William Egan. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Egan advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

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

(Whereupon, Past Department Commander Gerke advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 3 winner is the DAV Department of Puerto Rico. Please give a warm welcome to Department Commander Ruben Arce. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Department Commander Arce advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 4 winner is the DAV Department of Connecticut. Please give a warm welcome to Department Commander Juliet Taylor. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Department Commander Taylor advanced to the stage to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which she withdrew from the stage.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Division 5 winner is the DAV Department of Wyoming. Please give a warm welcome to Department Adjutant Floyd Watson. (Applause)

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

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Our next award is the General Jonathan M. Wainwright Award. It is presented to the Department that closes the year with the largest percentage increase in total new members. The winner is DAV Department of Wyoming. It's a privilege to welcome to the stage, again, Department Adjutant Floyd Watson. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Department Adjutant Watson received 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 MARSHALL: The Judge Robert S. Marx Award is presented to the Department that completes the year with the highest percentage increase of fully-paid life members over the goal. This year's winner is the Department of South Dakota. Please welcome Department Commander Dan Francis. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Department Commander Francis received the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Judge Robert S. Marx Award is named after DAV's founder. Marx served in the Army in World War I. He earned the Distinguished Service Cross and was injured in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in 1918. He later became a superior court judge and law professor.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Veterans who are assisted by DAV know firsthand the value of our organization. And it's no surprise that these same veterans are more likely to join as members as a result of the excellent assistance they receive from national service officers.

As our NSOs provide free services, they also provide an up-close look at the life-changing value of our organization. While they have an edge, it still takes a skilled communicator and driven representative to turn new allies into lifetime DAV members.

Our next award recognizes individuals who go above and beyond to bring new members into our ranks and help perpetuate the strength of DAV. As a retired NSO, it is with great pride that I present the top recruiter from our NSO corps who, remarkably, recruited 258 veterans to join our ranks.

Ladies and gentlemen, please put your hands together for Carlo Melone of the Chicago National Service Office. (Applause)

(Whereupon, NSO Malone advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Our top recruiting member of the year is Michael Crowe from DAV Chapter 8 in Mesa, Arizona. He recruited 80 new members. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Crowe advanced to receive the Commander's Award, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which he withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Since 1994, DAV has recognized the success of its members who have signed 100 or more new members for three consecutive membership years with a gold lapel pin and by entering their names into the Membership Recruiters Hall of Fame. A few of these folks may be here and will join us on the stage.

This year's inductees are: Carlo Malone who recruited a total of 258 new members; Hank Myers who recruited a total of 231 new members; and John Rodriguez who recruited a total of 202 new members. (Applause)

(Whereupon, those inductees present advanced to the stage to receive their pin, at which time an official photograph was taken, then they, along with Mr. Jesinoski and Mr. Wells, withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: As always, thank you to all of our recruiters for another incredible year. Keep up the wonderful work all of you do.

It is my distinct honor to introduce someone who has made it his life's purpose to provide the fullest possible accounting of our mission personnel to their families and the nation.

A retired Major General with 34 years of service in the Air Force, (Cheers) Kelly McKeague serves as the Director of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, or the DPAA. While he has been in his current position since 2017, this was not his first position with the agency.

The general served as the first-ever Deputy Director of the DPAA and, before that, as Commander of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

He received his Air Force commission in 1981, after graduating from Georgia Institute of Technology and served as a civil engineer and officer until his retirement in 2015.

Please join me in welcoming retired General Kelly McKeague. (Applause)

(Whereupon, General McKeague advanced to the podium.)

MAJOR GENERAL KELLY McKEAGUE: National Commander Marshall, National Adjutant Burgess, distinguished DAV members, warm greetings. I am deeply privileged to participate in your national convention and, more importantly, to thank DAV for championing the POW/MIA mission.

DAV and DPAA share a common theme in our mottos. Yours is "Keeping our promise to America's veterans." Ours is "Fulfilling our nation's promise."

Searching for, recovering and identifying Americans missing from past wars is a sacred obligation because it involves your comrades-in-arms and it's a moral imperative because they made the supreme sacrifice for the nation we all love.

This mission is global because we go wherever Americans went missing in battle since World War II. It's also generational because second- and third-generation family members still carry a void in life and heart in their deserved quest for answers.

As you see here, the numbers of MIAs are staggering, even with the 38,000 – 38,000 – that we estimate to be recoverable. These numbers, together with the passage of time, are the enemies we battle today. However, we benefit greatly from the acknowledgement and cooperation, strong cooperation, from 46 countries toward this humanitarian effort.

And here in the United States the POW/MIA issue still generates interest and visibility, which are due to devoted veterans like yourselves from across America.

As it did for you, COVID-19 impacted us. But over the last year more countries are permitting us access, subject to us meeting their health and safety protocols. This very day we have teams deployed in Europe and the Pacific, ten of them. In total this year we will have deployed 100 teams to 36 different countries.

We have a unique authority to establish private partnerships which are proving to be very successful. We have over 111 active and emerging arrangements with universities like the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and non-governmental organizations like Ancestry.com. These partners are talented. They are passionate. And, above all, they increase our capacity and capabilities to be able to do more.

Ladies and gentlemen, with 20 percent of the recoverable being a World War II or Korean War Unknown buried in an American cemetery somewhere in the world, we continue to disinter and identify them with great success.

This included two Medal of Honor recipients – last year Army Captain Chaplain Emil Kapaun of (Indistinguishable) Kansas, a chaplain lost during the Korean War; and this past April, Army Air Forces Lieutenant Colonel Addison Baker of Illinois, a B-24 pilot lost in World War II and awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Both are now home. (Applause)

You may recall the 55 boxes of remains North Korea turned over to the United States in 2018, the first fulfillment of a commitment they made to President Trump. Since receiving those boxes, we have identified 82 service members and anticipate to be able to do more.

However, despite the commitment made by the North Korean leader for us resuming field work in North Korea, our negotiations ended when their army stopped communicating with us over three years ago.

Now, while the numbers of MIAs are daunting, they are so much more than just figures. Each and every one has a unique story with memories that their families still carry and treasure. I'd like to briefly share three such stories of an MIA from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, all of whom are now home.

This is Marine Corps Private William Rambo of LaPorte, Indiana. He was a member of the 2nd Marine Division and was killed-in-action on the very first day of the Battle of Tarawa in 1943, at the age of 20 years old.

He was buried in a temporary cemetery that was lost for decades when Navy SeaBee battalions constructed an air base on the island. One of our private partners, History Flight, found and excavated several of these burial trenches several years ago.

We identified the remains of Private Rambo in 2019 and the Marine Corps notified his nephew and niece. They are children of Private Rambo's younger brother.

Seen here in this picture, they brought together 23 family members for his interment at Arlington National Cemetery. Many of them had lost touch with their relatives or did not even know they were related. They described the interment as "giving new life to their family."

Then there's the story of Army Sergeant Roy DeLauter, a member of the 7th Infantry Division. He was 21-years old when he was killed and declared missing from the Korean War in the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir in December 1950.

This past January we identified him from among the 55 boxes North Korea had turned over. His remains actually came from two boxes, Number 27 and Number 41.

This year on the April day he would have turned 93 years old, the community of Smithburg, Maryland, turned out en masse to welcome him home and bury him with full military honors in Hagerstown, Maryland.

The ladies you see here are his two daughters who were 3 and almost 2 years old at the time he went missing, and his three younger sisters who today are all in their 90s. Sergeant DeLauter's older sister, Evelyn, said, "Knowing Buddy is at rest next to our parents and our younger brother brings us such comfort."

Last but not least is Navy Commander Paul Chavert, who hailed from Grandview, Washington. He was an A-1H Skyraider pilot and was shot down in 1967 in North Vietnam at the age of 26. Ladies and gentlemen, this was his third combat tour in Vietnam. And, sadly, he was to return home the very next day after his fateful mission off the U.S.S. Bon Homme Richard.

At the height of COVID restrictions a Vietnamese team, trained by the U.S. a decade earlier, recovered his remains, which we identified last year. Here is what's incredible. His mother, Blanche, is 101 years old. And his two sisters were 22- and 24-years old when he went missing.

After a Navy honor guard moved his remains from an Alaska Airlines 737 to a waiting hearse, his sister, Lorraine, who you see here, stepped forward to hug her big brother. She said, "Even when I saw the casket, it was just like, 'That's really you, Paul. After all these years, welcome home.'"

Distinguished DAV members, these are just three of many examples of why this noble mission matters and how your awareness and advocacy enable us to provide MIA families with answers they have long sought.

The fact that the United States of America vigorously searches for, finds, and recovers and accounts for our MIAs from World War II through Operation Iraqi Freedom, is the right thing to do. It's the fulfillment of a promise made to those who made the ultimate sacrifice and to their families.

Since they are unreturned veterans, it's also a commitment to you, their comrades-in-arms, and those on the uniform today that they cannot be left behind.

Two years after the end of World War I, then Vice President Calvin Coolidge said this, "The nation that forgets its defenders will, itself, be forgotten." "The nation that forgets its defenders will, itself, be forgotten."

Ladies and gentlemen, I can assure you that the Department of Defense has not forgotten. But I also thank, again, the DAV for also not forgetting. In keeping your promise to America's veterans, you also help fulfill the promise made to those veterans who have not yet returned home.

May God bless each and every one of you. May he bless our MIAs and their families. And may he shed his grace upon the DAV and our great country. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, General.

(Whereupon, the General withdrew from the stage and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: And now I'd like to call on the Board of Directors' Treasurer William Baker for his report.

(Whereupon, Board of Directors Treasurer advanced to the podium.)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS TREASURER WILLIAM BAKER: National Commander Marshall, fellow members of the National Executive Committee, DAV members and guests, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

BOARD OF DIRECTORS TREASURER BAKER: Let me begin by recognizing those with whom I've served on the Board of Directors: first, Chairman Stephen Whitehead of Minnesota; Vice-Chairman Joseph Parsetch, Montana; Secretary and National Adjutant Marc Burgess; Director and National Executive Committee member Twentieth District, Charles W. Edwards, Sr., of Texas; Director and NEC Seventh District, Floyd Watson, Jr., of Wyoming; and Director and NEC Seventh District, Frank A. Chicollo of Florida.

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, 2022. DAV's total fundraising support through that date was a little over \$51 million. Contributions were in excess of \$40 million; and bequests were just under \$11 million.

Under the Department Fundraising Program payouts to departments in December 2021 and April 2022 totaled about \$3 million. Since the program began in 1994, almost \$113 million have been distributed to departments for their service programs.

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

As of June 2022, DAV has received a total support and revenue from all sources of roughly \$36 million. The total support and revenue is greatly affected by the negative securities market performance over the first six months of this year.

Our investment policy statements to guide decision making, especially during a bear market, we plan to stay the course of our long-term investment strategy and do not intend to realize these current market declines by prematurely selling securities.

Also, through June 2022, DAV had total expenditures of \$134 million, of which \$110 million were for service programs, which is 82 percent of total expenses.

Over the same period, fundraising expenditures were roughly \$19 million, were \$3 million more than through June 2021.

Administrative outlays were a little less than \$5 million.

As of June 30th, 2022, the market value of our general fund long-term investment portfolio is roughly \$432 million.

DAV's net assets or net worth decreased from slightly more than \$462 million at this time last year to in excess of \$399 million, a \$63 million increase, (sic) or 14 percent. Again, the securities market has been extremely tough on everyone this year and we're looking ahead to better days while maintaining our investment portfolio and our discipline.

On June 30th, 2022, the Life Membership Fund Reserve was approximately \$47 million.

Commander, it is my privilege to present DAV's proposed 2023 Annual Budget for ratification by the Convention.

At the May 26th, 2022, board meeting of directors, the Board presented the 2023 proposed budget. The Board unanimously approved the proposed budget at that time, a copy of which has been provided to all Convention attendees at registration.

I would like to thank National Adjutant Marc Burgess and his staff for all their hard work which made this report possible. Let me thank you, Commander Marshall, for the support I received in my role on the Board of Directors as 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 move for the adoption of the report and approval of the proposed 2023 annual budget. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Bill, for your service and that very informative report. I have a motion. May I have a second?

MR. WARREN TOBIN: Microphone 4.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Mic 2.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 4.

MR. TOBIN: Warren Tobin, Chapter 31, Department of North Dakota, proudly seconds that report, that motion.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.
(Whereupon, Mr. Baker withdrew from the podium.)

I would like to call on Chairman, 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. Chairman Reynolds.

(Whereupon, Convention Chairman and Past National Commander Robert Reynolds advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERT REYNOLDS: Thank you, Commander. Comrade Commander and delegates, good morning.
(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: The National Convention Committee on Constitution and Bylaws was called to order on August 6th, 2022, 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 Tom (Indistinguishable) 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 1, allow DAV chapters to conduct routine meetings of the governing body using virtual platforms, but to continue to require in-person participation of delegates and alternates for department and national conventions;

Resolution Number 421, add the following as Article VI, Section 7.8, Paragraph 5 of the National Bylaws: "No person shall succeed himself or herself as National Commander." This is already ratified in DAV's constitution.

Resolution Number 422, delete Article XIV, Section 14.5, Paragraph 3 of the Bylaws. This is a housekeeping matter, giving the issue is dated and specifically covered in Article XIII, Section 13.1 of the National Bylaws and the Board of Director Policy VIII.

Comrade Commander, this completes the first reading of the report of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws and the recommended changes to the Constitution and Bylaws.

(Whereupon, Convention Chair and Past National Commander Reynolds withdrew from the stage and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Rob. There will be no action taken at this time. We will hear the final report of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee at the final business session on Tuesday.

National Adjutant Burgess, do you have any announcements?

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. Immediately following this session, join us for a quick snack break sponsored by Heroes with Hearing Loss. Please head outside the Ballroom to Regency T foyer where you will find some delicious refreshments. Thanks to our friends at Heroes with Hearing Loss for their generous support.

The My Journey Workshop for Women Veterans takes place from 3:45 to 5:45 p.m. today in Regency Ballroom T through U. This goal and action plan creation workshop will help women veterans envision and plan for significant life events pre- and post-separation and offers women veterans the opportunity to connect with and learn from their fellow sisters-in-arms.

Join us right here in the Regency Ballroom for Fun Night tomorrow at 8:00 p.m. for the return of Gary Sinise and the Lieutenant Dan Band. (Applause)

This year's concert is sponsored, once again, by our good friends at TriWest who have generously donated to bring Gary and the team back to Orlando to perform.

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

Don't forget that today at 4:00 p.m. is the cut-off for you to make reservations to attend the Line Officer Dinner. You will need tickets to enter. And there will be assigned seating.

Our regular business will begin again Tuesday morning at 8:30 a.m. We will start off with Committee reports, including the final report of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. We will hear reports on the Charitable Service Trust and the National Service Foundation, plus an update on our Memorial in Washington, D.C.

All who wish to donate to any DAV entity, in the interest of time, are encouraged to fill out the donation form in your bags before making your way to the donation space at Regency Counter 3 located near the will call on the Convention Level.

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

And, again, we are giving away three \$50 gift cards that can be redeemed at the DAV store online or here while you are at convention. You must be present to win. If I call your name please come to the stage and see Membership Director Doug Wells.

Winner Number 1, John Higginbotham, Pennsylvania, Lehigh Valley Chapter 7; Erle Beard, Tennessee, Nashville Chapter Number 3; and Angel Lopez Comas, Puerto Rico, SFC Luis Morales Chapter Number 3.

Commander, that's all the announcements I have.

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

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Marc. Ladies and gentlemen, if able please rise. I ask Chaplain Varner to please lead us in a closing prayer.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN VARNER: Thank you. Let us pray. Almighty Creator, our Lord, our God, help us to be reminded as we leave this place that you are the one that has love for us and has expressed it in so many ways. And as we depart from this place may we feel your presence.

Help us and teach us to walk in wisdom and knowledge that we will always be the great and the better thereof. These and all things we ask and do believe by faith. And the people said Amen.

(Whereupon, the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: The Convention stands in recess until 8:00 a.m. Tuesday.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 10:59 o'clock, a.m., on Sunday, August 7, 2022.)

- - -

National Service Offices Monetary Stats 2021	
Compensation	\$22,000,741,846
DIC	\$712,861,975
Veteran Pension	\$259,666,884
Survivor Pension	\$28,676,121
Education Benefits	\$2,033,269,480
Special Entitlements (Clothing Allowance)	\$56,173,208
Total Benefits	\$25,091,389,514

Disabled American Veterans

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2021, and
Independent Auditor's Report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Disabled American Veterans

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Disabled American Veterans (DAV), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2021, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cashflows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of DAV as of December 31, 2021, 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.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of DAV and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for 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.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about DAV's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date that the financial statements are issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about DAV's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Deloitte + Touche LLP

April 7, 2022

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021

ASSETS	LIABILITIES
CASH	LIABILITIES:
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	Accounts payable
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	Accrued expenses
PREPAID EXPENSES AND OTHERS	Pension liability
INVESTMENTS	Postretirement benefit obligation
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT—Net	Other liabilities
OTHER ASSETS	Deferred revenue
LIFE MEMBERSHIP:	Loans payable
Cash	Life membership:
Accounts receivable	Accounts payable
Interest and dividends receivable	Reserve for future distribution of
Investments	life membership dues
TOTAL	Total liabilities
	NET ASSETS:
	Without donor restrictions—undesignated
	With donor restrictions:
	Purpose restrictions
	Endowment funds
	Total net assets
	TOTAL
	TOTAL

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions		Total
		Purpose Restrictions	Endowment Funds	
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Support:				
Contributions received primarily from				
direct mail solicitations	\$ 126,851,334	\$ 11,341,555	\$ 1,205,343	\$ 139,398,232
National per capita dues	3,882,900			3,882,900
Contributed services and facilities—primarily services	22,236,106			22,236,106
Contributed media and materials—primarily media	95,270,173			95,270,173
Total support	248,240,513	11,341,555	1,205,343	260,787,411
Revenue:				
List royalties	560,928			560,928
Miscellaneous revenue	207,971			207,971
Total revenue	768,899	-	-	768,899
NET INVESTMENT RETURN	67,798,716		1,768,726	69,567,442
NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS	12,717,590	(12,509,605)	(207,985)	-
Total support and revenue	329,525,718	(1,168,050)	2,766,084	331,123,752
EXPENSES:				
Program services:				
Service program	39,185,902			39,185,902
Employment program	1,314,460			1,314,460
Legislative service program	2,082,541			2,082,541
Voluntary service program	22,979,736			22,979,736
State services and disaster relief	6,218,201			6,218,201
Communications program	9,440,418			9,440,418
Public service announcement program—primarily contributed media	96,294,295			96,294,295
Membership program	6,810,749			6,810,749
Public awareness outreach	26,708,005			26,708,005
Total program services	211,034,307	-	-	211,034,307
Supporting services:				
Fundraising costs	35,552,894			35,552,894
Administrative and general	10,627,516			10,627,516
Total supporting services	46,180,410	-	-	46,180,410
Total expenses	257,214,717	-	-	257,214,717
EXCESS OF SUPPORT AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	72,311,001	(1,168,050)	2,766,084	73,909,035
OTHER CHANGES IN NET ASSETS:				
Change in fair market value of interest rate swap	189,289			189,289
Gain on sale of buildings	5,183,433			5,183,433
Pension liability and other postretirement benefit obligation adjustment	4,114,538			4,114,538
Total other changes in net assets	9,487,260	-	-	9,487,260
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	81,798,261	(1,168,050)	2,766,084	83,396,295
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	399,236,337	5,114,390	10,899,820	415,250,547
NET ASSETS—End of year	\$ 481,034,598	\$ 3,946,340	\$ 13,665,904	\$ 498,646,842

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

**STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

	Service Program	Employment Program	Legislative Service Program	Voluntary Service Program	State Services and Disaster Relief	Communications Program	Public Service Announcement Program	Membership Program	Public Awareness Outreach	Total Program Services	Fundraising Costs	Administrative and General	Total Supporting Services	Total
Salaries	\$23,122,392	\$ 374,299	\$ 859,514	\$ 536,530	\$ -	\$1,384,107	\$ -	\$1,464,219	\$ -	\$ 27,841,061	\$ 3,339,432	\$ 6,022,692	\$ 9,362,124	\$ 37,203,185
Employee benefits	7,449,311	120,812	172,996	324,142	298,113	298,113	-	430,560	-	8,795,934	1,668,049	2,208,661	3,897,110	12,686,644
Payroll taxes	1,889,933	29,907	71,122	47,411	-	115,492	-	107,061	-	2,269,926	266,492	473,891	740,383	3,001,309
DAV Transportation Network and LVAP volunteers				19,564,206						19,564,206				19,564,206
HSC and Transport Network Grants				166,473						166,473				166,473
Columbia Trust				69,200						69,200				69,200
Other grants	151,676	3,000		1,229,472	1,666,054	30,000				3,080,202				3,080,202
Disaster relief				1,563,750	2,984,366					1,563,750				1,563,750
State service program				46,875	2,984,366					2,984,366				2,984,366
Scholarships								958,209		46,875				46,875
Expenses of national convention									958,209	958,209				958,209
Expenses of national commander and committees								425,436		425,436				425,436
Travel/accommodations, training, and relocation	1,559,746	23,737	53,384	3,767	4,081	48,910		56,136	171,252	1,910,932	55,226	129,440	184,666	2,095,898
Facilities	2,671,900									2,671,900				2,671,900
Contributed media and materials							95,235,813			95,235,813				95,235,813
Postage and shipping	205,299	2,549	1,362	25,800		1,129,027	13,139	201,111	23,500	1,520,408				1,520,408
Equipment rental and maintenance	296,908	4,905	5,238	132,156		50,789	5,406	239,642	39,379	772,423	646,474	1,089,594	1,756,058	2,508,481
Supplies	221,630	13,750	81,903	40,594		202,123	33,540	125,692	19,446	556,768	170,098	445,578	626,366	1,183,134
Insurance	81,954		1,596	384		2,245		1,182	402	87,763		295,106	295,106	386,869
Telephone	180,429		2,684	4,231		8,619		9,041	284	209,519	16,088	202,714	218,782	428,301
Project costs		487,400	4,111		4,081	3,303,061		53,046	61,757	3,912,777	6,393,557	128,188	6,521,745	10,433,022
Printing of magazine	86,101					382,441				382,441				382,441
Cost of mailing materials	164,615									164,615				164,615
Heat, light, water, and power	254,705			2,087		16,835		240,957	3,341	359,381	33,362,279	377,864	34,054,444	34,054,444
Security services									6,880	6,880		360,869	367,749	374,629
Decorations of property and equipment									6,880	6,880		192,949	199,829	206,709
Legal fees	1,037,282	2,018	265	111,938		16,549		126,568		1,248,653	163,057	804,878	967,935	2,262,533
Professional fees	138,114									138,114	22,995	213,965	236,560	374,674
Technology services	233,134	150,604	56,022	3,220		1,022,990	1,006,397	230,264	98,252	2,800,883	1,551,463	4,131,721	6,932,604	
Other expenses	20,910		2,072	43,476		26,777		6,486	3,800	8,000	28,100	63,910	92,010	95,810
Support for membership service departments from (to) other departments	(582,141)	100,875	672,938	677,774		987,990		1,910,794		29,916,785	(24,813,379)	(5,103,406)	(29,916,785)	-
Total	\$39,185,902	\$1,314,460	\$2,882,541	\$22,079,236	\$6,218,201	\$9,440,418	\$96,294,295	\$6,802,740	\$26,708,005	\$211,034,307	\$ 35,552,894	\$10,627,516	\$ 46,180,410	\$57,214,717

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	\$ 83,396,295
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:	
Noncash contributions	(889,543)
Pension liability and other postretirement benefit obligation adjustment	(4,114,538)
Change in fair market value of interest rate swap	(189,289)
Depreciation	1,998,340
Gain on sale of buildings	(5,183,433)
Gain on disposal of property and equipment	(297,978)
Contributions restricted for endowment	(1,205,343)
Appropriation of endowment assets pursuant to spending-rate policy	207,985
Net change in appreciation of investments	(53,164,226)
Net gain on sale of investments	(10,126,992)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:	
Accounts receivable	(630,781)
Interest and dividends receivable	37,426
Prepaid expenses and others	633,644
Other assets	(646,334)
Accounts payable	1,127,017
Accrued expenses	16,938
Pension liability and other postretirement benefits obligation	(1,052,262)
Deferred revenue	(14,825)
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	5,805,414
	<u>15,707,515</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Payments for property and equipment	(13,650,545)
Proceeds from the sale of property and equipment	6,606,130
Purchases of investments for endowments	(6,354,329)
Proceeds from the sale of investments for endowment	4,817,037
Purchases of investments	(79,198,706)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	<u>69,701,288</u>
	<u>(18,079,125)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:	
Proceeds from contributions restricted for investment in endowment	1,205,343
Proceeds from term loan	13,000,000
Payments on term loan	(650,001)
Appropriation of endowment assets pursuant to spending-rate policy	<u>(207,985)</u>
	<u>13,347,357</u>
NET INCREASE IN CASH	10,975,747
CASH—Beginning of year	<u>15,802,402</u>
CASH—End of year	<u>\$ 26,778,149</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is a Congressionally chartered, not-for-profit service organization. DAV is dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. DAV accomplishes this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access a full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

- Providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies of government
- Providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people, generally, and to disabled veterans and their families, specifically
- Representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses, and their orphans before Congress, the White House, and the judicial branch, as well as state and local governments
- Extending DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level departments and local chapters
- Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements—The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

New Accounting Standards—In February 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2016-02, *Leases (Topic 842)*. This standard amends the existing guidance and requires lessees to recognize on the balance sheet assets and liabilities for the rights and obligations created by those leases with lease terms longer than 12 months. This update is effective for annual financial statements issued for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2021, 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

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

1. ORGANIZATION

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the financial statements at the net amount expected to be collected. This standard will be effective for the annual financial statements beginning January 1, 2023. 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 is in the process of evaluating the impact on the financial statements.

In September 2020, the FASB issued ASU No. 2020-07, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation and Disclosures by Not-for-Profit Entities for Contributed Nonfinancial Assets*. The amendments require not-for-profit entities to present contributed nonfinancial assets as a separate line item in the statement of activities, apart from contributions of cash and other financial contributions. The standard also requires additional disclosure related to contributed nonfinancial assets. The amendment, which requires retrospective application, is effective for annual periods beginning after June 15, 2021. Management is in the process of evaluating the impact on the financial statements.

Cash—DAV maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. DAV has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Accounts Receivable—Amounts recorded as accounts receivable are reduced to their net realizable value, as appropriate.

Investments—Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of DAV’s investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are part of net investment income included in total support and revenue for the investments in the general fund. DAV’s policy is to report cash equivalents, which include money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

Property and Equipment—Property and equipment are stated at cost, less accumulated depreciation, and, at December 31, 2021, are composed of the following:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
Land and improvements	\$ 3,000,974	\$ 277,822	\$ 2,723,152
Buildings and improvements	23,313,780	5,025,000	18,288,780
Machinery and other equipment	14,841,942	11,252,910	3,589,032
Construction in process	<u>139,218</u>		<u>139,218</u>
Total	<u>\$41,295,914</u>	<u>\$ 16,555,732</u>	<u>\$24,740,182</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—DAV recognizes contributions when cash, securities, or other assets; an unconditional promise to give; or a notification of a beneficial interest is received. Conditional promises to give—that is, those with a measurable performance or other barrier and a right of return—are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend have been met.

Contributions received are recorded as support with or without donor restrictions depending on the existence and the nature of any donor restrictions. All contributions are considered available for unrestricted use, unless specifically restricted by the donor. Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the gift.

Revenue Recognition from Exchange Transactions—DAV has multiple revenue streams that are accounted for as exchange transactions including sponsorships, cause marketing revenue, rental income, recycling income, and royalties. Revenue from these sources is recognized as services are performed or once the performance obligations are complete.

Net Assets without Donor Restrictions—All contributions and bequests without donor restrictions are resources available to support DAV's operations.

Net Assets with Donor Restrictions—Net assets with donor restrictions consist of assets whose use is limited by donor-imposed, time, and/or purpose restrictions.

DAV reports gifts of cash and other assets as revenue with donor restrictions if they are received with donor stipulations that limit the use of the donated assets. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished, the net assets are reclassified as net assets without donor restriction and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Some net assets with donor restrictions include a stipulation that assets provided be maintained in perpetuity while permitting DAV to expend the income generated by the assets in accordance with the provision of additional donor-imposed stipulations.

Contributed Services and Facilities—DAV operates extensive programs through which volunteers contribute many hours of service to veterans. The 685,500 hours that are donated to DAV's Transportation Network at the VA and donated hours of Department and Chapter Service Officers through the Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) are used to tabulate contributed services. Using a value per hour of \$28.54 developed by Independent Sector, an organization that provides oversight to nonprofit organizations in America, the value of these hours contributed to the DAV's Transportation Network and LVAP program is \$19,564,206. 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 \$95 million was donated through independent third parties. The value of the donated media is provided through an independent third party utilizing an estimated market value for each type of medium. The most significant medium is television. Estimated market values for television announcements are determined using various inputs, including length of spot, city, station, day part, and industry media cost data. The value of contributed media and materials is recorded as support and expenses in the accompanying statement of activities and statement of functional expenses.

Salaries Expense—The salaries expense in the accompanying financial statements includes the cost of all national service officers and their support staff who work directly with veterans and their dependents in providing counseling and representation in obtaining benefits and services. This expense also includes DAV's administrative and support staffs.

Income Taxes—As a not-for-profit service organization, DAV has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that it is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to DAV are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Use of Estimates—The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of support, revenues, and expenses during the reporting period. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

Risk and Uncertainties—In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic. As a result, economic uncertainties have arisen which are likely to negatively impact DAV's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations. Other financial impact could occur though such potential impact is unknown at this time.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more programs or supporting services of DAV. Those expenses include building maintenance, information technology and general administrative services. Building maintenance expenses are allocated based on a square footage basis; the information technology and general administrative services expenses are allocated based on the percentage of time tracked by department utilized.

Allocation of Joint Costs—The allocation of joint costs is based on the specific content of the qualifying material or media. In 2021, DAV incurred joint costs of \$52,410,484 for informational materials and activities that included fund-raising appeals. Of those costs, \$26,198,555 were allocated to public awareness outreach (program services) and \$26,211,929 were allocated to fund-raising 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 recognized as revenue in the statement of activities. 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 2021 in the reserve for future distribution of life membership dues are summarized below:

Balance—January 1, 2021	<u>\$45,508,255</u>
Additions:	
Membership dues received	5,358,237
Net investment return	6,572,102
Other income	<u>307,589</u>
Total additions	<u>12,237,928</u>
Distribution of membership dues:	
National headquarters	3,882,900
Local chapters	1,276,068
State departments	1,115,748
Other expense	<u>157,798</u>
Total distribution of membership dues	<u>6,432,514</u>
Balance—December 31, 2021	<u>\$51,313,669</u>

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, provides a framework for measuring fair value. This framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value, as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

DAV did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3) during 2021.

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, 2021.

Cash equivalents, composed of money market funds, are categorized as Level 1. Such investments are valued at cost, which approximates fair value. The money market fund represents DAV's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

US government securities (US Treasury notes), common stocks, and exchange-traded funds (ETFs), categorized as Level 1, are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

Commercial paper, categorized as Level 2, is valued at fair value, which approximates amortized cost.

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.

Interest rate swap agreement is classified within Level 2 of the valuation hierarchy. The fair value is estimated using forward-looking interest rate curves and discounted cash flows that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data.

The major categories of general fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2021, 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
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 19,294,028	\$ -	\$ 19,294,028
Commercial Paper		1,214,323	1,214,323
US government securities	2,859,769		2,859,769
Corporate bonds		46,583,069	46,583,069
Municipal bonds		638,954	638,954
Common stocks	67,195,537		67,195,537
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	78,130,674		78,130,674
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	217,578,245		217,578,245
International equity funds	83,761,525		83,761,525
Real estate equity funds	11,784,430		11,784,430
Total mutual funds/ETFs	391,254,874	-	391,254,874
Total general fund assets	\$ 480,604,208	\$ 48,436,346	\$ 529,040,554
Interest rate swap agreement	\$ -	\$ (15,466)	\$ -

The major categories of life membership fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2021, 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
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 366,016	\$ -	\$ 366,016
Corporate bonds		4,931,547	4,931,547
Common stocks	5,575,454		5,575,454
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed-income funds	7,112,318		7,112,318
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	19,798,519		19,798,519
International equity funds	9,098,840		9,098,840
Real estate equity funds	1,605,214		1,605,214
	<u>37,614,891</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>37,614,891</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs			
Total life membership fund assets	<u>\$ 43,556,361</u>	<u>\$ 4,931,547</u>	<u>\$ 48,487,908</u>

5. PENSION PLAN, POSTRETIREMENT BENEFITS AND OTHER 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 2021, DAV funded amounts in accordance with the recommended actuarially determined contribution amount. Contributions to the plan are based on the unit credit actuarial cost method.

Other Postretirement Benefit Plans—DAV provides certain health care and life insurance benefits (other postretirement benefits) for its retired employees and their spouses as well as certain retired employees and their spouses of DAVA. Substantially, all of DAV's employees may become eligible for these benefits if they have completed 20 years of service upon retirement. The post-Medicare retiree medical benefits are now a health reimbursement account (HRA).

DAV offers Medicare-eligible retirees access to health care coverage through a private exchange and provides an HRA to subsidize benefits. DAV established a catastrophic HRA with \$75,000 aggregate limit to cover catastrophic prescription drug expenses incurred by qualifying participants.

Summarized information for the plans as of December 31, 2021, measurement date is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Accumulated benefit obligation	<u>\$ 76,213,482</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Projected benefit obligation (PBO)	\$ 85,485,708	\$ -
Accumulated postretirement benefit obligation (APBO)		51,502,675
Fair value of plan assets	<u>(72,796,840)</u>	<u> </u>
Unfunded status recognized	<u>\$ 12,688,868</u>	<u>\$ 51,502,675</u>

Summarized information of the plans for the year ended December 31, 2021, is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Components of net periodic benefit cost:		
Service cost	\$ 3,496,070	\$ 1,332,110
Interest cost	1,385,623	1,045,305
Expected return on assets	(3,679,655)	
Amortization of net loss	1,340,308	453,999
Amortization of prior service cost (benefit)	31,964	(4,156,585)
Recognized settlement loss	<u>2,334,841</u>	<u> </u>
Net periodic benefit cost (benefit)	<u>\$ 4,909,151</u>	<u>\$ (1,325,171)</u>
Components of pension and postretirement benefit obligation adjustment:		
Amortization of prior service cost (benefit)	\$ 31,964	\$(4,156,585)
Amortization of net loss	1,340,308	453,999
Actuarial net loss during the year	669,716	3,440,295
Pension settlement loss	<u>2,334,841</u>	<u> </u>
Pension and postretirement benefit obligation adjustment	<u>\$ 4,376,829</u>	<u>\$ (262,291)</u>

Net periodic benefit cost of \$3,554,633 (offset by \$29,347 reimbursed by DAVA) is included in expenses and pension and postretirement benefit obligation adjustment of \$4,114,538 is included in other changes in net assets in the accompanying statement of activities.

For purposes of year end disclosure, the following changes were made to the actuarial assumptions used in the valuation of the Pension Plan:

- The single equivalent discount rate changed from 2.29% to 2.70% based on the Plan’s expected benefit payouts and the FTSE above median yield curve as of December 31, 2021.
- The mortality improvement assumption was updated to use the Mortality Improvement Scale MP-2021.
- The salary increase assumption was changed from 3.00% to 4.50%.

- PEP conversion interest rates were updated to the same yield curve rates used to determine the obligation under the spot rate method.

These changes had the cumulative impact of increasing the projected benefit obligation by \$470,000.

For purposes of year end disclosure, the following changes were made to the actuarial assumptions used in the valuation of the Other Postretirement Benefits Plan:

- The discount rate was updated to 2.87% for the January 1, 2022 actuarial valuation. Previously, a discount rate of 2.57% was used.
- The mortality table used was the Pri-2012 Headcount Weighted Mortality Table (base year 2012) with fully generational projection according to the MP-2021 scale. Previously, the Pri-2012 Headcount Weighted Mortality Table (base year 2012) with fully generational projection according to the MP-2019 scale was used.

These changes had the cumulative effect of decreasing the projected benefit obligation by \$2,500,000.

Amounts not yet recognized as a component of periodic pension cost at December 31, 2021, are as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Prior service cost (benefit)	\$ 31,963	\$(27,003,604)
Net actuarial loss	<u>18,024,020</u>	<u>7,836,879</u>
Amounts recognized as reduction (increase) in unrestricted net assets	<u>\$ 18,055,983</u>	<u>\$(19,166,725)</u>

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
For the year ended December 31, 2021:		
Benefit expense (net periodic pension benefit cost of \$4,909,151, offset by \$29,347 reimbursed by DAVA)	\$ 4,879,804	\$(1,325,171)
Actual return on plan assets	8,010,156	
Employer contribution	3,221,732	1,414,510
Plan participants' contributions		53,107
Benefits paid	11,802,896	1,467,617

Weighted-average rate assumptions used for the
December 31 valuation—for year-end benefit
obligation:

Discount rate	2.70%	2.87%
Rate of compensation increase	4.50%	3.00%

For the year-end benefit obligation, the Pri-2012 Total Employee and Retiree Mortality Table with Mortality Improvement Scale MP-2021 was utilized.

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
For annual benefit cost:		
Discount rate	2.29 %	2.57 %
Discount rate—PBO normal cost	2.30	
Rate of compensation increase	3.00	3.00
Expected return on plan assets	5.25	

For the annual benefit cost, the Pri-2012 Total Employee and Retiree Mortality Tables (base year 2012) with Mortality Improvement Scale MP-2021 was utilized.

The APBO and related benefit cost are determined through the application of relevant actuarial assumptions. DAV anticipates the increase in its health care cost-trend rate to slow from 6.5% in 2022 to 4.5% in 2026, after which the trend rate is expected to stabilize.

DAV expects to contribute \$3.5 million to its pension plan in 2022.

DAV's pension plan investment allocation at December 31, 2021, is as follows:

Asset Category	Percentage of Plan Assets
Equity-based securities	60 %
Fixed-income securities	23
Real assets	3
Alternative	12
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>2</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 4. The major categories of pension plan financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2021, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurements Using		Total
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,472,686	\$ -	\$ 1,472,686
US government securities	1,158,123		1,158,123
US government agency notes		1,825,489	1,825,489
Municipal bonds		574,617	574,617
Corporate bonds		6,744,842	6,744,842
Common stocks:			
Real assets	<u>2,099,920</u>		<u>2,099,920</u>
Total common stocks	<u>2,099,920</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,099,920</u>
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Equity-based securities	43,600,259		43,600,259
Fixed income	6,466,265		6,466,265
Alternative	<u>8,854,639</u>		<u>8,854,639</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>58,921,163</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>58,921,163</u>
Total pension plan assets	<u>\$63,651,892</u>	<u>\$9,144,948</u>	<u>\$72,796,840</u>

In selecting the expected rate of return on plan assets, DAV considers historical rates of return for the type of investments the plan holds, as well as future market expectations. Expectations are then applied to the target asset allocation to arrive at a weighted average of expected returns for the plan's portfolio of assets.

The pension plan benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid as follows:

Fiscal Years Ending	Benefit Payments
2022	\$ 2,647,676
2023	3,993,927
2024	3,384,866
2025	5,375,269
2026	5,501,190
2027–2031	33,493,471

DAV offers retirees access to health 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
2022	\$ 2,212,161
2023	1,910,699
2024	1,979,765
2025	2,077,358
2026	2,197,418
2027–2031	11,801,441

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 2021 were \$2,757,497 and are included in employee benefits expense in the accompanying statement of functional expenses.

Paid Time Off (PTO) Plan and Trust—The PTO Plan is a welfare benefit plan. The Plan established a trust to fund paid time-off benefits for eligible employees of DAV. DAV Benefit Plan Administration Committee serves as the Plan administrator. Fifth Third Bank serves as the trustee of the Plan. The Plan is subject to the provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). PTO benefits are funded by the Sponsor contributions to the Plan's trust and are recorded upon distribution. PTO participants can be part-time employees, which is anyone that works a minimum of 30 hours, and the benefit is prorated as compared to a full-time 40-hour employee. Remaining balances up to 40 hours of PTO are paid out at the end of each year. The Sponsor funds the Plan in sufficient amounts to cover currently payable benefits and estimated future benefits. Contributions to the Plan are deposited with a trustee. The PTO liability at December 31, 2021 was \$3.5 million and is included in accrued expenses in the statement of financial position.

PTO plan financial assets, included in prepaid and others in the statement of financial position, are recorded at fair value using the measurement techniques outlined in Note 4. The major categories of the PTO plan financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2021, 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
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 48,128	\$ -	\$ 48,128
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Equity-based securities	2,830,115		2,830,115
Fixed income	1,164,465		1,164,465
Real assets	<u>84,455</u>		<u>84,455</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>4,079,035</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,079,035</u>
Total PTO plan assets	<u>\$4,127,163</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$4,127,163</u>

6. LOANS PAYABLE

On May 7, 2020, DAV entered into a loan agreement with a bank for a draw note in the amount of \$13 million to fund the construction of a new headquarters building. On the conversion date, September 30, 2021, the entire outstanding principal balance and all accrued and unpaid interests was converted to a term loan. The term loan is payable in monthly principal payments of \$216,667 plus interest starting November 1, 2021 through October 1, 2026, the maturity date. Interest is paid at a monthly variable rate of prime less 2.00% per annum. The outstanding balance on the note at December 31, 2021 was \$12,349,999.

The annual maturities of the loan for the years ending December 31 are as follows:

Fiscal Years Ending	
2022	\$ 2,600,004
2023	2,600,004
2024	2,600,004
2025	2,600,004
2026	<u>1,949,983</u>
Total	<u>\$ 12,349,999</u>

DAV is required under the loan agreement to comply with certain covenants, the most restrictive of these are to maintain its primary operating accounts with the bank and to maintain liquid assets of at least \$16 million. DAV believes it is in compliance with all covenants as of December 31, 2021.

The fair value of the loans payable approximates the balance of \$12,349,999 as of December 31, 2021 and is classified as Level 2 within the fair value hierarchy.

7. DERIVATIVE AND HEDGING ACTIVITIES

DAV has entered into an interest rate swap agreement with a commercial bank, effective April 30, 2020, to reduce the impact of changes in interest rates on its floating rate bonds (see note 6). The agreement effectively changes DAV’s interest rate exposure on its floating rate bonds due October 1, 2026 to a fixed 2.00% rate. The interest rate swap agreement matures at the same time the related loan matures.

Derivatives are held only for the purpose of hedging such risks, not for speculation. Generally, DAV enters into a hedging relationship such that changes in the fair values or cash flows of transactions being hedged are expected to be offset by corresponding changes in the values of the derivative. At December 31, 2021, hedging relationships exist for loan indebtedness and the exposure to variable cash flows related to variable rate debt. The fair value of the interest rate swap agreement is based on quotes provided by derivative specialists at DAV’s bank with whom these agreements were made.

The increase in the fair value of the interest rate swap agreement of \$189,289 for the year ended December 31, 2021 is included in other changes in net assets in the statement of activities, increasing net assets without donor restrictions.

8. COMPOSITION OF NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor restrictions as of December 31, 2021, are restricted for the following purposes:

Subject to expenditure for a specified purpose:	
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	\$ 988,274
Disaster relief and COVID program	975,756
Capital campaign	900,000
Transportation Network	396,308
Employment program	125,574
National Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic	100,315
Other	<u>460,113</u>
Total subject to expenditure for a specified purpose	3,946,340
Endowments subject to DAV’s spending policy and appropriation	<u>13,665,904</u>
Total net assets with donor restrictions	<u>\$ 17,612,244</u>

9. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes or by occurrence of the passage of time or other events specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions for the year ended December 31, 2021, are as follows:

Purpose restriction accomplished:	
Purpose restrictions funds:	
Service program	\$ 6,047,555
Disaster relief and COVID program	1,563,750
Employment program	1,314,458
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	1,085,512
Camp Corral	513,930
DAV 5K events	171,926
Transportation network	166,473
Boulder crest retreat	150,000
Other	<u>1,496,001</u>
Total purpose restrictions funds	12,509,605
Endowment funds	<u>207,985</u>
Total net assets released from restriction	<u>\$ 12,717,590</u>

10. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

DAV intends to operate within a prudent range of financial soundness and stability. DAV regularly monitors liquidity required to meet its operating needs and other contractual commitments, while also striving to maximize the investment of its available funds. DAV has various sources of liquidity at its disposal, including cash and cash equivalents and readily marketable debt and equity securities.

DAV forecasts its future cash flows annually and monitors actual activity monthly. For purposes of analyzing resources available to meet expenditures over a 12-month period, DAV considers all expenditures related to its ongoing program, fund-raising, general and administrative activities, and capital purchases. DAV's working capital and cash flows have seasonal variations during the year attributable to the timing of contribution solicitation campaigns. Campaign expenses paid and contributions received fluctuate monthly with a heavier concentration near calendar year-end. Bequests also vary from year to year.

DAV's investments are primarily unrestricted, however, no funds have been withdrawn from the portfolio the past two years. DAV has an investment policy with primary goals of safeguarding its assets; maximizing return on the investments through interest, dividends, and appreciation of capital; and avoiding undue interest rate risk in the fixed-income portion of the portfolio. The overall asset allocation is 70% equities and liquid alternative investments and 30% fixed-income investments and cash equivalents.

The following reflects DAV’s financial assets at December 31, 2021, reduced by amounts not available for general use within one year of the statement of financial position date due to donor and purpose restrictions:

Total assets, excluding nonfinancial assets	\$ 611,793,743
Subtract: Life Membership Fund	(47,485,899)
Subtract: Donor-Restricted Endowment Fund, excluding \$207,985 available for general spending based on endowment usage policy (see Note 11)	(13,457,919)
Subtract: Investments not available for general expenditures	<u>(1,411,229)</u>
 Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	 <u>\$ 549,438,696</u>

11. ENDOWMENT

DAV’s endowment (the “Endowment”) consists of approximately 25 individual funds established by donors to provide perpetual source of support for DAV’s activities. As required by GAAP, net assets associated with Endowment funds are classified and reported based on the existence of donor-imposed restrictions.

DAV’s Board of Directors has interpreted the KY Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the date of the donor-restricted endowment funds, unless there are explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. At December 31, 2021, there were no such donor stipulations. Because of this interpretation, DAV retained in perpetuity (a) the original value of initial and subsequent gift amounts donated to the endowment and (b) any accumulations to the endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added. Donor-restricted amounts not retained in perpetuity are subject to appropriation for expenditure by DAV in a manner consistent with the standard of prudence prescribed by UPMIFA. DAV considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

- The duration and preservation of the endowment
- The purposes of DAV and the donor-restricted endowment
- General economic conditions
- The possible effect of inflation and deflation
- The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments
- Other resources of DAV
- The investment policies of DAV

As of December 31, 2021, DAV had \$13,665,904 of donor-restricted, perpetually endowed net assets.

Investment and Spending Policies—DAV has an investment policy specific to its endowment, which is monitored by DAV’s management team and implemented by the investment manager. The investment policy statement describes the objective for the fund and sets ranges for asset allocation. The objective of the endowment is to preserve and enhance the real (inflation adjusted) purchasing power of the endowment assets consistent with agreed-upon levels of risk that a prudent person would take under various economic conditions. At a minimum, long-term rates of return should be equal to an amount sufficient to maintain the purchasing power of the endowment fund assets, to provide necessary capital to fund the spending policy, and to cover the costs of managing the endowment fund

investments. The desired total return over a long-term basis (as measured on a five-year rolling period and full market cycle) is expected to exceed the rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, plus the spending rate plus investment expenses. Actual returns in any given year may vary from this amount. In light of this return requirement, the portfolio is constructed using a total return approach with a significant portion of the funds invested to seek growth of principal over time. The assets are invested for the long term, and a higher short-term volatility in these assets is expected and accepted. DAV limits its investment in so-called alternative investments to those that have daily liquidity (mutual funds and ETFs).

The following is a summary of the asset allocation guidelines, with allowable ranges for each asset type.

Asset Class	Lower Range	Target Weight	Upper Range
Equity	55 %	65 %	75 %
Fixed income	5	15	25
Real assets	3	10	15
Alternatives	3	7	11
Cash equivalents		3	13

DAV uses an endowment-spending formula based on total return of the investments for determining the amount to spend from the endowment fund each year. The appropriation is a maximum of 3% of the average market value of the trailing 12 quarters, calculated annually as of December 31 of each year. In establishing this policy, DAV considered the long-term expected return on its endowment fund investments and set the rate with the objective of maintaining the purchasing power of its donor-restricted permanent endowment funds over time. The endowment investment fund earned a positive return in 2021. DAV withdrew \$207,985 from the endowment fund in 2021 in accordance with the spending rate policy.

From time to time, certain donor-restricted endowment funds may have fair values less than the amount required to be maintained by donors or by law (underwater endowments). We have interpreted UPMIFA to permit spending from underwater endowments in accordance with prudent measures required under law. At December 31, 2021, funds with original gift values of \$9,813,408, fair values of \$13,665,904, and deficiencies of \$0 were reported in net assets with donor restrictions.

Changes in endowment net assets for the year ended December 31, 2021, are as follows:

	With Donor Restriction
Endowment net assets—January 1, 2021	\$ 10,899,820
Contributions	1,205,343
Appropriation of endowment assets pursuant to spending-rate policy	(207,985)
Investment return—net	<u>1,768,726</u>
Endowment net assets—December 31, 2021	<u>\$ 13,665,904</u>

12. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation—Some members of DAV’s Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for the DAV National Service Foundation (the “Foundation”). DAV also provides services to the Foundation, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of the Foundation. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the Foundation, which are held by the Foundation and available to DAV only through appropriation by the Foundation’s Board of Directors. The Foundation is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2021, net assets of the Foundation were \$181,828,980. During 2021, DAV personnel assisted the Foundation on a limited basis in administering its business operations and fundraising program. For these services, DAV charged the Foundation \$126,566. DAV provides the Foundation with the use of facilities, equipment, and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2021, DAV contributed \$69,200 to The Columbia Trust, a fund with donor restrictions established by the Foundation, to provide funds for the service programs of needy DAV state departments and local chapters.

In 2021, the Foundation appropriated \$4,823,400 in support of DAV service program.

At December 31, 2021, the Foundation owed \$133,909 to DAV, which is recorded as accounts receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust—Some members of DAV’s Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Charitable Service Trust (the “Trust”). DAV also provides services to the Trust, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of the Trust. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the Trust, which are held by the Trust and available to DAV only through grants approved by the Trust’s Board of Directors. The Trust is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2021, net assets of the Trust were \$52,521,695. DAV personnel assist the Trust on a limited basis in administering its business operations, fund-raising, and grant programs. For these personnel services, DAV charged the Trust \$177,796. DAV provides the Trust with the use of facilities, equipment, and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2021, the Trust appropriated the following in support of DAV programs and services which are recorded as support and revenue in the accompanying statement of activities:

DAV Employment Program	\$ 781,000
Assistance to disabled veterans and their families	593,163
DAV “Just B Kids” Scholarship	308,500
Transportation Network	200,000
Veterans retreats	150,000
Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program	45,000
DAV Night Out Program	38,000
DAV 5K Program	14,852
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	2,500
DAV Disaster Relief	2,000

At December 31, 2021, the Trust owed \$219,338 to DAV, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary—DAV provides services to the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary (the “DAVA”), which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of DAVA. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of DAVA, which are held by DAVA. DAVA is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2021, net assets of DAVA were \$10,920,214. 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 \$20,659 in 2021.

Certain costs are paid by DAV on behalf of DAVA. In addition, DAV collects contributions on behalf of DAVA. At December 31, 2021, DAVA owed DAV \$85,304, the net of such costs less contributions of \$31,378, which is recorded as accounts receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

DAV also processes membership dues on behalf of DAVA. As of December 31, 2021, no amount was owed to DAVA for dues collected.

Disabled Veterans’ LIFE Memorial Foundation—Some members of DAV’s Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for the Disabled Veterans’ LIFE Memorial Foundation (the “DVLMF”). DAV also provides services to the DVLMF, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of the DVLMF. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the unaudited DVLMF. The DVLMF is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2021, net assets of the DVLMF were \$22,724. During 2021, 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.

13. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

DAV is involved in certain legal actions arising in the ordinary course of its activities. Management believes that the ultimate liability, if any, with respect to these matters will not materially affect the financial position of DAV.

In September 2021, DAV entered into a real estate purchase agreement to sell its National Headquarters in Washington D.C. for a purchase price of \$14,625,000, and subject to an increase of up to \$16,125,000 if certain zoning approvals are received. This sale is expected to close in Q4 2022 or 2023, contingent upon various events outlined in the real estate purchase agreement. As of December 31, 2021, the property has a net book value of approximately \$687,000. A gain on the sale is expected to be recorded upon the completion of the sale.

14. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No other events have occurred after December 31, 2021, but before April 7, 2022, 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	Zilka, Michael	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	56
	Boyd, David	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	29
2	Du, Philip	Delegate	NEW YORK	144
	Russell, Judith	Alternate	NEW YORK	126
3	Biser, William	Delegate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	18
	Coffin, Donna	Alternate	RHODE ISLAND	21
4	Donberger, Mark	Delegate	DELAWARE	1
	Muffley, William	Alternate	DELAWARE	1
5	Noel, Kevin	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
	Elliott, Tammy	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
6	Dawson, Michael	Delegate	WEST VIRGINIA	56
	Miller, Nachee	Alternate	DC	3
7	Reed, Brenda	Delegate	FLORIDA	4
	McGuire, Bernard	Alternate	FLORIDA	123
8	Leger, Alfred	Delegate	LOUISIANA	19
	Morgan, Jerry	Alternate	ALABAMA	7
9	Cunningham, Willard	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	13
	Downer, Doris	Alternate	GEORGIA	92
10	Hillman, Daniel	Delegate	MICHIGAN	7
	Hughes, Albert	Alternate	MICHIGAN	1
11	Kaster, James	Delegate	OHIO	72
	Crawford, James	Alternate	OHIO	52
12	Felten, David	Delegate	WISCONSIN	17
	Melone, Carlo	Alternate	ILLINOIS	42
13	Coley, William	Delegate	INDIANA	72
14	Tobin, Warren	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	31
	Simon, Derlus	Alternate	MINNESOTA	38
15	Iglio, Charles	Delegate	MISSOURI	11
	Lee, Fredric	Alternate	NEBRASKA	11
16	Hernandez, Armando	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	1
	Graves, Robert	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	5
17	Hammond, Don	Delegate	COLORADO	8
	Ibarra, David	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	3
18	Wilson, Harold J.	Delegate	NEVADA	12
	Arment, Cathleen	Alternate	NEVADA	12
19	Marker, Brigitte	Delegate	OREGON	12
	Hack, Saranna	Alternate	ALASKA	2
20	Reed, Donald	Delegate	TEXAS	78
	Brown, James	Alternate	TEXAS	128
21	Halford-Pandos, J.	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	32
	Plunk, Bobby	Alternate	ARKANSAS	10

Committee on General Resolutions and Membership

Advisor: Shawn Hope and Jon Retzer

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Bronson, Robert	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	30
	Blonder, Jeffrey	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	64
2	Sander, Shannon	Delegate	NEW YORK	15
	Stephenson, Sherry	Alternate	NEW YORK	158
3	Borrazas, Richard	Delegate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	18
	Welch, Jesse	Alternate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
4	Werlich, Ronald	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	47
	Bromberg, Daniel	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	47
5	Arnold, Philip	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
	Butler, Jesse	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Russell, Rodrick	Delegate	DC	3
	Stewart, Marcia	Alternate	VIRGINIA	21
7	Bacon, Albert	Delegate	FLORIDA	17
	Jones, Debra	Alternate	FLORIDA	5
8	Davis, Carroll	Delegate	MISSISSIPPI	11
	Givens, Linda	Alternate	LOUISIANA	23
9	James, Roxann	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	19
	King, Karen	Alternate	GEORGIA	90
10	Hubbell, Christopher	Delegate	MICHIGAN	114
	Tillman, Kwan	Alternate	MICHIGAN	119
11	Parker, John	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Filidoro, John	Alternate	OHIO	42
12	Kempainen, Matthew	Delegate	WISCONSIN	3
	Resner, Norman	Alternate	ILLINOIS	42
13	Neal, Michael	Delegate	KENTUCKY	89
	Kelty, Daniel	Alternate	KENTUCKY	89
14	Lindner, Ron	Delegate	SOUTH DAKOTA	13
	Wolf, Mark	Alternate	SOUTH DAKOTA	13
15	Randolph, Doug	Delegate	KANSAS	11
	Brooks, Ricky	Alternate	MISSOURI	11
16	Moseley, Joseph	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	12
	Lentz, Andrew	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	46
17	Comeau, Timothy	Delegate	NEW MEXICO	5
	Wilfawn, Jonathan	Alternate	COLORADO	21
18	Mc Coy, Thomas	Delegate	ARIZONA	1
	Forkner, Carl	Alternate	ARIZONA	8
19	Mullins, Cali	Delegate	WASHINGTON	2
	Clark, Maurace	Alternate	WASHINGTON	47
20	Green, James	Delegate	TEXAS	187
	Baez, Luis	Alternate	TEXAS	5
21	Schermer, Anna	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	94
	Halpain, William	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	31

Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights

Advisor: Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Kinsman, Robert	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	47
	Valiia, Michael	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	4
2	Du, Philip	Delegate	NEW YORK	144
	Quinones, Pedro	Alternate	NEW YORK	15
3	Patterson, Andrew	Delegate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	18
	Cvelbar, William	Alternate	VERMONT	3
4	Schnepf, George	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	56
	Iverson Long, Edma	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	42
5	Fiumara, Philip	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
	Noel, Kevin	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
6	Stubbs, Marguerite	Delegate	MARYLAND	36
	Capizzi, Shamala	Alternate	VIRGINIA	10
7	Rose, Laymond	Delegate	FLORIDA	16
	Perez, Liza	Alternate	FLORIDA	13
8	Franks, Sandra	Alternate	LOUISIANA	30
9	Wilner, Brian	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	44
	Seawright, Terry	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	13
10	Dempsey, James	Delegate	MICHIGAN	13
	Dempsey, Jane	Alternate	MICHIGAN	13
11	Gidden, William	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Wetherbee, Jymmie	Alternate	OHIO	49
12	Labelle, Al	Delegate	WISCONSIN	57
	Johnson, Frederick	Alternate	ILLINOIS	60
13	Carnagey, Bob	Delegate	INDIANA	17
	Greer, DeAndre	Alternate	INDIANA	3
14	Dilks, Trent	Delegate	MINNESOTA	12
	Aguirre, Michael	Alternate	MINNESOTA	2
15	Mudd, Steven	Delegate	IOWA	2
	Fisher, Richard	Alternate	KANSAS	11
16	Brown, Penni	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	91
	Wilson, Gerald	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	154
17	Schievelbein, Michael	Delegate	COLORADO	7
	Prestwich, Stephen	Alternate	UTAH	8
18	Carpentier, Kevin	Delegate	NEVADA	12
	Snow, Phellep	Alternate	NEVADA	12
19	McWilliams, Khol	Delegate	WASHINGTON	47
	Wallace, Alex	Alternate	WASHINGTON	18
20	Dunham, Gregory	Delegate	TEXAS	239
	Westfall-Haessig, Marshal	Alternate	TEXAS	157
21	Pandos, Ronald	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	32
	Whitney, Johnathon	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	32

Committee on Constitution and Bylaws

Advisor: Edward Hartman and Robert Reynolds

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Devine, Dennis	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
	Patterson, William	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	45
2	Wohlrab, Thomas	Delegate	NEW YORK	144
	Quinones, Pedro	Alternate	NEW YORK	15
3	Gaddis, Joyce	Delegate	MAINE	6
	McKinney, Darrell	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Kopley, James	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	41
	Maebry, Ronnie	Alternate	CONNECTICUT	2
5	Cudworth, Robert	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	1
	Cudworth, Robert	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	1
6	Simmons, John	Delegate	VIRGINIA	22
	Elkins, William	Alternate	WEST VIRGINIA	56
7	Tyson, Wallace	Delegate	FLORIDA	11
	Roehm, Mark	Alternate	FLORIDA	11
8	Miller, Vernon	Delegate	MISSISSIPPI	17
	Gilliam, Barbara	Alternate	TENNESSEE	42
9	Reynolds, Robert	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	30
	Williams Moten, Cathy	Alternate	GEORGIA	50
10	Lee, Rolly	Delegate	MICHIGAN	102
	Zielke, Jason	Alternate	MICHIGAN	114
11	Martyn, Nolan	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Cunningham li, Aaron R	Alternate	OHIO	1
12	Huckaby, Eric	Delegate	ILLINOIS	17
	Grulich, August	Alternate	WISCONSIN	9
13	Bratcher, Thomas	Delegate	INDIANA	27
	Thompson, Janice	Alternate	NOMAD NO DEPT	1
14	Grantier, Kevin	Delegate	MONTANA	3
	Walsh, Timothy	Alternate	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
15	Shaffer, Terrance	Delegate	IOWA	6
	Neuberger, Daniel	Alternate	KANSAS	28
16	Brown, Penni	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	91
	Steinbaugh, Michael	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	7
17	Mestas, Cantalicio	Delegate	COLORADO	2
	Brusatto, Joe	Alternate	UTAH	14
18	Cooper, Kevin	Delegate	ARIZONA	20
	Park, Richard	Alternate	ARIZONA	20
19	Gunno, Stanley	Delegate	WASHINGTON	2
	Jackson, Gene	Alternate	WASHINGTON	1
20	Beason, Betty	Delegate	TEXAS	240
	Mercado-Figueroa, Jose	Alternate	TEXAS	187
21	Brown, Vici	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	43
	Halford-Pandos, J.	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	32

Committee on Employment

Advisor: Anthony Lewis and Rob Lougee

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Nadeau, Philip	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	11
	Picard, Richard	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	11
2	Porter, Monique	Delegate	NEW YORK	108
	Rangel, Michelle	Alternate	NEW YORK	23
3	Boisvert, Ernest	Delegate	RHODE ISLAND	12
	Grecenko, Sandra	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Walker, Michael	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	24
	Watts, Michael	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	14
5	Alexander, Tim	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
	McHugh, Helen	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Gregory, Lisa	Delegate	VIRGINIA	7
	Altreche, Heriberto	Alternate	PUERTO RICO	21
7	Ayala, Thomas	Delegate	FLORIDA	1
	Bueno, Eduard	Alternate	FLORIDA	13
8	Chapman, Robert	Delegate	LOUISIANA	50
	Waite, Richard	Alternate	LOUISIANA	33
9	Hill, Sadie	Delegate	GEORGIA	6
	Duncan, Michael	Alternate	NORTH CAROLINA	9
10	Barenbrugge, Ricky	Delegate	MICHIGAN	19
	Deck, Dwayne	Alternate	MICHIGAN	1
11	Allen, Johnnie	Delegate	OHIO	15
	MacCutcheon, EM Ginger	Alternate	OHIO	116
12	Koehler, Tiffany	Delegate	WISCONSIN	19
	Johnson, Pearl	Alternate	ILLINOIS	60
13	Casher, Robert	Delegate	KENTUCKY	3
	McCartney, Joseph	Alternate	KENTUCKY	158
14	Hall, Joseph	Delegate	NORTH DAKOTA	3
	Beauchamp, Robert	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	2
15	McDonald, Anna	Delegate	MISSOURI	2
	Kempisty, Timothy	Alternate	KANSAS	11
16	Kerr, Michael	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	1
	Eustis, Patrick	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	77
17	Schow, Terry	Delegate	UTAH	4
	Vicker, William	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	5
18	Armenta, Travis	Delegate	NEVADA	1
	Sweat, Ann	Alternate	NEVADA	12
19	Graham, Colin	Delegate	WASHINGTON	18
	Holland, Jacob	Alternate	WASHINGTON	41
20	Jackson, William	Delegate	TEXAS	20
	Saldana, Karen	Alternate	TEXAS	233
21	Moores, Ronald	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	88
	White, Fred	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	7

Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services

Advisor: Marquis Barefield and John Kleindienst

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Gayle-Bennett, Andrea	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	64
	Colon, Heriberto	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	41
2	Lee, Tony	Delegate	NEW YORK	126
	Ingram, Thomas	Alternate	NEW YORK	28
3	Nicodemus, Robert	Delegate	VERMONT	3
	Douglass, Joshua	Alternate	MAINE	1
4	Kelly, Timothy	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	19
	Cluff, Christian	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	52
5	Johnson, Leonard	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
	Falk, Jonathan	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	76
6	Greathouse, Adam	Delegate	WEST VIRGINIA	32
	Sabree, Joan	Alternate	MARYLAND	36
7	Keckler, Mary	Delegate	FLORIDA	67
	Taylor, James	Alternate	FLORIDA	4
8	Johnston, Rebecca	Delegate	TENNESSEE	22
	Jones, Tawanna	Alternate	ALABAMA	1
9	Long, Larry	Delegate	SOUTH CAROLINA	4
	Davis, D	Alternate	SOUTH CAROLINA	5
10	Barnes, Lloyd	Delegate	MICHIGAN	1
11	Manning, Fred	Delegate	OHIO	15
	Witneben, Jeffrey	Alternate	OHIO	9
12	Couture, Kenneth	Delegate	ILLINOIS	42
	Palo, Gregory	Alternate	WISCONSIN	2
13	Sparks, Michael	Delegate	KENTUCKY	12
	Kaminski, Robert	Alternate	KENTUCKY	8
14	Baker, Jill	Delegate	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
	Saddoris, Robert	Alternate	MINNESOTA	38
15	Shuey, James	Delegate	NEBRASKA	49
	Elmore, Michael	Alternate	MISSOURI	48
16	Barnes, Johnny	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	28
	Moseley, Joseph	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	12
17	Weeg, Matthew	Delegate	UTAH	8
	Sarnacki, Evan	Alternate	NEW MEXICO	3
18	Linton, Thomas	Delegate	ARIZONA	1
	Billy, Lorrie	Alternate	ARIZONA	26
19	Porter, Donna	Delegate	IDAHO	17
	Echols, Anginette	Alternate	OREGON	8
20	Krueger, Harriet	Delegate	TEXAS	42
	Shook, Paul	Alternate	TEXAS	3
21	Dunning, William	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	32
	Leday-Mauney, Merline	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	56

Committee on Nomination of National Officers

Advisor: Albert Church and Joseph Johnston

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Stack, Daniel	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
	Olson, Debora	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	85
2	Martin, Michael	Delegate	NEW YORK	178
	Stephenson, Scott	Alternate	NEW YORK	158
3	Santos, Stephen	Delegate	MAINE	19
	Florey, Craig	Alternate	MAINE	6
4	Pescatore, Richard	Delegate	CONNECTICUT	6
	Walker, Johnnie	Alternate	NEW JERSEY	44
5	Kauffman, Joseph	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	113
	Alexander, Tim	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Colon, Pedro	Delegate	PUERTO RICO	1
	Dunn, Nicole	Alternate	MARYLAND	13
7	Joyner, Dennis	Delegate	FLORIDA	16
	Wolfe, Kenneth	Alternate	FLORIDA	101
8	Wenthe, Kevin	Delegate	LOUISIANA	20
	Walker, Deborah	Alternate	ALABAMA	7
9	Small, Carolyn	Delegate	GEORGIA	33
	Dula Sultan, Tresa	Alternate	NORTH CAROLINA	1
10	Gonzales, Beth	Delegate	MICHIGAN	102
	Francis, Rachel	Alternate	MICHIGAN	102
11	Hanneman, Dennis	Delegate	OHIO	77
	Uetterling, David	Alternate	OHIO	36
12	Reynolds, Alfred	Delegate	ILLINOIS	17
	Hilliard, Robert	Alternate	WISCONSIN	27
13	Johnson, Penny	Delegate	INDIANA	3
	Hobbs, Linda	Alternate	INDIANA	3
14	Whitehead, Stephen	Delegate	MINNESOTA	10
	Litzinger, Joseph	Alternate	NORTH DAKOTA	2
15	Butz, Timothy	Delegate	NEBRASKA	47
	Chevalier, Shala	Alternate	IOWA	5
16	Anastasia, Guy	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	70
	Ramos, Enrique	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	70
17	Estes, Jerry	Delegate	UTAH	14
	Squyres, Jerry	Alternate	COLORADO	7
18	Girard, Cathryn	Delegate	NEVADA	15
	Samuel, Redell	Alternate	NEVADA	15
19	Hamel, Henry	Delegate	OREGON	17
	Keith, William	Alternate	IDAHO	6
20	Saldana, Raymond	Delegate	TEXAS	233
	Spence, Percy	Alternate	TEXAS	17
21	Komprood, Harry	Delegate	ARKANSAS	27
	Parham, Paul	Alternate	OKLAHOMA	26

National Executive Committee

DISTRICT	MEMBER NAME	TITLE	DEPARTMENT	CHAPTER
1	Follis, James	Delegate	MASSACHUSETTS	85
	Whitty, Francis	Alternate	MASSACHUSETTS	3
2	Rivera, Israel	Delegate	NEW YORK	118
	Martin, Michael	Alternate	NEW YORK	178
3	Guldner, Robert	Delegate	NEW HAMPSHIRE	19
	Gaddis, Joyce	Alternate	MAINE	6
4	Walker, Johnnie	Delegate	NEW JERSEY	44
	Donberger, Mark	Alternate	DELAWARE	1
5	Arnold, Philip	Delegate	PENNSYLVANIA	81
	Johnson, Leonard	Alternate	PENNSYLVANIA	15
6	Patterson, John	Delegate	MARYLAND	36
	Miller, Nachee	Alternate	DC	3
7	Chicollo, Frank	Delegate	FLORIDA	4
	Keckler, Mary	Alternate	FLORIDA	67
8	Sensat, Dave	Delegate	LOUISIANA	17
	Causey, Mason	Alternate	LOUISIANA	20
9	Keesee, Gregory	Delegate	NORTH CAROLINA	45
10	Lee, Rolly	Delegate	MICHIGAN	102
	Gonzales, Beth	Alternate	MICHIGAN	102
11	Stith, Michael	Delegate	OHIO	35
	Hanneman, Dennis	Alternate	OHIO	77
12	Polk, John	Delegate	WISCONSIN	19
	Johnson, Kevin	Alternate	WISCONSIN	3
13	Hall, George	Delegate	KENTUCKY	169
	Ewing, Lee	Alternate	KENTUCKY	89
14	Grantier, Kevin	Delegate	MONTANA	3
	Onsager, Lyle	Alternate	MONTANA	2
15	Hansen, Karin	Delegate	KANSAS	28
	Gerke, David	Alternate	MISSOURI	2
16	Wilson, Gerald	Delegate	CALIFORNIA	154
	Kerr, Michael	Alternate	CALIFORNIA	1
17	Watson, Floyd	Delegate	WYOMING	2
	Estes, Jerry	Alternate	UTAH	14
18	Dolan, Bill	Delegate	NEVADA	15
	Jones, Carl	Alternate	NEVADA	15
19	Gavin, JoAnn	Delegate	WASHINGTON	5
	Gunno, Stanley	Alternate	WASHINGTON	2
20	Edwards, Charles	Delegate	TEXAS	128
	Johniken, Teresa	Alternate	TEXAS	3
21	Oliver, Danny	Delegate	OKLAHOMA	88
	Donovan, John	Alternate	ARKANSAS	10

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION

August 9, 2022

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The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 100th National Convention convened in the Regency Ballroom O-S on the Convention Level of the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Tuesday morning, August 9, 2022, and was called to order at 8:30 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Andrew "Andy" Marshall.

COMMANDER ANDREW "ANDY" MARSHALL: The convention will please come to order. As a reminder I would like to ask everyone to please silence your cell phone and portable devices. If you can, please rise and join me in the Pledge of the Allegiance to our nation's flag. Salute.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Please remain standing. Chaplain Varner would you please lead us in prayer.

(Whereupon, the Chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DEBRA VARNER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN VARNER: May we pray. Almighty God, the Mighty Creator of all men, we give you thanks this morning for allowing us to be in your presence. We thank you for the bountiful blessings of our friends, our comrades, even our visitors who visit with us today.

Now, we ask that you grant us strength and guidance as we go throughout this day that we are well able to train and to serve and to give honor to others what have been given unto us. We ask these things of you and the people said Amen.

(Response of "Amen;" whereupon, the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

Thank you, Chaplain Varner. Please be seated. (One rap of the gavel) I remind each of you that in order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention you must be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. Upon being so recognized delegates must state their name, chapter number, and the state they represent.

I would like to call on Credentials Committee Chairman and fellow Tampa 4 Chapter member Brenda Reed for her report.

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

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON BRENDA REED: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON REED: National Commander Marshall, National Adjutant Burgess, officers, members and guests, the Credentials Committee met this morning at 8:00 a.m. in Florida Ballroom A at the Hyatt Regency in Orlando, Florida.

Roll call shows 981 delegates, 63 alternates have registered, which includes 45 departments and 348 chapters registered. There are 9 national officers, 21 National Executive Committeemen, and 6 past national commanders currently registered for a total of 7,784 votes.

This partial report is for informational purposes only and it reflects registration at the close of business at 4:00 p.m. on August 8th, 2022. This completes the partial report of the Credential Committee.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Brenda.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON REED: You're welcome, Andy.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: A reminder that the registration will close this morning at 10:00 a.m. Next, I would like to call upon Chairman Joe Hall for the report of the Committee on Employment.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Employment chair advanced to the podium.)

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOE HALL: Comrade Commander and delegates. The National Convention Committee on Employment was called to order on August 7th, 2022, by the Committee advisors Rob Lougee and Anthony Lewis.

The first order of business the election of the Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Joe Hall of North Dakota was elected as chairman and Tiffany (Indistinguishable) of Wisconsin was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted and I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purposes of saving time I will read only the number and purpose of the resolution.

45, eliminate the delimiting date for eligible spouses and surviving spouses for benefits provided under Chapter 35, Title 38, U.S.C.;

46, support licensure and certification of active-duty service personnel;

47, support outreach and employment of women veterans;

159, eliminate the 12-year rule to request VA Veteran Readiness in Employment benefits under Chapter 31, leaving the date to apply for that benefit open-ended;

160, monitor activities of the Mandatory Transition G-P-S program;

183, provide adequate funding and permanency for veterans' employment and/or training programs;

184, support extension of a period of employment services under VA Veteran Readiness in Employment Services;

185, require the United States Congress to create a work projects program which guarantees federal employment to service-disabled veterans;

186, support legislation to extend the duration of the VA Veteran Readiness and Employment benefits beyond 48 months;

187, support the adoption of programs and legislation to reduce the barriers to employment, education, and full use and access to the other benefits earned through the service in the military;

188, protect veterans from employment discrimination when receiving health care for service-connected conditions;

214 remove requirement that the VA compensation to service-connected veterans is counted as income for the purposes of federal financial aid determinations;

215, support prompt payment of contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned businesses;

216, support legislation enhancing government-wide goals for participation by small business-owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans;

217, support legislation to improve and protect education and employment benefits for disabled veterans and their survivors;

218, support legislation and reimburse, replace, and extend education vocational benefits for disabled veterans and their survivors for education and training impacted by COVID-19;

347, provide educational benefits for dependents of service-disabled veterans rated 80 percent or more disabled;

349, support veterans' preference in public employment;

403, adequate staffing levels of the VA Veteran Readiness in Employment Service;

404, 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;

405, create economic opportunity administration within the Department of Veterans Affairs;

406, support fraud prevention controls over service-disabled veteran-owned small business programs;

407, support verification improvements for veteran-owned businesses within the VA;

408, oppose using DVOP and LVER to work with or process assistance programs unrelated to veterans;

438, support legislation to strengthen and protect service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses;

439, support legislation to create, improve and reform federal programs for service-disabled veteran entrepreneurship.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report on 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. (Applause)

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 045
ELIMINATE THE DELIMITING DATE FOR ELIGIBLE SPOUSES
AND SURVIVING SPOUSES FOR BENEFITS PROVIDED UNDER
CHAPTER 35, TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

WHEREAS, dependents and survivors eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits under chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, have 10 years in which to apply for and complete programs of education; and

WHEREAS, this 10-year period begins either from the date a veteran is evaluated by the VA as permanently and totally disabled from service-connected disabilities or 10 years from the date of such veteran's death due to service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, in many instances, because of family obligations or the need to provide care to the veteran, spouses and surviving spouses may not have had an opportunity to apply for these benefits;
NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 046
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) Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training to carry out a demonstration project on credentialing to facilitate the seamless transition of members of the armed forces to civilian employment by selecting up to five military occupational specialties with a skill or set of skills that are required for civilian employment in industries with high career demand; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 047

SUPPORT OUTREACH AND EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, many women who have served in the military are not aware of services available to them through State Employment Security Agencies/State Workforce Agencies and therefore are less likely to obtain employment and training assistance than their male counterparts; and

WHEREAS, over the past decade, a significant increase has occurred in the number of women veterans in need of employment and training services; and

WHEREAS, because of the reduction in federal programs and the reduction of jobs for women in the private sector, the number of unemployed women veterans continues to increase; and

WHEREAS, workforce trends indicate only job-ready and highly skilled women veterans are able to find career employment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to enact legislation to establish and fund special programs and outreach to women veterans, especially service-disabled women veterans, in need of employment assistance from the nation's basic labor exchange system and training assistance through programs operated under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls for additional training to be provided to service providers to address the delivery of services to, and the under-representation of, women veterans in career employment.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 159

ELIMINATE THE 12-YEAR RULE TO REQUEST DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VETERAN READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER CHAPTER 31, FOR ALL VETERANS, 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) Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) 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; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 116-315 removed this period of eligibility but only for veterans who were discharged after January 1, 2013; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks legislation to eliminate the 12-year limitation to apply for VR&E benefits for all veterans, leaving a veteran's date of entitlement open ended without time limit.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 160

IMPROVEMENT, REFORM AND OVERSIGHT 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; 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;

WHEREAS, as the Transition GPS Program was established several years ago, it does not fully contemplate new needs of transitioning service members nor additional programs to improve their transition; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to create new services and to improve and reform the Transition GPS Program;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to provide comprehensive oversight of the Transition GPS program, its workshops, training methodology and delivery of services, and the collection and analysis of course critiques;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the inclusion of 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. 183 PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING AND PERMANENCY FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND/OR TRAINING PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the extended economic downturn has had a greater impact on veterans generally and service-disabled veterans specifically than many other groups; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous veterans employment and training programs reaching out to provide critical assistance but are in need of adequate staffing and funding; and

WHEREAS, these programs include the Veterans' Employment and Training Service of the Department of Labor, National Veterans Training Institute of the Small Business Administration, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Local Veterans Employment Representative program, homeless assistance programs and others; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks and supports adequate funding and permanency for all veterans' employment and training programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 184 SUPPORT EXTENSION OF A PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER THE VETERAN READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, §3105 states the period of a Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) 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 eighteen 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 face employment barriers even after rehabilitation or achievement of vocational goals; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks to ensure that service-connected veterans receive the services necessary to obtain and maintain suitable employment and supports an extension up to 24 months for counseling and placement and post-placement services.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 185

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CREATE A WORK PROJECTS PROGRAM THAT GUARANTEES FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT TO SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the federal government set a precedent with the creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), later renamed the Work Projects Administration (WPA) to complete major public works projects before World War II; and

WHEREAS, the WPA was highly successful in completing major public works projects, and

WHEREAS, general government infrastructure nationwide lacks sufficient funding to maintain the adequate safety of public roads, bridges, water supplies, and the like; and

WHEREAS, the nation's veterans have proved themselves as dedicated, highly trained, and capable workers, that bring leadership and maturity to the workforce; and

WHEREAS, such a program has the potential to significantly reduce veteran homelessness caused by high unemployment rates and demonstrate the gratitude of the people served by our veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, strongly supports legislation to require the United States Congress to create and fund, without reduction to VA or DOD funding, a jobs program similar to the WPA, which guarantees federal employment to service-disabled veterans being discharged from military service under other than dishonorable conditions.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 186

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND THE DURATION OF VETERAN READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT 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 Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E) services through the VA; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans are eligible for VR&E 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 VR&E program and require basic entry level courses to start college; and

WHEREAS, VR&E released its 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 VR&E benefits beyond 48 months, extending them to a minimum of 60 months, to ensure that they can complete their program without additional financial burden; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation that would allow VR&E 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. 187

SUPPORT THE ADOPTION OF PROGRAMS AND LEGISLATION TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND FULL USE AND ACCESS TO OTHER BENEFITS EARNED THROUGH SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

WHEREAS, the DAV is dedicated to empowering veterans to lead high quality lives with respect and dignity; and

WHEREAS, a primary focus for the DAV is to provide free, professional assistance to service-disabled veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service; and

WHEREAS, furthering their education and seeking gainful employment to support themselves and their families becomes a veteran's immediate and continued focus upon leaving service; and

WHEREAS, upon separation from service, veterans do not always fully understand the scope and breadth of their earned benefits, how to access those benefits, and often do not understand or realize the barriers that impede or infringe on those benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the adoption of programs and legislation to identify, reduce and remove barriers to a service-disabled veteran’s employment, continued education and full access and use of other benefits earned as a result of their service-connected disability.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 188
PROTECT VETERANS FROM EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION WHEN RECEIVING HEALTH CARE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires certain employers to allow employees to take reasonable unpaid leave for qualified medical and family reasons; and

WHEREAS, the National Defense Authorization Acts for fiscal years 2008 and 2010 amended the FMLA to include “qualifying exigency leave” and “military caregiver leave” to better balance the unique needs of employees with family members in the military and family members ill and injured while serving in the military; and

WHEREAS, the FMLA delays service-connected disabled veterans’ eligibility to job-protected medical leave; and

WHEREAS, many service-disabled veterans with the ability to work need ongoing care to maintain their health status and retain their employability; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to extend protection under the FMLA to encompass the medical care needs of veterans with service-connected disabilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 214
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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 215
SUPPORT PROMPT PAYMENT OF CONTRACTS TO SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES

WHEREAS, the program of contracts for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) on a preferential basis should be of a great assistance to SDVOSBs that hire disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, we are aware of problems involving the nonpayment of contracts; and

WHEREAS, when these SDVOSBs complain about reduced payments, they face the threat of rejection from future contracts and/or the threat of being put out of business; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 216
SUPPORT LEGISLATION IMPROVING 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 VA’s database of Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB), as well as serving as an advocate for VOSBs, SDVOSBs, historically underutilized business (HUB) zone businesses and women-owned small businesses; and

WHEREAS, the database va.gov/osdbu vendor information pages (VIP) lists businesses that are 51% or more owned by veterans and is the only one within the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the VIP was originally established to act as a single-source database of certified VOSBs and SDVOSBs to supply all federal agencies and prime contractors information to assist the federal government with achieving the not less than 3% goal of set-aside contracts for SDVOSBs and/or contracts being awarded to SDVOSB or VOSB concerns, as mandated in Public Law 106-50; and

WHEREAS, while section 8127 (f)(4), Public Law 109-461, requires verification of veterans’ ownership of listed SDVOSBs and VOSBs, as well as verification of the service-disabled status of SDVOSBs, the federal agencies tasked with ensuring set-asides and timely, comprehensive verification have failed to do so; and

WHEREAS, according to the VA Office of Inspector General report, “Audit of Veteran-Owned and Service Disabled-Owned Small Business Programs,” Report Number 10-02436-234, dated July 25, 2011, 32 of 42 statistically selected businesses that were reviewed—76%—were either ineligible to participate in the programs or were ineligible for the awarded contracts; and

WHEREAS, few government agencies have met, much less exceeded, the set-aside program goal for disabled veteran-owned businesses; and

WHEREAS, women-owned small businesses have a required federal contract set-aside goal of 5%, which is greater than the set-aside for VSOB or SDVOSB; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation and efforts to increase the federal set-asides for VSOB and SDVOSB to 5% of all governments agencies to provide parity to those goals for women-owned businesses; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on all government agencies to meet the set-aside goal 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 goals 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. 217
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE AND PROTECT EDUCATION AND
EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS AND THEIR SURVIVORS

WHEREAS, VA's Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E) and Survivors and Dependents' Educational Assistance (Chapter 35) have been integral to improving the economic outlook for both service-disabled veterans and their survivors; and

WHEREAS, despite improvements in the overall veteran unemployment rate, service-disabled veterans still have a higher rate of unemployment than their civilian counterparts; and

WHEREAS, programs, such as the VetSuccess on Campus, that could be used to reach more rural locations, could be expanded and strengthened; and

WHEREAS, both Chapter 35 and VA's VR&E benefits should be strengthened and protected from budget cuts and fraud, waste, and abuse; and

WHEREAS, survivors and dependents of severely disabled veterans should see their benefits under Chapter 35 strengthened and increased so as not to cause a financial burden if they choose to attend school; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation that would improve and protect VA's education and employment benefits for service-disabled veterans and their survivors.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 218
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REIMBURSE, REPLACE AND EXTEND
EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS AND
THEIR SURVIVORS FOR EDUCATION/TRAINING IMPACTED BY COVID-19

WHEREAS, all educational and vocational programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have an established number of months of potential eligibility; and

WHEREAS, the underlying premise for the educational and vocational programs is to enable the veteran and/or their dependents to obtain college/university/trade school-based education; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, all schools/colleges/universities shut down in-person sessions to include both class and counseling; and

WHEREAS, this disruption impacted the quality of education obtained during that period and the schools/students continue to face difficulties in adjusting to changes imposed by lockdowns and the ongoing pandemic; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, proposes, seeks and strongly supports Congress directing the VA to not count the semesters/quarters of school that were interrupted, beginning in March 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, against the overall number of months of eligibility for any veteran/dependent who was in receipt of benefits from any VA education or vocational program at the time, and continuing until such a time as Congress determines that stability to the educational process has returned; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to ensure that any delimiting date, whether through time frame of eligibility or, in the case of dependent children, the attainment of age, be extended for one full semester/quarter for each semester/quarter impacted by the COVID-19 disruptions to fully mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 closures that began in March 2020.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 347
PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS OF SERVICE-
CONNECTED VETERANS RATED 80% OR MORE DISABLED

WHEREAS, chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, extends educational assistance to the dependents of service-connected veterans who are evaluated as permanently and totally disabled; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected veterans rated 80% and 90% disabled have reduced earning ability and cannot afford to assist dependents with the cost of attending higher learning or pursuing vocational training; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend educational assistance under

chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, to the dependents of veterans who have service-connected disability ratings of 80% or more.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 349

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 five-point preference in federal hiring, and service-disabled veterans receive a 10-point preference; and

WHEREAS, numerous special hiring authorities exist in federal law for veterans and service-disabled veterans, including the veterans recruitment appointment authority, Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 hiring authority and the 30% or more disabled veterans hiring authority; and

WHEREAS, the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended, requires most federal contractors to have an "Affirmative Action" plan for employment of service-disabled veterans, veterans who served during periods of conflict, and recently separated veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act was enacted to protect veterans from job discrimination and ensure their right to 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 Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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. 403

SUPPORT ADEQUATE STAFFING LEVELS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VETERAN READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veteran Readiness 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 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 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 Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, supports strengthening of 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. 404
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE A REASONABLE TRANSITION
PERIOD FOR SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL
BUSINESSES TO RETAIN FEDERAL PROTECTED STATUS FOLLOWING
THE DEATH OF THE DISABLED VETERAN OWNER

WHEREAS, section 308, Public Law 108-183, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003, established a procurement program for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB); and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 13360, Contracting with Service-Disabled Veterans' Businesses, directs all federal agencies to provide opportunities for SDVOSBs to increase their federal contracting and subcontracting opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 109-461, the Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006, established a Veterans First Contracting Program specifically for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to increase business opportunities with the VA for SDVOSBs; and

WHEREAS, SDVOSBs and other small businesses are the focus of Public Law 111-240, the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, which provides enhanced opportunities for SDVOSBs to compete for federal projects and subcontracting opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the SDVOSB category has encouraged many service-disabled veterans to take the personal risk of establishing small businesses with the support of their families, their own personal financial resources, the VA and, in some cases, commercial institutions; and

WHEREAS, these SDVOSBs have created new job opportunities for American citizens and, in many cases, have hired other service-disabled veterans and veterans during very challenging economic times; and

WHEREAS, in enacting Public Law 111-240, the federal government acknowledges that it is essential to create and grow small businesses in order to create new jobs and help the country recover from a most severe recession and provide for future job growth; and

WHEREAS, the SDVOSB category requires the service-disabled veteran to own at least 51% of the stock in the business and remain active in the day-to-day operations of the business in order for the business to maintain its SDVOSB status; and

WHEREAS, the enabling legislation for the SDVOSB program does not currently include a provision dealing with the treatment of the business after the death of the veteran owner; and

WHEREAS, since loss of the company's SDVOSB status would put the service-disabled veteran's investment, family heirs and employees at severe risk due to either downsizing or closing the business due to loss of federal procurement opportunities; and

WHEREAS, section 8127 (h)(2)(C), Public Law 109-461, (applicable only to VA) allows for a 10-year transition period to the surviving spouse of a 100% service-disabled veteran owner of a SDVOSB or a veteran owner who dies as a result of a service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, allowing the surviving spouses or heirs of service-disabled veterans to gain a reasonable transition period for the SDVOSB program would help to maintain the jobs created by the SDVOSB for service-disabled veterans, veterans and other employees, and will not put these individuals at increased financial risk and hardship due to likely job loss or downsizing of the business; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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. 405
CREATE AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ADMINISTRATION
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, veterans programs have become more complex over the years, the fragmented nature of these programs has resulted in a decreased ability of senior management to monitor the delivery of each veterans' employment, education, and training program; and

WHEREAS, when the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was created, the initial reason for doing so was to avoid duplication, fragmentation or delay in the various services provided to veterans; and

WHEREAS, anticipating veterans' long-term needs, not only for health care and disability compensation but also for education and employment, requires a new approach; and

WHEREAS, establishing a fourth administration within 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 Veteran Readiness and Employment have seen a stagnation of budget requests and even reductions; and

WHEREAS, this new centralized veterans economic opportunity administration should be administered through a new position of Under Secretary for said organization; and

WHEREAS, such a move would allow the Under Secretary for Benefits to focus specifically on the delivery of disability compensation and pension benefits to disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 406
SUPPORT FRAUD PREVENTION CONTROLS OVER SERVICE-DISABLED
VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Program (SDVOSB), designed to steer \$4 billion in government contracts to businesses owned by service-disabled veterans, has allowed over \$90 million to be fraudulently awarded to ineligible companies; and

WHEREAS, the Small Business Administration failed to properly check applicants before awarding contracts and failed to take action on service-disabled veterans' complaints of abuse; and

WHEREAS, testimony presented by the United States Government Accountability Office identified millions of dollars of SDVOSB contracts awarded to ineligible firms; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks and strongly supports creating effective resources to investigate, prevent and monitor the SDVOSB program and to ensure that fraud is aggressively prosecuted or companies having committed fraud are suspended, debarred or otherwise held accountable.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 407
SUPPORT VERIFICATION IMPROVEMENTS FOR VETERAN-OWNED
BUSINESSES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the military is downsizing, and thousands of former military personnel who have honorably served their country could become unemployed when they leave the military; and

WHEREAS, small business development assistance to veterans who have honorably served this country is a veterans benefit that dates back to the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized under the Veterans First program to enter into contracts first with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) and then with Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB); and

WHEREAS, Congress has found that VA has entered into contracts pursuant to the Veterans First program with companies that were not legitimate SDVOSBs or VOSBs; and

WHEREAS, VA has implemented a formal verification process that is overly burdensome; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, recommends VA simplify its verification process for SDVOSBs and VOSBs interested in participating in the VA's Veterans First Contracting Program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 408
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 (LVER) work with nondisabled veterans, informing them of employment opportunities, and outreach to community businesses to locate employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Public Law 112-56, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, state employment agencies are now directed to utilize DVOPS and LVERs to work on other public assistance-related programs, which diverts DVOPS/LVERs from their prime mission to assist veterans with their employment and training needs; and

WHEREAS, this same law directs the Secretary of Labor to conduct regular audits to ensure compliance with this provision; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to amend Public Law 112–56 and return the duties of DVOPS and LVERs to concentrate their work to aid veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 438
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN AND PROTECT SERVICE-
DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES

WHEREAS, the federal governments support of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs) contributes significantly to restoring veterans' quality of life while aiding in their transitions from active duty; and

WHEREAS, the federal government sets aside over \$105 billion in annual small business spending which the SDVOSBs compete for; and

WHEREAS, the Vets First Program was created under Public Law 109-461 for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) and expanded the Service-Disabled Veteran contracting program for VA procurements in order for veteran business owners and the government to benefit mutually; and

WHEREAS, the Vets First Program's purpose is to ensure that legitimately owned and controlled VOSBs and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs) are able to compete for VA VOSB and SDVOSB set-asides, and help stimulate the small business community and create growth for the economy; and

WHEREAS, the success of the SDVOSB programs greatly benefits the service-disabled veteran community; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, DAV supports the enactment of legislation that strengthens and protects SDVOSB programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 439
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CREATE, IMPROVE AND REFORM FEDERAL
PROGRAMS FOR SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WHEREAS, the federal government has established programs to assist Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs) and veteran self-employment, many of these programs have not been reformed or updated in multiple years; and

WHEREAS, the VA's program, Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E) in 2021, provided education and employment services to over 80,000 eligible disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, VR&E has a self-employment track, however, its eligibility is open to only "veterans with the most severe service-connected disabilities who require homebound training or self-employment," resulting in just 162 veterans participating in the self-employment track in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Veterans with service-related injuries deserve the opportunity for self-employment that accommodates their employment barriers and provides them with financial empowerment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to create federal programs for service-disabled veteran entrepreneurship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DAV supports legislation to improve and reform existing federal service-disabled veteran entrepreneurship programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to expand eligibility for the self-employment training within VA's VR&E program.

* * *

(Whereupon, the Employment Committee chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Joe. You have heard the motion. May I have a second, please?

MR. ALBERT J. BAKER, SR.: Mic 3.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MR. BAKER: Comrade Commander, Albert J. Baker, Sr., Department of Florida Commander, Chapter 17, so moves.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: In accordance with Rule 9 now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any resolutions that you wish to be read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, the Employment Committee chair withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I would like to call upon Chairman Lee Gidden for the report of the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights chair advanced to the podium.)

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS CHAIRPERSON W. LEE GIDDEN: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON GIDDEN: Dear comrades, commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights was called to order on Sunday, August 7th, 2022, by the Committee advisors Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann.

The first order of business was the election of Convention Committee chairman and secretary. W. Lee Gidden was elected chairman. And Marguerite Subbs was elected secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I will now report on the resolutions recommended for adoption by the National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolution.

Number 002, support legislation to reduce the 10-year rule for dependency indemnity compensation;

Number 006, oppose all attempts to change the basis of Department of Veterans Affairs Ratings Schedule for the Average Impairments and Earnings Capacity Standard;

Number 007, oppose any recommendation by any commission or other source to reduce and eliminate benefits for disabled veterans;

Number 008, oppose reduction, taxation and elimination of veterans' benefits;

Number 009, increase grant funding for local cemeteries;

Number 032, increase the grant and special adaptive equipment reimbursement rates for automobiles and other conveyances to certain disabled veterans and authorize reimbursement for new adaptive equipment technologies;

Number 033, support legislation to improve the VA fiduciary program;

Number 035, support legislation providing that special separation benefit payments not be withheld from VA disability compensation payments;

Number 063, support legislation authorizing presumptive service connection based on herbicide exposure for military personnel that served on the bases in Thailand during the Vietnam War;

Number 066, protect claimants from those charging fees from VA claims presentation, preparation and prosecution;

Number 068, reform and improve service-connected disability veterans' life insurance;

Number 069, streamline and improve specially-adapted housing and special housing adaptation grants;

Number 070, support VA modernization of information technology and improvements to include digital sharing, adequate funding, and improve access for disabled veterans;

Number 072, support legislation for the studies and presumptive diseases related to P-FAS exposure;

Number 073, support legislation for health care and concession for exposure to burn pits;

Number 074, support legislation to remove the prohibition against DAV members who are federal employees from communication on behalf of the DAV with federal agencies;

Number 075, support reauthorization of the Persian Gulf War Act – Persian Gulf Veterans Act, excuse me;

Number 076, support reauthorization of the Agent Orange Act;

Number 077, support legislation to provide studies related to the health care and benefits resulting from toxic exposures at K-2;

Number 084, oppose the long-term rounding-down of COLAs in veterans benefits;

Number 085, support legislation that would exempt the benefits paid to war-time service-connected disabled veterans for the Pay-go/Cut-go provisions in the Budget Enforcement Act;

Number 086, amend the law to provide ten-year protection for service-connected disability ratings;

Number 087, support legislation to provide for service connection for disabling conditions resulting from toxic and environmental exposures;

Number 088, oppose any proposal that would reduce payments for Department of Veterans Affairs Disability Compensation by payments in Social Security Disability Insurance or any other federal benefit paid to the veteran;

Number 089, consider treatment of presumptive service-connected conditions as a claim for VA compensation;

Number 092, support legislation to remove the prohibition against concurrent receipt of longevity retired pay and veterans' disability compensation for all longevity retired veterans;

Number 093, support interest payments of Department of Veterans Affairs retroactive awards for one year or more;

Number 094, support legislation to provide for presumptive service connection for tinnitus and hearing loss;

Number 095, support meaningful claims for appeals reform;

Number 096, expand presumptions for service connection for former POWs;

Number 097, support legislation for the VA to provide child care services and/or assistance to veterans attending VA programs;

Number 099, support legislation to increase disability compensation;

Number 100, support legislation to allow all veterans who recover amounts withheld as tax on disability severance pay;

Number 101, support legislation that requires VA to consider private medical evidence provided by licensed private health care providers;

Number 102, support legislation to provide for realistic cost of living allowances;

Number 104, support legislation to include veterans' disability compensation from countable income for purposes of eligibility for benefits and services from other government programs;

Number 105, support oversight of VA's practices in evaluating disability claims and residuals of military sexual trauma;

Number 106, oppose subjecting disability compensation and DIC to means testing;

Number 113, support a more liberal review of Other-than-Honorable Discharges for the purpose of eligibility for VA benefits and health care services;

Number 114, oppose lump sum payments for service-connected disabilities;

Number 115, oppose the imposition of time limits for filing disability compensation claims;

Number 116, oppose any change that would redefine service-connected disability or restrict the conditions or circumstances under which it may be established;

Number 117, oppose change of definition of herbicide agents for the purpose of establishing service-connected conditions for disabilities related to herbicide exposure;

Number 118, support legislation to establish presumptive service connection for diseases and illnesses related to contaminants at Fort McClellan, Alabama;

Number 119, amend the VA schedule for rating disabilities for mental disorders;

Number 120, compensate Persian Gulf veterans suffering from illnesses circumstantially linked to their service in the Persian Gulf War;

Number 121, support sufficient, timely, and predictable funding for all VA programs, benefits and services;

Number 122, support legislation to include children in legal custody as VA dependents;

Number 123, support legislation to increase the number of presumptive diseases related to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune;

Number 150, support legislation to expand VA mental health transition services to all service members upon discharge;

Number 162, support legislation to improve and reform DIC benefits;

Number 167, support the elimination of the 30-day requirement for diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune;

Number 168, support legislation recognizing racial trauma as a stressor for post-traumatic stress disorder;

Number 170, support legislation to direct the Secretary of VA to coordinate with VA and with the DoD to verify dependency status;

Number 171, support congressional action to ensure the total disability based on the individual employability remains available for all veterans, regardless of age or receipt of any other earned federal benefit;

Number 172, remove the delimiting date for Persian Gulf War illness;

Number 173, support compensable evaluations for certain disabilities currently at Zero percent;

Number 174, support compensation and pension examinations done by private contractors be placed in the veteran's VA medical record;

Number 178, support resources and oversight of the appeals process;

Number 180, support legislation to increase maximum valuation in service-connected headaches;

Number 221, amend provisions regarding eligibility for automobile adaptive equipment to include the veteran whose service-connected disability inhibits his or her ability to safely operate a motor vehicle;

Number 222, support a change to regulatory requirements for temporary and total disability ratings;

Number 223, establish immediate authorization for grants of the Board of Veterans Appeals for all cases advanced on the docket;

Number 235, support legislative reforms related to the recovery of debts by the VA;

Number 241, expand eligibility for mortgage protection life insurance for 100 percent service-connected veterans;

Number 242, support legislation to cap attorneys' fees for benefits counseling and claims services before the Department of Veterans Affairs;

Number 244, support legislation that concedes exposure to herbicide agents of service members who served in Guam, American Samoa, and Johnston (Atoll) during the Vietnam era;

Number 246, provide medical benefits and compensation for Persian Gulf War veterans negatively impacted by Sarin gas from the VA;

Number 277, support a change in regulatory requirements rating under Section 4.30 under Title 38, C.F.R., to provide for temporary and total rating for incapacitation for more than 21 days;

Number 291, support legislation to provide a temporary and total disability compensation rating for an amputee veteran while a new prosthetic device is developed and delivered;

Number 294, support legislation to oppose the payments for attorneys' fees based on periods of when the attorney was not involved in the claim;

Number 295, support legislation to allow for the use of Intent-to-File in cases where an initial or supplemental claim for the same or similar benefit or the same or similar basis was previously decided;

Number 297, support legislation for a scientific evaluation to include conditions of the thyroid as presumptive Gulf War Disorder;

Number 298, support legislation placing the burden on the VA to demonstrate fugitive felon status;

Number 299, support legislation authorizing the presumption of service connection for all radiogenic diseases and eliminate dose exposure estimate requirements;

Number 305, support legislation to award special monthly compensation at R-1 to veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use of three extremities;

Number 321, support an increase in the Department of Veterans Affairs Burial Allowance for service-connected veterans and provide automatic annual adjustments;

Number 322, support legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address the loss of quality of life;

Number 323, oppose regional dispersion of the Board of Veterans Appeals;

Number 324, support legislation to require the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to decide each appellant's assignment of error;

Number 326, increase the benefit rate for the Home Improvement and Structural Alterations Grant;

Number 358, support legislation to expand and recognize wartime service periods to include those veterans who served in combat environments from hostile military or terrorist activity from November 4, 1979, through August 1, 1990;

Number 374, support legislation that recognizes presumptive service conditions for hypertension and (MGUS) as related to Agent Orange;

Number 375, support legislation to expand radiation risk activities;

Number 376, support legislation to remove the veteran's personal identification information from his or her claim identification;

Number 378, support legislation to clarify and expand entitlement to Dependent's Educational Assistance under Chapter 35 for children of two-veteran households;

Number 379, support legislation to allow expanded entitlement to Dependent's Educational Assistance under Chapter 35 for children of two-veteran households where both parents are shown with a permanent and total status due to service-connected conditions;

Number 381, support legislation to allow veterans permanently and totally disabled due to service-connected conditions to continue to receive Dependent's Compensation for their adult child attending school while the child is in receipt of Dependent Educational Assistance under Chapter 35;

Number 409, Require VA to request private medical records prior to future examinations;

Number 410, provide for a compensable rating for hearing-impaired veterans required to use a hearing aid;

Number 411, support legislation to establish multiple automobile grants for eligible veterans;

Number 412, support using a proposed reduction due process to all disability-evaluation reductions;

Number 413, support legislation to establish a supplementary special adaptive housing grant;

Number 415, support elimination of the link between chrynosity and continuity with the chronic diseases listed in 38 C.F.R., Section 3.309;

Number 423, support legislation to grand Aid and Attendance to veteran's seriously disabled child;

Number 424, support legislation to require VA to implement an optional path for visual impair veterans;

Number 425, remove the requirement for magnification of chloracne and porphyria cutanea tarda to acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy within one year of exposure to Agent Orange.

Comrade Commander –

(Whereupon, Shane Liermann advanced to the podium to speak to the chair.)

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON GIDDEN: Yes. Okay, excuse me. I did make a mistake and I am being corrected. I will re-read it.

Resolution Number 104, support legislation to exclude veteran's disability compensation for countable income for purposes of eligibility for benefits and services from other government programs.

MR. SHANE LIERMANN: Thank you.

LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON GIDDEN: You're welcome. Sorry about that. Comrade Commander, this completes the report for the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights. On behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee may be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 002 SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REDUCE THE 10-YEAR RULE FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, section 1318 (b)(1), title 38, United States Code, provides Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits for survivors of deceased veterans who were rated totally disabled for 10 or more years; and

WHEREAS, the financial status of the surviving spouse is compromised due to the care required by the totally disabled veteran and provided by the caregiver spouse; and

WHEREAS, the veteran's spouse, acting as a caregiver, must in many cases limit, give up or put careers and other activities on hold; and

WHEREAS, it is inherently unfair that the spouse should carry this additional burden for 10 years or more before qualifying for DIC; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to reduce the 10-year rule for DIC qualification to a more reasonable period of time.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 006
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 over a century; and

WHEREAS, the current VASRD has been updated, revised and modified numerous times to reflect advances in medical knowledge, diagnosis, treatment and technology for injuries, illnesses and disabilities related to military service, but the standard of average impairments of earnings capacity has remained unchanged due to its practicality, equity and fairness to disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, determining rating levels based on the average impairments of earning capacity ensures that veterans who have similar manifestations of the same disabilities are treated equally and fairly without consideration of their age, education, work experience or current work status; and

WHEREAS, by basing the VASRD on the average impairments of earnings capacity, rather than on individual measurements of earnings loss or functionality, disabled veterans are actually encouraged to seek vocational rehabilitation training in order to find jobs and become more productive wage earners without fear of being penalized for doing so; and

WHEREAS, the VA is currently updating the entire VASRD and has committed to update each body of the section of the VASRD every five years, and throughout this process numerous proposals have been made, and will be considered, to alter the VASRD; and

WHEREAS, any attempt to replace average impairment of earnings capacity with a new standard based on individual earnings loss or measurements of functionality would dramatically alter the purpose and effectiveness of the VA disability compensation program, create disincentives for veterans interested in rehabilitation and work, and lead to reductions in compensation for millions of disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, any attempt to eliminate all consideration of impairments and impacts outside of the workplace fails to properly recognize that disability affects a veteran’s entire life—including social, marital, familial, emotional and spiritual aspects—all of which have some effect on their earnings capacity; and

WHEREAS, any attempt to model the VA disability compensation program on the Social Security Disability Insurance or workers’ compensation programs fails to recognize that those programs have separate purposes based on injuries and illnesses incurred in the civilian workplace that do not compare with the unique challenges faced and sacrifices made by veterans who have served in our armed forces; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 007
OPPOSE ANY RECOMMENDATION BY ANY COMMISSION OR OTHER SOURCE
TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE BENEFITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, American citizens owe their freedoms and way of life to disabled veterans who made extraordinary personal sacrifices and who suffer lifelong disabilities as a consequence; and

WHEREAS, those who serve in our armed forces stand ready to endure any hardships and to be exposed to any hazards on behalf of their country and our citizens; and

WHEREAS, our government did not hesitate in asking them to give life or limb if necessary; and

WHEREAS, our elected officials surely should not renege on our reciprocal obligation when our disabled veterans ask for so comparatively little in return; and

WHEREAS, we, as a nation, owe no more important indebtedness nor greater moral obligation than the indebtedness and obligation we have to disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, some elected officials nonetheless prefer to minimize or ignore the suffering of disabled veterans, despite this debt and this national responsibility; and

WHEREAS, any effort on the part of legislators to find ways to avoid compensating disabled veterans, especially in time of war, is unconscionable; and

WHEREAS, honorable and great nations of conscience do not abandon their wounded, injured or ill wartime veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 008

OPPOSE REDUCTION, TAXATION OR ELIMINATION OF VETERANS BENEFITS

WHEREAS, veterans benefits are earned benefits paid to veterans and their families for their service to the nation; and

WHEREAS, veterans benefits are part of a covenant between our nation and its defenders; and

WHEREAS, certain government leaders have continued to attack veterans benefits in an attempt to tax those benefits, reduce them or eliminate them completely; and

WHEREAS, these attacks recur with regularity and serious intent; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, vigorously opposes reduction, taxation or elimination of veterans benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 009

INCREASE GRANT FUNDING FOR LOCAL VETERANS CEMETERIES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Cemetery Grants Program was established in 1978 to complement the VA's National Cemetery Administration; and

WHEREAS, the program was established to assist states, territories and federally recognized tribal governments in providing gravesites for veterans in those areas where the VA's national cemeteries cannot fully satisfy their burial needs; and

WHEREAS, the funding of the grant may be used only for the purpose of establishing, expanding or improving veterans cemeteries that are owned and operated by a state, federally recognized tribal government or U.S. territory and can only be provided to these entities; and

WHEREAS, the current budget for this grant program is \$5 million per year while the total application requests for this funding far exceed the allocated budget; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, requests an increase in the VA's Veterans Cemetery Grant Program budget to \$10 million per year to cover the establishment, improvement, operations and maintenance for these cemeteries.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 032

INCREASE THE GRANT AND SPECIALLY ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR AUTOMOBILES AND OTHER CONVEYANCES TO CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS, AND AUTHORIZE REIMBURSEMENT FOR NEW ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGIES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides grants to assist eligible disabled veterans and military service members in purchasing specially equipped automobiles or other conveyances; and

WHEREAS, when originally established, the grant was set at an amount sufficient to cover the average retail cost of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, later adjustments elevated grants to amounts representing 80% of the average cost of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, the amount of the automobile allowance has not been further adjusted concurrent with increases in costs of automobiles, resulting in substantial erosion of the value of the benefit due to inflation; and

WHEREAS, the current grant level constitutes about 66% of the total average retail price of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, the VA also provides reimbursement for special adaptive equipment, but the rates of reimbursement have not kept pace with present-day costs to repair or replace such equipment; and

WHEREAS, advances in new automobile technologies, such as collision warning systems, electronic stability control, backup cameras and GPS, would enable disabled veterans to more safely operate vehicles; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to increase the automobile grant level to an amount representing 80% of the average cost of new automobiles; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation and policies that would increase the rates of reimbursement for repairs and replacement of specially adaptive equipment for automobiles and other conveyances consistent with present-day costs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress and the VA to support legislation and policies that would expand the items approved for reimbursement, such as collision warning systems, electronic stability control, backup cameras, GPS and other available safety technologies.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 033 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, vulnerable veterans are being wronged by both malfeasance of the VA Fiduciary and the institutional incompetence of the VA Fiduciary Program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 035
SUPPORT LEGISLATION PROVIDING THAT SPECIAL SEPARATION
BENEFIT PAYMENTS NOT BE WITHHELD FROM DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS DISABILITY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS

WHEREAS, as a result of the downsizing of our military forces, many career military personnel have left service prior to becoming eligible for longevity retirement pay; and

WHEREAS, these individuals are entitled to separation pay; and

WHEREAS, many of these individuals also become eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation; and

WHEREAS, a VA General Counsel opinion held that any funds received as a result of the Special Separation Benefit (SSB) must be recouped from any VA disability compensation payment; and

WHEREAS, SSB payments are in no way related to a disability; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to clarify that SSB payments are not disability payments and therefore should not be recouped from VA disability compensation payments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 063
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, American military personnel stationed at air and army bases in Thailand from January 9, 1962 to June 30, 1976, were exposed to herbicides; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently acknowledges certain personnel as having been exposed to herbicides who performed duties on the perimeters of these bases; and

WHEREAS, veterans who file claims related to their proximity to base perimeters are challenged to prove that they in fact performed duties resulting in exposure; and

WHEREAS, most personnel assigned to bases in Thailand were quartered in open-air barracks near perimeters where herbicides were habitually sprayed by the United States government; and

WHEREAS, the VA already presumes exposure to herbicide agents for any veteran who served in Vietnam, including some veterans who served in Vietnam's inland waterways; and

WHEREAS, spraying of herbicide agents along air base perimeters in Thailand would affect not only the service members who were assigned perimeter duties, but also other personnel stationed at these locations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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 bases in Thailand from January 9, 1962 to June 30, 1976.

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RESOLUTION NO. 066
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROTECT CLAIMANTS FROM THOSE
CHARGING FEES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CLAIMS PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, OR PROSECUTION

WHEREAS, claims agents and attorneys recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), can assist a claimant in the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of a claim; and

WHEREAS, fees may not be charged, allowed, or paid for services of agents or attorneys with respect to services provided before the date on which a notice of disagreement is filed with respect to the case; and

WHEREAS, veterans service organizations (VSOs) and the VA provide free assistance in the claims process; and

WHEREAS, many reports, past and present, have identified that certain entities charge claimants fees for the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of a claim; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to prohibit and penalize those who knowingly solicit or contract for charges or receive any fee or compensation for providing advice on how to file a VA claim, the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of such a claim, or unlawfully withhold from any claimant any part of a benefit or claim, all prior to the date on which a higher level review, supplemental claim or a notice of disagreement has been filed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 068
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REFORM AND IMPROVE
SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS LIFE INSURANCE

WHEREAS, the Congress of the United States has created a modernized service-disabled veterans life insurance program which will replace the existing Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) program beginning January 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the modernized insurance program will allow veterans to enroll at any time, which is a change from the existing S-DVI, which only allows veterans to apply within two years of a Department of Veterans Affairs decision that establishes a new grant of service connection; and

WHEREAS, veterans enrolled in the modernized insurance program may elect to be insured in the amounts of \$10,000, \$20,000, \$30,000 and \$40,000; and

WHEREAS, inflation has significantly increased, and the value of the maximum amount of S-DVI coverage has significantly decreased since the existing coverage amounts were set in law; and

WHEREAS, the existing S-DVI provides a waiver of premiums on the basic coverage of \$10,000 for eligible totally disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, the modernized insurance program will not provide a waiver of premiums at any amount for totally disabled veterans, effectively eliminating an existing benefit for future eligible veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports strong oversight of the implementation of the modernized service-disabled veterans insurance program by Congress and chartered veterans service organizations; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports a waiver of premiums for totally disabled veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV continues to support an increase in the maximum amount of coverage allowed by the service-disabled veterans insurance.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 069
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO STREAMLINE AND IMPROVE THE
REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSING OF SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING
GRANTS AND THE SPECIAL HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANTS

WHEREAS, the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant and the Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) grant have eligibility requirements, benefits and limitations that are very specific and distinct from each other, which can cause confusion among veterans and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) adjudicators; and

WHEREAS, once eligibility has been established by the VA, the remaining grant processes have numerous requirements, which can be cumbersome and lengthy, that include feasibility studies, minimum property requirements, and the veteran finding three separate contractors to solicit bids and then approval by the VA, all of this even before construction begins; and

WHEREAS, while the required SAH modifications must be compliant with both local municipalities' building codes and VA's own code, there must be a balanced focus on the immediate needs of the veteran; and

WHEREAS, contractors often decline to participate in these projects as the VA has not completely digitized its payment processes, thus contractors may wait months before payment, all while increasing the processing time; and

WHEREAS, these often lengthy processes become of great concern for veterans with severely restricting disabilities or terminal illnesses, as veterans with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and

other terminal illnesses often do not survive long enough to benefit from the improvements that an SAH grant could afford them; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to streamline the SAH and SHA eligibility requirements, improve the length of processing time, digitize VA payments, and expedite all applicants with ALS and other terminal illnesses.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 070
SUPPORT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MODERNIZATION
OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND IMPROVEMENTS TO
INCLUDE DIGITAL SHARING, ADEQUATE FUNDING AND
IMPROVED ACCESS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, updated and modern information technology (IT) with digital sharing of information within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DOD) is critical to the delivery of VA health care, VA benefits and VA educational services; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) made a critical decision to transform its paper-based claims system and replaced it with electronic streamlined business processes such as the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS), National Work Queue (NWQ), Case Flow, eBenefits and the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP); and

WHEREAS, several VA sites, including VA forms and applications, have been reported as not having ease of access by visually impaired veterans; and

WHEREAS, veterans service organizations (VSOs) providing representation for veterans and their families rely on VA systems, while VBA has determined to no longer fund upgrades or updates to some of the existing programs; and

WHEREAS, lacking appropriate IT funding led to the Veteran Readiness and Employment's (VR&E) \$12 million IT debacle and the Education Service's continuing problems in making accurate payments under the new GI Bill program; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) will be integrating the new VA Electronic Health Records (EHR) Modernization program, a commercial health IT program in collaboration with DOD, over the next 10 years, while its existing Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (Vista) program will remain throughout the implementation phase; and

WHEREAS, the cost of full integration of the Cerner EHR is projected at \$16 billion over the next 10 years, with \$5.8 billion of those funds set aside to manage and support the current Vista infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, VHA and VBA must compete with other offices and agencies within the VA for the limited IT funding available each year, delaying development and deployment of critical IT systems and programming; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports reforming and improving the budgeting and funding of VA IT systems for each individual department within the VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports secure and protected digital information sharing between the DOD and VA, as well as sharing within VA agencies; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports improving IT access for VSO representatives and veterans with disabilities, including those who are visually impaired.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 072
SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR STUDIES AND PRESUMPTIVE
DISEASES RELATED TO PFAS EXPOSURE

WHEREAS, the acronym "PFAS" relates to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances that are man-made chemicals with at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom, are present in fire-fighting foams and do not break down in the environment; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970s, the Department of Defense (DOD) began using aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) to fight fuel fires and emergency response is a major source of PFAS contamination of ground water on military bases; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the DOD examined 524 installations for two of the most prevalent PFAS chemicals in AFFF, perfluorooctane sulfonate, or PFOS, and perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA, and found 401 locations with some level of contamination; and

WHEREAS, in March 2020, DOD released new data showing that more than 600 military sites have been contaminated with PFAS, far more than previously disclosed; and

WHEREAS, according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ASTOR), some studies in humans suggest that certain PFAS may be associated with: fertility issues and pregnancy-induced hypertension/preeclampsia, increased cholesterol, changes in the immune system, increased risk of certain cancers (e.g., testicular and kidney cancer), changes in fetal and child development, liver damage, increased risk of thyroid disease, and increased risk of asthma; and

WHEREAS, some studies have reported these possible health outcomes, the overall scientific and medical evidence is currently inconclusive; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to establish and maintain a registry for eligible individuals who may have been exposed to PFAS to ascertain and monitor the health effects of the exposure of members of the Armed Forces; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation requiring DOD or VA to contract with the National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering to provide a study on the long-term health effects of PFAS exposure; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the establishment of presumption of service connection or a concession of exposure for PFAS and establish presumptive diseases related thereto.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 073 SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR HEALTH CARE AND CONCESSION OF EXPOSURE FOR BURN PITS

WHEREAS, it is estimated that over 3.5 million veterans were exposed to airborne toxins from burned waste products including, but not limited to, plastics, metal/aluminum cans, rubber, chemicals (such as paints, solvents), petroleum and lubricant products, munitions and other unexploded ordnance, wood waste, medical and human waste, and incomplete combustion byproducts; and

WHEREAS, during Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm (1990–1991) and since, burn pits were utilized not only in Iraq but also in Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and since September 11, 2001, burn pits have been used throughout the operations in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Yemen, as well as in Iraq after March 20, 2003; and

WHEREAS, there is no current presumptive service connection, veterans must file claims for direct service connection for diseases and illnesses related to burn pit exposure, and according to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), from June 2007 through May 2020, 12,517 direct service connection claims were adjudicated for diseases related to burn pit exposure and roughly 80% of those claims have been denied; and

WHEREAS, in September 2020, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine completed its report, “Respiratory Health Effects of Airborne Hazards Exposures in the Southwest Asia Theater of Military Operations,” and concluded that there was inadequate or insufficient evidence to determine associations between exposure to toxins from burn pits and respiratory-related conditions; and

WHEREAS, if burn pit-exposed veterans are not service-connected and it has been more than five years since the end of their combat service, they are not eligible for VA health care for these conditions; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to establish health care for burn pit-exposed veterans, to include by amending section 1710, title 38, United States Code, to extend the five-year combat requirement or by including burn pit exposure as part of the toxic exposure eligibility; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation requiring the Department of Defense or VA to contract with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine to provide a study on the long-term health effects of burn pit exposure; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the establishment of a concession of exposure or a presumption of service connection for burn pit exposure and the establishment of presumptive diseases related thereto.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 074
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST
DAV MEMBERS WHO ARE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES FROM COMMUNICATING
ON BEHALF OF DAV WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES

WHEREAS, in order to support DAV's mission to provide assistance to service-connected disabled veterans, it often requires DAV members to communicate on behalf of DAV with federal agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, DAV members who are federal employees are subject to federal ethics representational and communication prohibitions, including section 205 of title 10, United States Code. Section 205 provides representational and communication prohibitions that any federal employee is barred from acting as agent of any organization other than the federal government when communicating with federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) is responsible for ethics policy in the federal government; and

WHEREAS, OGE has recognized that section 205 bars many reasonable communications by federal employees acting in their personal capacity with federal agencies, even when assisting charitable and service organizations; and

WHEREAS, OGE has recommended changes to section 205, but the changes have not been enacted; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports a legislative amendment to section 205 to establish a statutory exception to the representational and communication prohibitions for the benefit of Congressionally chartered veterans service organizations, including DAV.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 075
SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION OF THE PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS ACT

WHEREAS, the Persian Gulf War Veterans Act of 1998, codified at section 1118, title 38, United States Code, provides for presumptive service connection for diseases related thereto; and

WHEREAS, subsection (b) provided requirements for the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to follow when prescribing new presumptive diseases, including determinations of positive association of diagnosed or undiagnosed illnesses; reports from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM); and positive significantly statistical association; and

WHEREAS, subsection (c) provided that, not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary receives a report from NASEM, the Secretary shall determine whether or not a presumption is warranted for each illness covered by the report; and

WHEREAS, if the Secretary determines that a presumption of service connection is warranted, the Secretary shall, not later than 60 days after making the determination, issue proposed regulations setting forth the Secretary's determination; and

WHEREAS, if the Secretary determines that a presumption of service connection is not warranted, the Secretary shall, not later than 60 days after making the determination, publish in the Federal Register a notice of the determination, and the notice shall include an explanation of the scientific basis for the determination; and

WHEREAS, if the Secretary determines that a presumption of service connection is warranted, the Secretary shall, not later than 60 days after making the determination, issue proposed regulations setting forth the Secretary's determination; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of the Persian Gulf War Veterans Act of 1998, as noted above in subsection (b) and subsection (c) expired on September 30, 2011; and

WHEREAS, there are no longer any requirements for a positive association or time requirements for the Secretary to act on scientific reports; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to reauthorize all sections of the Persian Gulf War Veterans Act of 1998 to ensure that the presumptive process for diseases related to toxic exposures, as noted, remain available for veterans exposed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 076

SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION OF THE AGENT ORANGE ACT

WHEREAS, the Agent Orange Act of 1991, codified at section 1116, title 38, United States Code, provides for presumptive service connection for diseases related thereto; and

WHEREAS, subsection (b) provided requirements for the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to follow when prescribing new presumptive diseases, including determinations of positive association of diagnosed or undiagnosed illnesses; reports from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM); and positive significantly statistical association; and

WHEREAS, subsection (c) provided that, not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary receives a report from NASEM, the Secretary shall determine whether or not a presumption is warranted for each illness covered by the report; and

WHEREAS, if the Secretary determines that a presumption of service connection is warranted, the Secretary shall, not later than 60 days after making the determination, issue proposed regulations setting forth the Secretary's determination; and

WHEREAS, if the Secretary determines that a presumption of service connection is not warranted, the Secretary shall, not later than 60 days after making the determination, publish in the Federal Register a notice of the determination, and the notice shall include an explanation of the scientific basis for the determination; and

WHEREAS, if the Secretary determines that a presumption of service connection is warranted, the Secretary shall, not later than 60 days after making the determination, issue proposed regulations setting forth the Secretary's determination; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of the Agent Orange Act of 1991, as noted above in subsection (b) and subsection (c) expired on September 30, 2015; and

WHEREAS, there are no longer any requirements for a positive association or time requirements for the Secretary to act on scientific reports; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to reauthorize all sections of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 to ensure that the presumptive process for diseases related to toxic exposures, as noted, remain available for veterans exposed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 077

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE STUDIES RELATED TO, AND HEALTH CARE AND BENEFITS RESULTING FROM TOXIC EXPOSURES AT KARSHI-KHANABAD AIR BASE, UZBEKISTAN

WHEREAS, over 15,000 U.S. service members were deployed to the Karshi-Khanabad Air Base (K2) in Uzbekistan from 2001 to 2005; and

WHEREAS, while it was a Soviet air base, K2 had contained chemical weapons, enriched uranium and soil saturated with fuels and other solvents; and

WHEREAS, recently declassified Department of Defense documents reveal that U.S. service members were exposed to multiple toxic hazards while stationed at K2, including jet fuel, kerosene, dangerous levels of particulate matter in the air, as well as possible exposure to depleted uranium; and

WHEREAS, other health assessment tests found the base had elevated levels of volatile organic compounds, and total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) were detected at numerous locations throughout K2; and

WHEREAS, air samples at the base found elevated levels of tetrachloroethylene, as well as the residuals of chemical weapons including cyanide in the showers; and

WHEREAS, a 2015 U.S. Army study found that veterans exposed at K2 have a 500% increased likelihood of developing cancer, to include malignant melanoma and neoplasms of the lymphatic and hematopoietic tissues; 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 may suffer from disabling conditions that are not immediately identified as a result of such exposures; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not recognize or acknowledge service at K2 with high probability of exposure to any toxic exposures; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the recognition of the existence of toxic substances and environmental hazards at K2, and concession of exposure by all U.S. service members who served at K2 between January 1, 2001 and December 31, 2005; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to grant K2 veterans eligibility to VA health care, to include hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care by expanding the definition of toxic exposures in title 38, United States Code, section 1710; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports studies to identify illnesses and diseases that have a positive association, including a sufficient, limited, or suggestive association, with exposure to any toxic substances or high levels of particulate matter and dust resulting from open burn pits that may have been at K2.

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RESOLUTION NO. 084
OPPOSE LONG-TERM ROUNDING DOWN OF COST-OF-LIVING
ADJUSTMENTS IN VETERANS BENEFITS

WHEREAS, to maintain the worth of veterans benefits, they must be adjusted to keep pace with the rise in the cost of living; and

WHEREAS, long-term rounding down of adjusted rates to the next lower dollar amount erodes the value of these benefits over time and thus does not keep pace with the rise in the cost of living; and

WHEREAS, the rounding down of veterans' cost-of-living adjustments (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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes long-term rounding down COLAs for veterans disability compensation, and compensation to their dependents and survivors.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 085
SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD EXEMPT THE BENEFITS PAID TO
WARTIME SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS FROM THE “PAY-
GO/CUT-GO” PROVISIONS OF THE BUDGET ENFORCEMENT ACT

WHEREAS, wartime disabled veterans have earned the benefits and services they, their dependents and survivors receive from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as a result of the injuries sustained during wartime service; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services received by wartime disabled veterans as a result of their service-connected disabilities is an extension of the costs of war; and

WHEREAS, this country has a moral obligation to continue to care for these citizen-soldiers who have risen in defense and support of the ideals of this great nation and who have returned to civilian life with service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services provided to America's veterans, dependents and survivors have not caused this nation's deficit problems; and

WHEREAS, the so-called “PAYGO/CUTGO” provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act require any new benefits or services to be paid out of existing benefits or programs, in effect, requiring one group of disabled veterans to give up a benefit or service so that another worthy group of wartime disabled veterans can receive benefits or services to which they are entitled; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of budget caps and sequestration have often limited the ability of congressional appropriations committees to fully fund all veterans programs, services and benefits; and

WHEREAS, veterans suffering from ailments associated with their service in the military are compensated from funds generated by cutting the benefits of other service-connected veterans and their survivors; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services provided to wartime disabled veterans are unique and not a gratuitous benefit; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 086
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 that have been in effect for 10 years without change in evaluation with no further examination scheduled; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 087
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, VA and DOD must collaborate and share necessary deployment, health and exposure data to better address the health conditions experienced by disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, these studies to establish and recognize relationships between exposures and diseases, take several years to accomplish, requiring veterans to establish claims on a direct basis without conceded exposure to such toxins; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 088
OPPOSE ANY PROPOSAL THAT WOULD REDUCE PAYMENTS OF
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DISABILITY COMPENSATION BY
PAYMENTS OF SOCIAL SECURITY INSURANCE, SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY
INSURANCE OR ANY OTHER FEDERAL BENEFIT PAID TO A VETERAN

WHEREAS, consideration has been given to offsetting Social Security Insurance (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits from any other federal benefit; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of such a measure would reduce the overall income provided to veterans who have a compensable service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, such an offset creates undue hardship on totally disabled service-connected veterans and their families by drastically reducing their total income; and

WHEREAS, benefits received from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or under military retirement pay and other federal programs have differing eligibility criteria compared to eligibility for SSI or SSDI benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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.

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RESOLUTION NO. 089
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 that include many types of cancer, as well as diabetes and other chronic diseases may not be aware that they may be eligible for service connection, even if they are being treated in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility; and

WHEREAS, many VA medical facilities are not currently staffed or equipped to provide appropriate counseling to veterans or their families on how to file a claim for service-connected benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 092
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST
CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF MILITARY RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS
DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR ALL LONGEVITY RETIRED VETERANS

WHEREAS, current law provides that service-connected veterans rated less than 50% disabled who retire from the armed forces based on length of service do not receive disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in addition to full military retired pay; and

WHEREAS, proposed changes to military retirement plans and changes to the definition of longevity retired veterans by the Department of Defense could affect the veterans with service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, these disabled veterans must therefore surrender retired pay in an amount equal to the disability compensation they receive; and

WHEREAS, this offset is unfair to veterans who have served faithfully in military careers inasmuch as these veterans have earned their retired pay by virtue of their long service to the nation and wholly apart from disabilities due to military service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to repeal the offset between military longevity retired pay and VA disability compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 093
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 indebtedness to the United States government, in addition to the principal amount of such indebtedness, are assessed and must pay interest charges; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, Congress enacted the Prompt Payment Act, Public Law 97-177, to require federal agencies to pay their bills to outside vendors on a timely basis or pay interest penalties to the outside vendors when payments are made late; and

WHEREAS, VA claimants who are denied timely receipt of their rightfully earned benefits do not receive interest payments from the government and therefore incur a loss of income, which could have been avoided had they received their earned benefits in a timely fashion; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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. 094 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, which recognizes the high incidence of acoustic trauma by veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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. 095 SUPPORT MEANINGFUL CLAIMS AND APPEALS PROCESSING REFORM

WHEREAS, Congress has created a system for the administration of veterans benefits and services, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is responsible for processing veterans claims and appeals for a myriad of benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, the number of claims filed and appeals each year is growing, the complexity of claims and appeals filed is increasing, the backlog of non-rating claims and appeals pending is too large, and the accuracy of claims must continue to be approved; and

WHEREAS, VBA's primary emphasis of reducing the disability claims backlog resulted in less attention to other work that led to significant increases in non-rating related claims and a rising backlog of appeals; and

WHEREAS, VBA has reached out to veterans service organizations accredited to represent veterans in the claims process for assistance in reforming its claims processing system, particularly the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) because of our experience and success in representing more than 300,000 veterans each year; and

WHEREAS, VBAS has made measurable progress in reducing the number of disability claims pending in the backlog (defined as those pending more than 125 days), while also improving accuracy; 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, VBA is in the process of modernizing the system for adjudicating veterans' appeals; and

WHEREAS, when VBA reports on the average days pending for claims, VBA does not include non-rating claims, and these claims are just as important and should be accounted for when reporting average days of pending claims; and

WHEREAS, any claims or appeals reform must preserve or enhance veterans' due process rights and ensure that adjudications are fair, accurate, timely, and of acceptable quality; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on Congress and VBA to support significant and meaningful claims and appeals processing reform to address VA's overall claims and appeals workloads; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress and VBA ensure that all proposals to streamline and automate the claims development and rating process fully protect veterans rights and that automated rating processes, such as automated decision letters, provide sufficient and specific information to inform veterans and their advocates about the reasons and bases for rating decisions; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on VA and Congress to ensure that sufficient funding is requested and provided to complete all reform and transformation initiatives; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation and other policies that will strengthen training, testing and quality control, as well as accountability measures to ensure that VBA leaders and employees develop a corporate culture focused on getting each claims decided right the first time; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to give due deference to private medical evidence that is competent, credible, probative and otherwise adequate for rating purposes, as well as legislation and policies that encourage the use of private medical evidence, including allowing private physicians to gain access to all Disability Benefit Questionnaires.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 096 EXPAND PRESUMPTIONS FOR SERVICE CONNECTION FOR FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR

WHEREAS, former prisoners of war (POWs) suffered cruel and inhumane treatment, together with nutritional deprivation at the hands of their captors, which resulted in long-term adverse health effects; and

WHEREAS, POWs were subjected to numerous and varying forms of abuse dependent upon the place, time and circumstance of their captivity by the enemy; and

WHEREAS, for this reason, former POWs suffer from a wide range of physical and psychological maladies; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation which would add those medical conditions that are characteristically associated with or can be reasonably attributed to the POW experience as presumptive disorders for former POWs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 097 SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) TO PROVIDE CHILD CARE SERVICES/ASSISTANCE TO VETERANS ATTENDING VA PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not provide child care assistance or services for veterans; and

WHEREAS, multiple studies and surveys reveal that a significant barrier for veterans seeking and obtaining VA services is child care; and

WHEREAS, child care services would assist in removing a major obstacle for veterans, while vastly improving their ability to successfully comply with health care treatment and complete training, rehabilitative, and education programs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 099

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCREASE DISABILITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, it is the historical policy of DAV that this nation's first duty to veterans is to provide for the rehabilitation of its wartime disabled; and

WHEREAS, the percentage ratings for service-connected disabilities represent, as far as can be practicably determined, the average impairment in earning capacity resulting from such disabilities in civil occupations; and

WHEREAS, compensation increases should be based primarily on the loss of earning capacity; and WHEREAS, disabled veterans who are unable to work because of service-connected disabilities should be entitled to compensation payments commensurate with the after-tax earnings of their able-bodied contemporaries; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 100

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW ALL VETERANS TO RECOVER TAXES ON DISABILITY SEVERANCE PAY

WHEREAS, certain funds received by military service members determined to be unfit for duty as a result of personal injury or disability are not taxable; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) continues to tax military disability severance pay as regular income; and

WHEREAS, a United States District Court held that such military disability severance pay is nontaxable income; and

WHEREAS, the IRS has subsequently acquiesced to the District Court holding; and

WHEREAS, a three-year statute of limitation prevents individuals who have been discharged for more than three years from recovering the taxed funds taken by the IRS; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, strongly supports legislation that would allow all veterans to recover taxes from their disability severance pay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 101

SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT REQUIRES THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO CONSIDER PRIVATE MEDICAL EVIDENCE SUPPLIED BY LICENSED PRIVATE HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

WHEREAS, section 5125, title 38, United States Code, Acceptance of Reports of Private Physician Examinations, authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to accept private reports in the adjudication of claims for veterans disability benefits; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Health Administration personnel, to include nurse practitioners and physician assistants in independent practices, of equal training and background to their private-sector counterparts, are authorized to complete such medical reports for VA adjudication purposes; and

WHEREAS, submission of private medical records by a claimant, if otherwise adequate for rating purposes, provides claimants with an alternate means to procure evidence in support of their claims, rather than being required to attend mandatory compensation and pension examinations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks the enactment of legislation that would require 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. 102
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 Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, supports legislation to provide a realistic cost-of-living allowance for our nation's disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 104
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXCLUDE VETERANS DISABILITY
COMPENSATION FROM COUNTABLE INCOME FOR PURPOSES
OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS AND SERVICES FROM
OTHER GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, by virtue of their service and sacrifices, disabled veterans deserve special benefits that are separate and in addition to benefits the government provides to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, compensation for the effects of service-connected disabilities is counted as income in determinations of eligibility for other government benefits and programs, such as low-income housing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS, the value of compensation is negated and its purposes are defeated when a veteran's receipt of compensation is used to reduce or deny entitlement to government benefits or services available to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, when a veteran's compensation is offset against other entitlements, it is in effect deducted from eligibility for services generally available to citizens who did not serve, and thus the veteran receives nothing for his or her disability and is thus not compensated; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, seeks legislation to exclude veterans disability compensation from countable income for purposes of eligibility for benefits or services under other government programs.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 105
SUPPORT OVERSIGHT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS PRACTICES IN EVALUATING DISABILITY CLAIMS
FOR RESIDUALS OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA**

WHEREAS, DAV maintains a long-standing resolution from our membership that advocates an open process to govern establishment of service connection for diseases and injuries incurred in or aggravated during military service; and

WHEREAS, establishing a causal relationship between certain injuries and later disability can be daunting due to lack of records or human factors that obscure or prevent documentation or even basic investigation of such incidents after they occur; and

WHEREAS, military sexual trauma is ever more recognized as a hazard of service for 1% of men serving and 20% of women serving in the armed forces and later represents a heavy burden of psychological and mental health care for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, an absence of documentation of military sexual trauma in the personnel or military unit records of injured individuals prevents or obstructs adjudication of claims for disabilities of this deserving group injured during their service, and may interrupt or prevent their care by 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 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, VA has trained adjudication personnel, especially its rating staffs in VA regional offices, in better evaluating disability claims for military sexual assaults and has emphasized these particular claims must be made subject to special attention in consonance with the new regulation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports VA's practices in evaluating disability claims associated with military sexual trauma, and urges 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. 106
OPPOSE SUBJECTING DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY
AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO MEANS TESTING

WHEREAS, the citizens of our nation heretofore have honorably recognized their indebtedness to those who sacrificed in military service by providing disability compensation as restitution for injuries, illnesses or diseases suffered in such service; and

WHEREAS, a disabled veteran is rightfully entitled to compensation for the effects of service-connected disability, without regard to any good fortune or income of the veteran or spouse from sources independent of the government's obligations to the veteran; and

WHEREAS, it is unfair for the government to seek to disclaim its obligation to disabled veterans or their survivors merely because of the receipt of other, unrelated income; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the special status of disability compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, efforts have been made to deploy a means test to reduce or eliminate them in cases in which the veteran, spouse or survivor has obtained other income; and

WHEREAS, degrading compensation by providing it to the extent of the veteran's or survivor's economic needs rather than as a measure of restitution for personal injury or illness, thereby disassociates compensation from that which merits it and associates it with factors that govern purely gratuitous benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes any proposal to means test disability compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 113
SUPPORT A MORE LIBERAL REVIEW OF OTHER THAN HONORABLE
DISCHARGES IN CASES OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER,
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY, MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AND OTHER
TRAUMA FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, former service members who receive a non-punitive 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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 114
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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes any change in law to provide for lump-sum payments of Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 115
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 VA's workload; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes any change in law to limit the time for filing compensation claims.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 116
OPPOSE ANY CHANGE THAT WOULD REDEFINE
SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY OR RESTRICT THE CONDITIONS
OR CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH IT MAY BE ESTABLISHED**

WHEREAS, current law authorizes service connection for disabilities incurred or aggravated during service in the United States armed forces in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, various proposals have been made to limit service connection to disabilities caused directly by the performance of duty; and

WHEREAS, disability incurred in the line of duty is sometimes not directly due to a job injury but may be due to less obvious factors attributable to the armed forces environment; and

WHEREAS, proof of a causal relationship may often be difficult or impossible notwithstanding an inability to dissociate the disability from service-related factors; and

WHEREAS, current law equitably alleviates the onerous burden of establishing performance of duty or other causal connection as a prerequisite for service connection; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes changes in current law so as to redefine and restrict the conditions under which service connection may be established.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 117
OPPOSE CHANGE OF DEFINITION OF A HERBICIDE AGENT
FOR THE PURPOSES OF ESTABLISHING SERVICE CONNECTION
FOR DISABILITIES RELATED TO HERBICIDE EXPOSURE**

WHEREAS, section 1116, title 38, United States Code (USC), defines a "herbicide agent" as a chemical in a herbicide used in support of the United States and allied military operations in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and

WHEREAS, 38 USC §1116 states that for the purposes of establishing service connection for a disability or death resulting from exposure to a herbicide agent, including a presumption of service connection, a veteran who, during active military, naval or air service, served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, shall be presumed to have been exposed during such service to a herbicide agent containing dioxin or 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid, and may be presumed to have been exposed during such service to any other chemical compound in a herbicide; and

WHEREAS, congressional records indicate the Secretary of Defense acknowledged herbicides were used on the Korean demilitarized zone as early as April 1968; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Manual M21-1 acknowledges herbicides were used at eight specific Royal Thai Air Force bases; and

WHEREAS, the Administration's proposed budget for fiscal year 2019 seeks to amend 38 USC §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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes any change of definition of herbicides that would limit service connection only to those veterans physically in Vietnam.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 118
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE
CONNECTION FOR DISEASES AND ILLNESSES RELATED TO
CONTAMINANTS AT FORT MCCLELLAN, ALABAMA

WHEREAS, after World War II until the base closed in 1999, Fort McClellan, located in Anniston, Alabama, was home of the Chemical Corps and Chemical Weapons school for the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, in 1953, Fort McClellan conducted "Operation Top Hat" which used military personnel to test exposure and decontamination methods that included sulfur mustard and nerve agents; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Fort McClellan added the Biological Radiological Agency, Aberdeen Proving Grounds; and

WHEREAS, the 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 Ft. McClellan containing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) trichloroethylene (TCEs), Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs), semi-volatile organic compound (SVOCs), pesticides, explosives, heavy metals (Pb), unexploded ordinance (UXO), radioactive sources, and non-stockpile chemical materials; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 Institute of Medicine (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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 119
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 Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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. 120
COMPENSATE PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS SUFFERING
FROM ILLNESSES CIRCUMSTANTIALLY LINKED TO THEIR
SERVICE IN THE PERSIAN GULF WAR**

WHEREAS, DAV has a significant concern regarding the multitude of ailments reported by a growing number of Persian Gulf War veterans who were exposed to both identified and unknown health hazards; and

WHEREAS, Persian Gulf War veterans were exposed to numerous and various environmental health hazards, including smoke from oil field fires and other petroleum agents, depleted uranium, chemical and biological elements, desert parasites, vaccines, chemoprophylactic agents and vehicle paints; and

WHEREAS, primary investigations and multifarious studies have thus far failed to identify the source or sources of these ailments; and

WHEREAS, the scientific/medical community's inability to identify the source(s) and pathological nature of the disease has caused considerable anxiety for these veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, there appears to be a commonality of ailments plaguing Persian Gulf War veterans; and

WHEREAS, these ailments have been unofficially labeled "Persian Gulf Syndrome," "Multiple Chemical Sensitivity" and "Chronic Fatigue Syndrome;" and

WHEREAS, based on Government Accounting Office (GAO) Report (GAO 17-511) findings, approval rates for Gulf War Illness claims are about three times lower than for all other claimed disabilities which is due, in large part, to current law requiring veterans to suffer from an "undiagnosed" or "medically unexplained" illness for eligibility to receive disability compensation for medical conditions occurring in Persian Gulf War veterans; and

WHEREAS, based on the available medical evidence medical examiners must rule out all known diseases that could cause the 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 Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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 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. 121
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 VA's three medical care accounts that fund VA health care programs; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted Public Law 113-235, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015, that requires advance appropriations for three mandatory accounts of the Veterans Benefits Administration, compensation and pensions, readjustment benefits, and veterans insurance and indemnities; and

WHEREAS, VA's leadership, employees and veterans served by VA health care facilities have universally reported that advance appropriations have allowed 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 VA's discretionary budget, which includes information technology (IT), medical and prosthetic research, construction and general operating expenses—primarily the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)—could benefit from the timeliness and predictability offered by advance appropriations, particularly when unrelated budget stalemates, continuing resolutions and sequestration occur; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 111-81 required the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study and report to Congress and the public on VA's budget submissions in fiscal years 2011, 2012 and 2013, including an evaluation of VA's budget estimates compared to the forecasts made by VA's internal actuarial model; and

WHEREAS, GAO reported significant findings of unjustified, questionable changes VA made during the internal budget development process, limitations of budget justifications and questionable reliability of proposed savings estimates; and

WHEREAS, recent budget requests for advance appropriations by the Administration and advance appropriations amounts provided for by Congress continue to be insufficient to meet the full demand for VA benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, DAV and congressional sponsors of the advance appropriations concept anticipated that full implementation of Public Law 111-81 would require continued oversight from Congress, DAV and others; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to authorize advance appropriations for all of 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 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. 122
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCLUDE CHILDREN IN LEGAL CUSTODY AS A
DEPENDENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PURPOSES

WHEREAS, per Title 10, United States Code, (USC) § 1072(2)(I), military service members and military retirees can claim a dependent child that is an unmarried person who is placed in the legal custody of the member or former member as a result of an order of a court of competent jurisdiction in the United States (or possession of the United States); and

WHEREAS, 38 USC § 101 (4)(A) in part, defines dependent child as a person under the age of eighteen years, or who before attaining the age of eighteen, became permanently incapable of support, or who after attaining the age of eighteen but not after attaining the age of twenty-three, 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 VA purposes; however, the child would be recognized by the Department of Defense, therefore creating an inequity; and

WHEREAS, the veteran and the child are placed at an disadvantage of not being able to utilize VA programs and benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 123
SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE
CONNECTION FOR ADDITIONAL DISEASES RELATED TO
CONTAMINATED WATER AT CAMP LEJEUNE

WHEREAS, military personnel and their families were exposed to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, from August 1, 1953 to December 31, 1987; and

WHEREAS, the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 established 15 different conditions where the exposed military personnel and their families were eligible to seek treatment at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health facilities at no cost; and

WHEREAS, the conditions identified for cost-free health care were esophageal cancer, lung cancer, breast cancer, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, leukemia, multiple myeloma, myelodysplastic syndromes, renal toxicity, hepatic steatosis, female infertility, miscarriage, scleroderma, neurobehavioral effects, and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs established the presumptive list for service connection for diseases associated with said water supply exposure as of January 2017 and included only eight conditions: adult leukemia, aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, liver cancer, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary will continue to review relevant information to support the creation of additional presumptive conditions, as it becomes available; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 900,000 service members were potentially exposed to the tainted water; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 150
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXPAND DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS MENTAL HEALTH TRANSITION SERVICES
TO ALL SERVICE MEMBERS UPON DISCHARGE

WHEREAS, at present, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides limited mental health transition services to individuals who have incurred a traumatic physical injury; and

WHEREAS, individual service members being discharged with severe mental health issues due to traumatic experiences incurred on active duty are not being identified for enrollment in mental health transition services; and

WHEREAS, the VA has committed to expanding its suicide prevention programs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports enacting legislation that would expand the provision of mental health transition services to individuals who have, or are reasonably suspected to have been, exposed to traumatic events including, but not limited to, military sexual trauma, combat or other exposure to a hostile military or terrorist activity, natural or man-made disaster, or an individual disaster that would reasonably be believed by the layperson to have caused significant emotional distress.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 162
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE AND REFORM DEPENDENCY
AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION BENEFITS

WHEREAS, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) was created in 1993 and has only been minimally adjusted since then; and

WHEREAS, DIC payments were intended to provide surviving spouses with the means to maintain some semblance of economic stability; and

WHEREAS, survivors who rely solely on the disabled veteran’s compensation face significant financial hardships upon the death of the veteran; and

WHEREAS, monthly benefits for survivors of federal civil service retirees are calculated as a percentage of the civil service retiree’s Federal Employees Retirement (FERS) or Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) benefits, up to 55%; and

WHEREAS, recent legislation has reduced the survivor’s remarriage age from 57 to 55; and

WHEREAS, now survivors in receipt of DIC benefits risk losing entitlement if they remarry before the age of 55; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, strongly supports legislation that improves and reforms DIC benefits to include increasing the monthly amount and lowering the remarriage age for survivors of disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 167
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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 168 SUPPORT LEGISLATION RECOGNIZING RACIAL TRAUMA AS A STRESSOR FOR POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

WHEREAS, current regulations direct that credible supporting evidence that the claimed in-service stressor occurred, 38 CFR §3.304(f); and

WHEREAS, that regulation currently recognizes five situations where the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has specifically set out criteria for special consideration of the stressor: (1) diagnosed during service, (2) combat, (3) fear of hostile military or terrorist activity, (4) prisoner of war, and (5) in-service personal assault; and

WHEREAS, a service member experiencing a racial trauma is exposed to an unexpected scenario in which they are largely helpless and over which they have no control; and

WHEREAS, their response may include feelings of anger, confusion, disbelief, dysphoria, fear, feelings of desocialization or derealization, hopelessness, humiliation, rage, shame and shock; and

WHEREAS, these recognized traumatic reactions may result in the disabled veteran experiencing and manifesting symptom clusters consistent with a diagnosis of PTSD, including:

Re-experiencing through distressing memories, flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, nightmares, physical and emotional distress at reminders, and

Avoidance through agoraphobia, attempting not to think about it, avoidance of people the same or similar race that is responsible for the racial trauma, isolation, substance use/abuse, and

Negative alterations in cognitions manifested by the presence of anger, anxiety, belief that the world is unsafe, depression, guilt, helplessness and/or hopelessness, horror, inability to trust, self-blame, and/or self-doubt, and

Alterations in arousal and reactivity that may include anger/rage with little provocation, concentration and memory problems, diminished interest or participation in prior significant activities, guilt, hypervigilance, fear, increased startle response, irritability, reckless or self-destructive behavior, reduction in positive emotions, sadness, shame, sleep impairment, social withdrawal, verbal and/or physical aggression; and

WHEREAS, the law and regulations currently in effect require the veteran to provide "credible supporting evidence that the claimed in-service stressor occurred;" and

WHEREAS, this limitation on the law limits the disabled veteran's ability to prove their case where the assailants may have been in their chain of command and therefore would be the ones responsible for ensuring the documentation, or lack thereof, of the incident; and

WHEREAS, even in the presence of a racial trauma perpetuated outside of the chain of command, the disabled veteran may not have been able to ensure formal documentation either through invalidation by those members of their command or due to fear and shame of reprisal or invalidation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to specifically include racial trauma as one of the identified categories of stressors in 38 CFR §3.304(f).

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 170
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO DIRECT THE SECRETARY OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS TO COORDINATE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE TO VERIFY DEPENDENCY STATUS

WHEREAS, current law and regulations allow for additional compensation for veterans who have a service-connected disability rating of 30% or more for the dependents; and

WHEREAS, it is the veteran's responsibility to inform the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) of changes in dependency; and

WHEREAS, veterans are often confused by the different sections of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and report changes to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and/or through the Department of Defense's Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS); and

WHEREAS, VBA will establish an overpayment due to dependency changes that were not directly reported to VBA regardless of whether VHA and/or DEERS reflected the changes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to formally direct the VA Secretary to accept any reports of dependency changes made to the VHA and/or documented in DEERS to mitigate any alleged overpayment due to changes in dependency status; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to formally direct the VA Secretary to establish a method to accept and incorporate DEERS changes automatically into the VBA process, and to allow VHA changes to dependency to be reported to VBA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 171
SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION TO ENSURE THAT TOTAL
DISABILITY BASED ON INDIVIDUAL UNEMPLOYABILITY REMAINS
AVAILABLE FOR ALL VETERANS REGARDLESS OF AGE OR RECEIPT
OF ANY OTHER EARNED FEDERAL BENEFITS

WHEREAS, when a veteran's disability is rated less than a total 100% evaluation, but he or she is unable to obtain or maintain substantial gainful employment, VA regulations allow the veteran to apply for Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU); and

WHEREAS, TDIU is based on the severity of the individual veteran's unique disability picture and its impact on the veteran's ability to obtain and maintain substantial gainful employment. Generally, the veteran must have a single disability rated at 60% or a combined evaluation of 70% to be eligible for TDIU; and

WHEREAS, reports published by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) in November 2013, August 2014, and December 2016, as well as the Government Accounting Office (GAO) report in June 2015, made recommendations to limit TDIU based on age and entitlement to additional earned federal benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Administration's proposed 2018 budget contained a proposal to terminate IU ratings for veterans at age of 62 and cut off TDIU benefits for any veteran already in receipt of Social Security retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, the December 2018 CBO report contained a proposal to terminate IU ratings for veterans at age of 65 and cut off TDIU benefits for any veteran already in receipt of Social Security retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, VA regulation 38 C.F.R. § 4.19, states the VA is precluded from considering the veteran's age in their determination of a TDIU; and

WHEREAS, TDIU is not a retirement or pension program and is neither similar nor related to Social Security retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, a VA determination of a TDIU is not the same nor is it similar to federal unemployment insurance; it is a disability compensation benefit; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to enact legislation to protect TDIU for it to remain available for all veterans regardless of age or receipt of any other earned federal benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 172

REMOVE THE DELIMITING DATE FOR PERSIAN GULF VETERANS' ILLNESSES

WHEREAS, thousands of Gulf War veterans still suffer from chronic and unexplained physical symptoms; and

WHEREAS, current law limits filing dates for illnesses and injuries in veterans from certain service during active-duty periods, including the Southwest Asia theater of military operations; and

WHEREAS, 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% or more not later than December 31, 2026;” 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 assure that benefits and services are available when those conditions ultimately manifest; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to support legislation to remove the delimiting date for disabilities as a result of active-duty services in the Southwest Asia theater of operation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 173

SUPPORT COMPENSABLE EVALUATIONS FOR CERTAIN DISABILITIES CURRENTLY AT ZERO PERCENT

WHEREAS, the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities assigns a noncompensable rating for asymptomatic disabilities; and

WHEREAS, a noncompensable rating does not contemplate required medications, prosthetic appliances, or employment interference; and

WHEREAS, the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities provides a compensable rating of 10% for other disabilities that require medication only, such as chronic fatigue disorder, coronary artery disease, and hypothyroidism; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the assignment of a compensable evaluation of 10% for noncompensable disabilities that require medication, prosthetic appliances, or show employment interference.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 174

SUPPORT COMPENSATION AND PENSION EXAMINATIONS DONE BY PRIVATE CONTRACTORS BE PLACED IN THE VETERAN'S DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL RECORDS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can require a veteran to have a Compensation and Pension (C&P) examination when filing a claim; and

WHEREAS, the VA has been contracting out examinations to be conducted by contracted entities; and

WHEREAS, the C&P examinations are physical examinations of the veteran; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the requirement that all C&P examinations done by contracted doctors/entities be placed in the veteran's VA medical record.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 178
SUPPORT RESOURCES AND OVERSIGHT OF THE APPEALS PROCESS

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) implemented the Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act (AMA), which impacts decisions at the Veterans Benefits Administration, the existing legacy appeals and AMA appeals at the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board); and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year (FY) 2020, the Board issued 102,663 decisions and surpassed its FY 2020 goal of 91,500 decisions by over 11,000 cases; and

WHEREAS, the Board improved FY 2021 decision output by approximately 8% over FY 2019's 95,089 decisions; and

WHEREAS, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as of July 2021, there were over 90,000 pending hearings at the Board; and

WHEREAS, as of July 2021, the Board announced that, due to the pandemic, they will not be able to complete all pending legacy appeals by October 2022 as previously established; and

WHEREAS, in FY 2021, the Board received an additional 20 veterans law judges with required attorneys and support staff; and

WHEREAS, DAV and the Independent Budget recommended an additional 200 Board employees to address the backlog of appeals and hearings; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on Congress to provide effective and continued oversight of the legacy and AMA appeals processes to ensure that adequate resources are provided to resolve the backlog of legacy appeals and the backlog of pending hearings at the Board, as well as provide regular oversight to monitor and measure the VA's progress so these reforms achieve their intended purpose.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 180
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCREASE MAXIMUM EVALUATION FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED HEADACHES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) rating schedule notes that the minimum schedular rating for consideration of Individual Unemployability is 60% for a single condition, or a combination of 70% with one of them being at least 40%); and

WHEREAS, at present, a veteran with the highest schedular rating for headaches, 50%, must be shown to have a very frequent completely prostrating and prolonged attack productive of severe economic inadaptability as stated at title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, section 4.124a, diagnostic code 8100; and

WHEREAS, a veteran currently in receipt of the maximum 50% rating for headaches due to very frequent completely prostrating and prolonged attacks productive of severe economic inadaptability would not also qualify for consideration of a claim for Individual Unemployability based on that single disability; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, proposes that the VA amend its regulations to increase the maximum evaluation for an individual with migraine headaches from the current 50% evaluation to a 60% rating to more appropriately address the industrial impairment attributable to that level of disability.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 221
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 (USC), 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, USC; 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, USC; and

WHEREAS, these service-connected disabled veterans should be provided the adaptive equipment necessary to safely operate a motor vehicle; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 222
SUPPORT A CHANGE IN REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS
FOR TEMPORARY TOTAL DISABILITY RATINGS

WHEREAS, with advances in modern medicine and increasing emphasis on more efficient use of health care resources, health care providers are being encouraged to utilize suitable alternatives to inpatient care; and

WHEREAS, as a consequence, veterans are often treated through home health services or convalesce at home rather than in hospital; and

WHEREAS, convalescent ratings are currently only authorized where inpatient or outpatient treatment resulted in surgery or immobilization of a major joint by cast; and

WHEREAS, instances occur in which a veteran's treatment does not involve surgery or casting of a major joint, but the veteran undergoes healing, convalescence or a therapeutic course in the home, with a duration of one month or more; and

WHEREAS, exacerbation of a service-connected disability sometimes contraindicates work or other activities for periods of one month or more; and

WHEREAS, in such instances, a therapeutic course, convalescence or restriction from work for one month or more would occur in the home in lieu of hospitalization; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 223
ESTABLISH IMMEDIATE AUTHORIZATION OF GRANTS BY THE BOARD OF
VETERANS' APPEALS ON ALL CASES ADVANCED ON THE DOCKET

WHEREAS, in a case before the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board), an appellant can request the case advanced on the docket, due to financial hardship, homelessness, and/or a serious illness; and

WHEREAS, once the Board grants an appeal that is advanced on the docket, it is then sent to either the agency of original jurisdiction (AOJ) or the Appeals Resource Center (ARC) for the decision to be granted, authorized and promulgated prior to payment of benefits to an appellant; and

WHEREAS, the average processing time of these cases by the AOJ or the ARC can be more than 90 days; and

WHEREAS, many appellants with serious illness die prior to the grant and authorization; and

WHEREAS, this delay defeats the purpose of the Board granting a case to be advanced on the docket; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 235
SUPPORT REFORMS RELATING TO RECOVERY OF DEBTS
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, it is a reasonable expectation that recipients of overpayments are required to repay the debt; and

WHEREAS, the current overpayment and debt system allows the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to collect debts regardless of when the debt was created; and

WHEREAS, debt collections by the VA include complete recoupment of the veteran's monthly benefit payments, and in many cases, put the veteran at risk of financial hardships; and

WHEREAS, additional amounts of debt created by VA's lack of timely action are often added to the debt, thus creating an inequity on the veteran; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to reform the VA overpayment and debt collection systems; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to limit the amount of monies recouped from the veteran's monthly payment to not greater than 25% of the payment amount; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation preventing the VA from collecting debts incurred more than five years prior; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation that requires the VA to waive any additional amounts of debt created by their own lack of timely action on evidence and information received regarding but not limited to dependency changes, income changes, drill status, education changes, or incarceration adjustments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 241
EXTEND ELIGIBILITY FOR VETERANS' MORTGAGE PROTECTION
LIFE INSURANCE TO SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS RATED
PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED

WHEREAS, Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) is presently available to veterans entitled to the specially adapted housing award under section 2101(a), title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, service-connected veterans rated as permanently and totally disabled cannot obtain mortgage life insurance through commercial insurance companies; and

WHEREAS, their survivors and dependents must bear an undue hardship upon the death of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VMLI program provides mortgage life insurance to severely disabled veterans and service members who have also received a specially adapted housing grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend VMLI to service-connected veterans who are rated as permanently and totally disabled.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 242
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, in 2019, the Appeals Modernization Act (AMA) established three ways for a claimant to take action on a decision, a Supplemental Claims, a Higher Level Review or a Notice of Disagreement and thus allowing attorneys or agents to charge a fee for counseling and representation following any of the three noted; and

WHEREAS, the initial intent of veterans' benefits recognized that no disabled veteran should have to pay an attorney significant fees to obtain the benefits that a grateful nation provides and the veteran is rightfully due; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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. 244
SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT CONCEDES EXPOSURE TO HERBICIDE
AGENTS OF SERVICE MEMBERS WHO SERVED IN GUAM, AMERICAN
SAMOA AND JOHNSTON ATOLL DURING THE VIETNAM ERA

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has claimed that the herbicides sprayed on the Pacific islands of Guam, American Samoa and Johnston Atoll were commercial herbicides rather than tactical herbicides; and

WHEREAS, the VA has denied disability compensation claims related to exposure to herbicides by veterans who served in Guam, American Samoa and Johnston Atoll on this basis; and

WHEREAS, in a 2018 report, the Government Accountability Office stated that both commercial and tactical herbicides contain the chemicals 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D, the toxins in Agent Orange, which, when combined, make the deadly toxin 2,3,7,8-TCDD; and

WHEREAS, in May 2020, the National Veterans Legal Services Program and the Veterans Legal Services Clinic published a report indicating that veterans who served in Guam from 1962 to 1975 were at least as likely as not exposed to herbicides during their service, to include dioxin-containing herbicides other than Agent Orange; and

WHEREAS, veterans who served in American Samoa during the Vietnam era claim to have witnessed Agent Orange or other herbicides transported or stored at the island; and

WHEREAS, evidence in private and government records shows that Agent Orange was stored on Johnston Atoll between 1972 and 1977, that the herbicide was disposed of at sea during the summer of 1977, and military personnel were likely exposed during storage and disposal ; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, supports enactment of legislation that concedes exposure to herbicide agents of service members who served in Guam, American Samoa and Johnston Atoll during the Vietnam era.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 246
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CONCEDE SARIN GAS
EXPOSURE, RESEARCH AND PRESUMPTIVE DISEASES
FOR PERSIAN GULF VETERANS**

WHEREAS, the United States had a buildup of almost 700,000 U.S. troops deployed to the Persian Gulf region during the height of the buildup and the war; and

WHEREAS, since returning, many of these veterans have experienced medical issues unique to their service in the Southwest Asia theater of operations; and

WHEREAS, while the exact cause of these symptoms were unknown, the Department of Defense (DOD) has stated that a variety of potentially hazardous symptoms, such as pesticides, some from oil well fires, and depleted uranium could be linked; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides disability compensation benefits to veterans who served in Southwest Asia for illnesses that fall into the following three categories: (1) Undiagnosed illnesses (established in 1994); (2) Medically unexplained chronic multisymptom illnesses (established in 2001); (3) Nine specific infectious diseases (established in 2010); and

WHEREAS, according to VA more than 1.1 million veterans served in the Southwest theater of operations and estimates that 44% of veterans who served have medical issues commonly referred to as Gulf War Illness; and

WHEREAS, in the Government Accountability Office (GAO) 2017 report states Gulf War Illness claims were denied at a higher rate than all other claimed disabilities; and

WHEREAS, unclassified records confirm that rockets filled with sarin and cyclosarin were found at a munitions storage depot in Iraq and were destroyed by U.S. troops in 1991 and an undetermined amount of the gas was released into the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that over 250,000 Servicemembers were exposed to these nerve agents; and

WHEREAS, in the May 2022 issue of "Environmental Health Perspectives Journal", Dr. Robert Haley, stated that his findings provide strong evidence for an etiologic role of the nerve agent in Gulf War Illness; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to concede sarin gas exposure for all veterans who served in the Southwest Asia area of operations; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports scientific studies and reports to determine the potential long-term negative health impacts of sarin and cyclosarin; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports establishing benefits and presumptive diseases related specifically to the two nerve agents.

* * *

**RESOLUTION NO. 277
SUPPORT A CHANGE IN REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS
RATING UNDER SECTION 4.30 OF TITLE 38, CODE OF FEDERAL
REGULATIONS TO PROVIDE FOR A TEMPORARY TOTAL RATING
FOR INCAPACITATION OF MORE THAN 21 DAYS**

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 the 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, there are instances where the veteran's treatment did not involve surgery or casting of a major joint, but the veteran has undergone healing, convalescence, or a therapeutic course in the home, with a duration of more than 21 days; and

WHEREAS, exacerbation of a service-connected disability sometimes makes work activities contraindicated for periods of more than 21 days; and

WHEREAS, in such instances, the therapeutic course, convalescence, or restriction from work would occur in the home in lieu of hospitalization for more than 21 days; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports a change in section 4.30 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, to provide for a temporary total rating 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 more than 21 days.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 291
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 (VASRD) does not contain any provision for temporary total disability rating for a service-disabled veteran amputee during the period of waiting for delivery of a new prosthetic limb; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to amend the VASRD to provide a temporary total rating for a service-connected veteran amputee during the period required to replace a prosthetic device.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 294
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO OPPOSE THE PAYMENT OF
ATTORNEY FEES BASED ON PERIODS WHEN THE ATTORNEY
WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE CLAIM

WHEREAS, revisions in the law and regulations governing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have allowed for private agents and attorneys to charge for their representation of claimants before the VA; and

WHEREAS, those regulations, 38 CFR § 14.636(e), contain some indications that there may be provision for limitation of the final payment awarded to the private agents and attorneys based on reasonable limitations, as noted in the written description of Fees Permitted:

Fees permitted for services of an agent or attorney admitted to practice before VA must be reasonable. They may be based on a fixed fee, hourly rate, a percentage of benefits recovered, or a combination of such bases. Factors considered in determining whether fees are reasonable include:

- (1) The extent and type of services the representative performed;
- (2) The complexity of the case;
- (3) The level of skill and competence required of the representative in giving the services;
- (4) The amount of time the representative spent on the case;
- (5) The results the representative achieved, including the amount of any benefits recovered;
- (6) The level of review to which the claim was taken and the level of the review at which the representative was retained;
- (7) Rates charged by other representatives for similar services; and
- (8) Whether, and to what extent, the payment of fees is contingent upon the results achieved; and

WHEREAS, VA rarely, if ever, restricts the amount of fee paid to the private agents and attorneys beyond restricting the amount to 20% of any retroactive amount payable; and

WHEREAS, many private agents and attorneys act in the role of representative in a particular case for only a matter of months, providing limited interaction on behalf of the claimant, and not demonstrating any particular knowledge of the case; and

WHEREAS, regardless of whether the private agent and/or attorney did any actual work that resulted in the eventual grant of benefits the claimant is required to pay the 20% fee; and

WHEREAS, this frequently results in a windfall payment to the private agent and/or attorney at the immediate and direct expense of the claimant; and

WHEREAS, some private agents and/or attorneys, once they have engaged the signature of the client on the representation agreement have prematurely disengaged as the representative without waiving their right of recovery for any future award; and

WHEREAS, that future award is often years later resulting in an ever-expanding amount of retroactive pay; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to restrict the amount of payment to a private agent and/or attorney to a reasonable analysis of the actual work put into the case, and in no case should the payment extend beyond the date when either the claimant or the private agent and/or attorney ends the representation, and withdrawal by the private agent and/or attorney should result in a loss of all rights to recovery where they, for whatever reason, have opted to break the client/representative relationship.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 295
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW FOR THE USE OF AN INTENT
TO FILE IN CASES WHERE AN INITIAL OR SUPPLEMENTAL
CLAIM FOR THE SAME OR SIMILAR BENEFIT ON THE SAME
OR SIMILAR BASIS WAS PREVIOUSLY DECIDED

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published regulations allowing for the use of an intent to file (ITF) that would make it easier for veterans to file fully developed claims that would allow for quicker decisions easing the backlog of cases with the VA; and

WHEREAS, with the enactment of the Appeals Modernization Act on February 19, 2019, VA regulations specifically restricted the use of the ITF with a supplemental claim, defined by VA as any complete claim for a VA benefit on an application form prescribed by the Secretary where an initial or supplemental claim for the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, the typical veteran does not maintain the legal sophistication to clearly understand when the claim they are presently seeking to file is a claim for the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, VA relies on its partnership with veterans service organizations (VSO) to assist with many claim related activities; and

WHEREAS, VSOs in turn rely on the development and submission of claims from a wide range of volunteer assistants; and

WHEREAS, the VSO volunteers have no reasonable way to understand when the veteran they are assisting is presenting a claim where the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, by accepting the use of the ITF in Supplemental Claims, VA would have the opportunity to notify the veteran of the fact that the claim filed was considered to be the same or similar benefit on the same or similar basis that was previously decided; and

WHEREAS, that would allow the veteran, with VSO volunteer and professional staff assistance, to prepare a better claim; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to allow for the use of an ITF for any claim, to specifically include Supplemental Claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 297
SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION TO INCLUDE
CONDITIONS OF THE THYROID AS A PRESUMPTIVE GULF WAR DISORDER

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has an established list of disabilities that are presumptively associated with service in Southwest Asia (SWA); and

WHEREAS, SWA refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations for certain veterans (38 CFR §3.317(e)(2)); and

WHEREAS, VA recognizes signs or symptoms of undiagnosed illness and medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses associated with SWA service to include (1) fatigue, (2) signs or symptoms involving skin, (3) headache, (4) muscle pain, (5) joint pain, (6) neurological signs or symptoms, (7) neuropsychological signs or symptoms, (8) signs or symptoms involving the respiratory

system (upper or lower), (9) sleep disturbances, (10) gastrointestinal signs or symptoms, (11) cardiovascular signs or symptoms, (12) abnormal weight loss, and (13) menstrual disorders; and

WHEREAS, 10 of the common symptoms of a thyroid disorder include fatigue; weight changes (gain too much weight with hypothyroid and too little weight with hyperthyroid); muscle and joint pain; neck swelling (goiter); hair and skin changes; bowel changes; menstrual abnormalities; depression; carpal tunnel (weakness or tingling in the arms, wrists, hands, and legs); and finally, family history; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, proposes that the VA immediately establish studies to determine whether thyroid disorder(s) are more common in veterans with SWA service than the general population given that many of the common symptoms of a thyroid disorder are also the currently recognized signs or symptoms of undiagnosed illness and medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses associated with SWA service.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 298
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REFORM FUGITIVE FELON STATUS
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, at present, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has a recognized policy denying compensation, pension or dependent benefits to an individual listed as a fugitive felon; and

WHEREAS, at present, the VA accepts indications of fugitive status from local authorities; but the VA does not require information from the originating agency that any attempt has ever been made to locate the alleged fugitive, and the VA does not seek clarification on whether or not the claimant was actually fleeing or otherwise avoiding prosecution, custody or confinement, the criteria for establishing fugitive status; and

WHEREAS, the presumption by the VA against the claimant results in loss of VA benefits and significant hardships by the erroneously identified claimant in attempting to reinstate their benefits; and

WHEREAS, the individual often has years of government bureaucracy to overcome despite the fact that they have lived in the same location for years without anyone actually attempting to contact them prior to the VA's declaration of fugitive status; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation that requires the VA to verify that the originating agency has actually attempted to locate the claimant, and that the claimant has fled justice or was otherwise avoiding prosecution, custody or confinement, before the VA can seize their current benefits and establish overpayment for prior benefits dispensed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 299
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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on Congress to enact legislation to provide presumptive service connection to atomic veterans for all recognized radiogenic diseases; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any veteran involved in cleanup operations following a detonation of a nuclear device hereinafter be considered an atomic veteran for purposes of eligibility for benefits and services provided by VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress to support the elimination of dose exposure estimates required for diseases presumptive to ionizing radiation exposure and presume exposure to ionizing radiation for any radiation-exposed veteran with proof of radiation risk activities to include atmospheric and underwater detonations.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 305
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO AWARD SPECIAL MONTHLY
COMPENSATION AT R(1) TO VETERANS WITH ANATOMICAL
LOSS OR LOSS OF USE OF THREE EXTREMITIES

WHEREAS, veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use, or a combination of anatomical loss and loss of use, of three extremities are significantly impaired in their ability to conduct activities of daily living; and

WHEREAS, veterans with loss or loss of use of three extremities require the assistance of others for the ability to dress and undress themselves, or to keep themselves clean and presentable, or to perform frequent adjustment of special prosthetic or orthopedic appliances, or to attend to bowel and bladder self-care, or to protect themselves from hazards or dangers incident to their daily environment; and

WHEREAS, these factors are considered basic criteria for determining the need for regular aid and attendance by the Department of Veterans Affairs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 321
SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS BURIAL ALLOWANCE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED
VETERANS AND PROVIDE AUTOMATIC ANNUAL ADJUSTMENTS

WHEREAS, the National Cemetery Administration burial allowance provides partial reimbursement for eligible funeral and burial costs, with a maximum payment of \$2,000 for service-connected burial allowance, \$300 for non-service-connected burial allowance and \$749 for non-service-connected plot allowance; and

WHEREAS, passage of Public Law 111–275, the Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010, resulted in an increase in both plot allowance and burial allowance from \$300 to \$749 for non-service-connected deaths in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, effective October 1, 2011; and

WHEREAS, this law did not increase the \$2,000 for burial and funeral expenses for service-connected deaths outside of VA facilities, nor is it indexed to the Consumer Price Index for annual adjustments; and

WHEREAS, the plot allowance introduced in 1973 was an attempt to provide a plot benefit for veterans who did not have reasonable access to a national cemetery, but neither the plot allowance nor the burial allowance was intended to cover the full cost of a civilian burial in a private cemetery; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 322
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 compensate service-disabled veterans for average impairment of earning capacity; and

WHEREAS, the Commission concluded early in its deliberations that VA disability compensation should recompense veterans not only for average impairments of earning capacity, but also for their inability to participate in usual life activities and for the impact of their disabilities on quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine (now the National Academy of Medicine) reached the same conclusion; moreover, it made extensive recommendations on steps to develop and implement a methodology to evaluate the impact of disabilities on veterans' quality of life and to provide appropriate compensation; and

WHEREAS, the Commission concluded that the VA rating schedule should be revised to include compensation for the impact of service-connected disabilities on quality of life; and

WHEREAS, for some veterans, quality of life is addressed in a limited fashion by special monthly compensation for loss of limbs or loss of use of limbs; and

WHEREAS, the Commission urged Congress to consider increases in some special monthly compensation awards to address the profound impact of certain disabilities on quality of life and to assess whether other ancillary benefits might be appropriate; and

WHEREAS, while a recommended systematic methodology is being developed for evaluating and compensating for the impact of disability on quality of life, the Commission recommended that an immediate interim increase of up to 25% of compensation rates be enacted; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 323
OPPOSE REGIONAL DISPERSION OF THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

WHEREAS, veterans and other claimants for veterans benefits may appeal ratings and other decisions of the various and geographically dispersed benefit offices and medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, inaccuracy and lack of uniformity are pervasive among the claims decisions of the many VA field offices; and

WHEREAS, one board, the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) in Washington, D.C., hears all appeals; and

WHEREAS, appellants, Board members and taxpayers derive numerous benefits from an appellate board housed in one centralized location, some of the more obvious of which are:

- Availability of the collective expertise of the entire board;
- Professional interaction and association among Board members and staff;
- Shared and uniform training;
- Common and shared goals and responsibilities;
- Economies of scale from pooled resources and the most efficient workload distribution, with the flexibility and capacity to readjust the workload as necessary between members and support staff;
- A positive environment and employee incentives for developing creative solutions and innovations to meet and overcome the challenges inherent in a system of mass adjudication of claims;
- More efficient and effective centralized case management and storage;
- More effective centralized Board administration and hands-on employee oversight; and

WHEREAS, Congress created the Board after repeated failed experiments with various configurations of regional appellate panels that were plagued by persistent inefficiencies and problems and were proven impractical and poorly suited to properly dispose of veterans' appeals; and

WHEREAS, such regional reorganization of the Board would be extremely unwise, wholly unwarranted and not in the best interests of veterans or taxpayers; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, categorically opposes any decentralization of the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 324
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE THE UNITED STATES
COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS TO DECIDE
EACH OF APPELLANT'S ASSIGNMENTS OF ERROR

WHEREAS, Congress passed the Veterans' Judicial Review Act of 1988 (VJRA) and created the United States Court of Veterans Appeals (currently the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims) (Court); and

WHEREAS, the VJRA granted the Court the authority to decide all relevant questions of law and to hold unlawful and set aside or reverse any finding of material fact adverse to the claimant, which is clearly erroneous; and

WHEREAS, due to long delays in claims processing at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), it can take veterans years to get their appeals before the Court; and

WHEREAS, in many appeals, the Court will ignore the appellants' legal arguments and remand an appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) based on the General Counsel's confession of error that the Board failed to provide adequate reasons or bases for its decision to deny the benefit; and

WHEREAS, a remand due to lack of reasons or bases allows the VA to reopen the evidentiary record and obtain other evidence to support the continuation of the denial; and

WHEREAS, a veteran must appeal to the Court a second time and, in some cases, a third or fourth time to obtain a decision on the merits of his or her appeal; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 326
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 nonservice-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 nonservice-connected veterans as a result of the Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls for a reasonable increase in HISA benefits for veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 358
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXPAND THE RECOGNIZED WARTIME SERVICE PERIODS TO INCLUDE THOSE VETERANS WHO SERVED IN COMBAT ENVIRONMENTS FROM HOSTILE MILITARY OR TERRORIST ACTIVITY FROM NOVEMBER 4, 1979 THROUGH AUGUST 1, 1990

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recognizes specific periods of time as being war time periods; and

WHEREAS, the Vietnam era ended on May 7, 1975 and the Persian Gulf War era began on August 2, 1990 (38 CFR §3.2(f) and (i)); and

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of United States service members were subjected to combat environments from hostile military or terrorist activity beginning on:

- November 4, 1979 with the seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and the subsequent ill-fated rescue mission, Operation Eagle Claw;
- May 1981 terrorist threats from and resulting combat action with Libya; the April 18, 1983 bombing of the US Embassy in Beirut;
- the October 23, 1983 bombing of the Marine Barracks in Beirut; the October 25, 1983 invasion of Grenada;
- the December 12, 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait;
- the September 20, 1984 bombing of the U.S. Embassy annex northeast of Beirut;
- the April 5, 1986 bombing of La Belle, a discotheque in West Berlin known to be popular with off-duty U.S. service members;
- the resulting Operation El Dorado Canyon on April 15, 1986, that involved 200 U.S. aircraft bombing Libya;
- the 1989 buildup of U.S. troops in Panama with increasing tensions and hostilities leading to the December 20, 1989 invasion of Panama by U.S. troops in Operation Just Cause;
- the unknown number of anti-terrorist activities that remain classified to this day; and

WHEREAS, any of the military participants of any of these combat environments from hostile military or terrorist activity who were wounded, physically or mentally, are entitled to service-connected compensation from the VA, they are otherwise not entitled to pension; and NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports a new war time period covering the time frame of November 4, 1979 until August 1, 1990, plausibly identified as Middle East and South America Hostile enemy and terrorist activity.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 374
SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT RECOGNIZES PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR HYPERTENSION AND MONOCLONAL GAMMOPATHY OF UNDETERMINED SIGNIFICANCE AS RELATED TO EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE AND HERBICIDES

WHEREAS, during 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 Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) update, “Veterans and Agent Orange,” published in 2016, noted that although the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has not found hypertension to be presumptively related to service in Vietnam, the committee reaffirmed the conclusions of previous studies that hypertension should be placed in the category of limited or suggestive evidence of association; and

WHEREAS, the VA study, “Herbicide Exposure, Vietnam Service, and Hypertension Risk in Army Chemical Corps Veterans,” found that exposure to herbicides is “significantly associated” with the risk of hypertension, or high blood pressure, in members of the Army Chemical Corps; and

WHEREAS, the December 2018 NASEM updated report reviewed the VA study and stated there is sufficient evidence of a relationship between hypertension, monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS), and Agent Orange exposure; and

WHEREAS, in a March 2019 congressional hearing, the VA indicated that a decision on these presumptives could be released within 90 days; and

WHEREAS, subsequently, in a September 2019 Senate hearing, it was noted that VA leadership, in accordance with Policy 0215, had been considering the addition of these diseases since early summer 2019; and

WHEREAS, at a hearing in December 2020, VA stated they were still seeking additional evidence before they could include the diseases; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to add hypertension and MGUS to the presumptive list in section 3.309(e), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 375

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXPAND RADIATION RISK ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, members of the United States armed forces participated in “cleanup” operations at various sites during different times, which are not recognized as radiation risk activities; and

WHEREAS, currently the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not recognize participation in the cleanup of the crash site of a B-52 bomber carrying four hydrogen bombs, and a KC-135 air refueling tanker in Palomares, Spain for the period of January 7, 1966, to March 31, 1967, as a radiation risk activity; and

WHEREAS, approximately 650 acres were contaminated with radioactive material; and

WHEREAS, as part of the U.S. effort, active service members participated in the clean-up; and

WHEREAS, the Radiation Safety Journal Health Physics published an article in December 2019, stating the Air Force used the incorrect maximum safety radiation doses at the time confirming the service members who participated in cleanup operations were likely exposed to unsafe levels of plutonium; and

WHEREAS, the VA currently does recognize those veterans who participated in nuclear testing at Enewetak Atoll from 1951 to 1959; and

WHEREAS, the VA does not recognize those 5,000 service members who participated in the subsequent cleanup operations, which moved contaminated soil and dirt from nuclear test sites into the concrete barriers built in the area from January 1, 1977 to December 31, 1980; and

WHEREAS, the presumption of service connection for radiation exposure applies to radiation risk activity participants, which does not include participants in cleanup operations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on Congress to enact legislation to expand radiation risk activities and presume exposure to those service members who participated in cleanup operations; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to expand current VA acknowledged radiation risk activities to include cleanup operations at Palomares, Spain, Enewetak Atoll and Thule, Greenland.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 376

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE VETERAN'S PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION FROM HIS/HER CLAIM IDENTIFICATION

WHEREAS, an individual's Social Security number is now assigned at birth, and is directly linked to bank accounts, income taxes and all personal credit references; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) promised many years ago to discontinue using veterans Social Security numbers as the veterans claim number; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, that the VA discontinue using Social Security numbers and promptly assign a unique “C” or Claim Number to all veterans who have or will file a disability claim with the VA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 378
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CLARIFY AND EXPAND ENTITLEMENT
TO DEPENDENTS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER CHAPTER 35
FOR CHILDREN OF A TWO-VETERAN HOUSEHOLD

WHEREAS, current law and regulations allow for the child of a veteran permanently and totally (P&T) disabled due to service-connected conditions to receive Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA) under chapter 35; and

WHEREAS, upon establishing DEA benefits, the veteran is no longer allowed to claim that adult child attending school as a dependent on their compensation claim; and

WHEREAS, this limitation is carried forward to both veteran parents despite the child received chapter 35 benefits only under the P&T parent's entitlement; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to clarify and expand the law and regulations to allow for continued dependency claim for the veteran parent who is not the P&T party upon which DEA benefits are being claimed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 379
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW EXPANDED ENTITLEMENT TO
DEPENDENTS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER CHAPTER 35
FOR CHILDREN OF A TWO-VETERAN HOUSEHOLD WHERE BOTH PARENTS
ARE SHOWN WITH PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED STATUS
DUE TO SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, current law and regulations allow for the child of a permanently and totally (P&T) disabled veteran to receive Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA) under chapter 35; and

WHEREAS, each P&T veteran parent achieved such a rating based on their own personal military service and service incurred disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not allow the child to receive chapter 35 benefits based on the separate entitlement of each P&T parent; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to require VA to afford the child separate chapter 35 benefits under each P&T parent.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 381
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW A VETERAN PERMANENTLY AND
TOTALLY DISABLED DUE TO SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS TO
CONTINUE TO RECEIVE DEPENDENTS COMPENSATION FOR THEIR
ADULT CHILD ATTENDING SCHOOL WHILE THAT CHILD IS IN RECEIPT
OF DEPENDENTS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER CHAPTER 35

WHEREAS, veterans are able to claim their adult child attending school as a dependent while that child continues to attend school; and

WHEREAS, current law and regulations mandate that once a child establishes entitlement to Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA) benefits the parent veteran is forbidden to also claim that child as a dependent on their compensation claim; and

WHEREAS, the parent veteran is not directly involved in the child's claim other than having established permanent and total (P&T) status where the child, usually with the assistance of a veteran counselor at the school files their own claim; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not share the claim information of the adult child attending school with the parent veteran because an individual over the age of 18 is considered to be capable of handling their own matters and it would be a privacy violation to inform the parent veteran of the child's claim status; and

WHEREAS, the parent veteran is frequently charged with overpayment for having received the dependency compensation with the child is also receiving DEA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to allow for a P&T veteran to continue to claim their adult child attending school as a dependent while that child is separately in receipt of DEA under chapter 35.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 409

REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO REQUEST MEDICAL RECORDS PRIOR TO ROUTINE FUTURE EXAMINATIONS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is required to reexamine disabilities that have not become stabilized and are likely to improve; and

WHEREAS, VA regulations require a reduction in rating based on reexaminations disclosing improvement, physical or mental health conditions; and

WHEREAS, VA is not required to request any additional private or government medical records from the veteran prior to a future examination; and

WHEREAS, without any additional medical records prior to the examination, the VA rating specialist will not have sufficient evidence to determine whether the evidence makes it reasonably certain that any improvement will be maintained under the ordinary conditions of life and work; and

WHEREAS, reductions or proposed reductions based solely on VA examinations and not the entire medical evidence available, will not reflect the veteran's true disability picture and functional impairment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, vigorously supports regulatory and statutory requirements to require VA be mandated to request any private or government medical records prior to scheduling any future examination.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 410

PROVIDE FOR A COMPENSABLE RATING FOR HEARING-IMPAIRED VETERANS REQUIRED TO USE HEARING AIDS

WHEREAS, veterans can be rated at 0% based on their audiometric results and still be required to use hearing aids due to their specific type of hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD) is predicated on the industrial impairment that each disability provides to the disabled veteran; and

WHEREAS, hearing loss can impact a veteran's ability to communicate and negatively affect relationships, school/work performance, safety and emotional well-being; and

WHEREAS, section 4.10, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, notes that "the basis of disability evaluations is the ability of the body as a whole, or of the psyche, or of a system or organ of the body to function under the ordinary conditions of daily life including employment"; and

WHEREAS, a National Institutes of Health study, "The Socioeconomic Impact of Hearing Loss in U.S. Adults," published in March 2015, noted, "even after controlling for education and important demographic factors, hearing loss is independently associated with economic hardship, including both low income and unemployment/underemployment. The societal impact of hearing loss is profound"; and

WHEREAS, the VASRD does account for required prostheses or required medication for control, as it provides a 10% evaluation for over 15 different disabilities that require daily medication for control of said disability; and

WHEREAS, it is a general principle of the VASRD that ratings are not offset by the function artificially restored by a prosthetic device; and

WHEREAS, assigning a compensable rating for medically required hearing aids would be consistent with minimum ratings otherwise provided throughout the rating schedule; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the VA granting veterans with high-frequency hearing loss a compensable rating (10%) when it has been medically determined that the veteran requires and has been issued a hearing amplification device.

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RESOLUTION NO. 411
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH MULTIPLE
AUTOMOBILE GRANTS FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS

WHEREAS, Congress authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide financial assistance to eligible veterans through an automobile grant in the amount of \$21,058.69; and

WHEREAS, this one-time grant is used toward the purchase of a new or used automobile to accommodate a veteran or service member with certain disabilities that resulted from a condition incurred or aggravated during active military service; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation (DOT) reports the average useful life of a vehicle is 11.5 years; vehicles that have been modified structurally, including modifications to accommodate the weight of a veteran and their wheelchair, can have an accelerated depreciation of usefulness; and

WHEREAS, on average, the cost to replace modified vehicles ranges from \$40,000 to \$65,000 when the vehicle is new and \$21,000 to \$35,000 when the vehicle is used; these substantial costs, coupled with inflation, present a financial hardship for many disabled veterans who need to replace their primary mode of transportation once it reaches its life of service; and

WHEREAS, the cost of replacing modified vehicles purchased through the VA automobile grant program presents a financial hardship for veterans who must bear the full replacement cost once the adapted vehicle has exceeded its useful life; the divergence of a vehicle's depreciating value and the increasing cost of living only compounds this hardship; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to establish multiple automobile grants, for veterans to use once every 10 years, equaling the current grant maximum in effect at the time of vehicle replacement.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 412
SUPPORT USING THE PROPOSED REDUCTION DUE PROCESS
TO ALL DISABILITY EVALUATION REDUCTIONS

WHEREAS, section 3.105(e), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, requires that a reduction in a disability evaluation which results in a reduction of compensation payments or the overall combined evaluation, must include a notice of a proposed reduction with all material facts, a 60-day period to present additional evidence and the right to request a predetermination hearing prior to a final reduction decision; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has determined that if a reduction in a disability evaluation does not result in a reduction of compensation payments, overall combined evaluation, a proposed reduction is not warranted; and

WHEREAS, in many instances, the VA will grant increases and new benefits in the same decision as reducing a disability evaluation but not changing the previous combined evaluation, thus leaving the veteran without proposed reduction due process, to include submitting new evidence and requesting a predetermination prior to a final reduction decision; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the proposed reduction due process be applied to all reductions of a disability evaluation even when it does not change compensation payments or the overall combined evaluation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 413
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A SUPPLEMENTARY
SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANT

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides grants to service members and veterans with certain permanent and total service-connected disabilities to help purchase or construct an adapted home or modify an existing home to accommodate a disability; and

WHEREAS, the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant helps veterans with certain service-connected disabilities live independently in a barrier-free environment; and

WHEREAS, SAH grants can be used to construct a specially adapted home on land to be acquired, build a home on land already owned if it is suitable for specially adapted housing, remodel an existing

home if it can be made suitable for specially adapted housing, or apply the grant against the unpaid principal mortgage balance of an adapted home already acquired without the assistance of a VA grant; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2022 maximum SAH grant amount is \$101,754 and must be used for the purpose of constructing or modifying a home to meet adaptive needs; and

WHEREAS, the maximum grant amount adjusts annually, and the grant benefit cannot be used more than three times up to the maximum dollar amount allowable; and

WHEREAS, eligible veterans can use the VA adapted housing grants, not to exceed the maximum amount at the time of the grant, and once the maximum amount is reached, these veterans must bear the full cost of continued accessible living should they move, need to modify a home or suffer an increase in the severity of their service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, these veterans should not have to choose between surrendering their independence by moving into an inaccessible home or staying in a home simply because they are unable to afford the cost of new modifications; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to establish a supplementary SAH grant for eligible veterans needing to relocate and for veterans experiencing an increase in the severity of their service-connected disabilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the supplementary grant amounts be at least half of the maximum amount at the time of application for the supplementary grant.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 415
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 non-adversarial nature of the VA claims system; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 423
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO GRANT ENTITLEMENT TO AID AND ATTENDANCE TO A VETERAN'S SERIOUSLY DISABLED CHILD

WHEREAS, part 3, section 356, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), provides additional compensation for a veteran whose child is shown to be permanently incapable of self-support by reason of mental or physical defect at the date of attaining the age of 18 years; and

WHEREAS, a veteran's seriously disabled and or handicapped child is significantly impaired in their ability to conduct activities of daily living; and

WHEREAS, section 1114, title 38, United States Code, provides aid and attendance benefits for veterans, their spouse and dependent parents who have significant disabilities as to be in need of regular aid and attendance; and

WHEREAS, 38 CFR §3.352 states entitlement is held to exist when the veteran requires 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 dangerous incidents to their daily environment; and

WHEREAS, the veteran's seriously disabled child, in many cases, requires the aid and attendance of another individual to perform functions of daily living; and

WHEREAS, the seriously disabled child is already deemed to be handicapped by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, it is inherently unfair that the veteran and the seriously disabled child carry this additional burden without additional compensation despite being an immediate family member of the veteran; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6 9, 2022, supports legislation to allow the seriously disabled child of a veteran who meets the aforementioned criteria be granted the ability to seek additional compensation by way of aid and attendance.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 424
REQUIRE THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION AND THE VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR TELEPHONE ACCESS TO HOSPITAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED VETERANS TRYING TO OBTAIN SAID HEALTH CARE AND OTHER BENEFITS VIA LAND LINE OR MOBILE PHONE DEVICES

WHEREAS, section 12102, title 42, United States Code, establishes persons' disabilities and major life activities to be covered; and

WHEREAS, in enacting the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Congress intended that the Act "provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities" and provide broad coverage; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is required as a public entity to follow the precepts of the ADA; and

WHEREAS, it is also VHA policy that contacting the hospital via a telephonic device requires the veteran to engage the automated system through a series of keypad tones; and

WHEREAS, these actions are prohibitive where numeric depressions on a keypad such as a land line or mobile device are difficult if not overwhelming for a visually impaired veteran; and

WHEREAS, a second person is often required to assist the veteran in initiating first contact counter to the precepts of the ADA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6 9, 2022, urges the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to develop and implement a consistent policy requiring VA health care facilities and Veterans Benefits Administration offices and call centers with optional paths for telephonic initial contact.

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RESOLUTION NO. 425
REMOVE REQUIREMENT OF MANIFESTATION OF CHLORACNE AND
PORPHYRIA CUTANEA TARDA AND ACUTE AND SUBACUTE PERIPHERAL
NEUROPATHY WITHIN ONE YEAR OF EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently recognizes a total of 14 diseases as presumptive to Agent Orange exposure; and

WHEREAS, section 1116, title 38, United States Code, establishes presumptive service connection for diseases based on exposure to Agent Orange which requires that chloracne and porphyria cutanea tarda become manifest to a degree of 10% or more within one year after service in the Republic of Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, section 3.307(a)(6)(ii), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, requires the presumptive disease, acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy, to become manifest to a degree of 10% or more within one year of exposure to herbicides; and

WHEREAS, the limitations placed on the three above noted diseases create unreasonable requirements on veterans to provide evidence of manifestations of symptoms from 50 years ago and create an inequity; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6 9, 2022, supports legislation to remove the requirement of manifestation of symptoms to a compensable degree within one year of exposure for Chloracne and porphyria cutanea tarda and acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy.

* * *

(Whereupon, the Committee on General Legislation and Veterans Rights chair withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Lee. You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MR. MIC AGARY: Mic 4.

MS. DEBBIE MANN: Debbie Mann.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 4.

MR. AGARY: Mic Agary, State Commander, Department of Minnesota, Chapter 2, so move.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: 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 aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Right chair withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: My fellow veterans, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce The Honorable Denis McDonough. Before coming to VA, the Secretary served as the 26th White House Chief-of-Staff and as Principal Deputy National Security Advisor.

He believes deeply, as he testified to Congress, that "there is no more sacred obligation nor noble undertaking than to uphold our promises to our veterans, whether they came home decades ago or days ago."

Please join me in welcoming the 11th Secretary of Veterans Affairs, The Honorable Denis McDonough.

(Whereupon, Secretary McDonough advanced to the podium amid a standing ovation.)

THE HONORABLE DENIS McDONOUGH: Well, thank you, Andy, for that kind introduction and for your unwavering leadership of DAV, kind of our leadership of these organizations coincides so I hope I continue to have near the success that you're having so thank you for everything.

And good morning, to everyone. It's an honor to be here with you today in Orlando for your 100th National Convention. Over a century of service to veterans, it's an amazing accomplishment.

And let me just start with acknowledging some of the many people deserving of our gratitude: Marc Burgess, your national adjutant; Barry Jesinoski, your national headquarters executive director; Randy Reese, who I was just talking with backstage, your D.C. headquarters executive director; Linda (sic) Helms-Prosser, your Auxiliary national commander; and Bunny Clos, your Auxiliary national adjutant; and, of course, all of your members, each and every one of you. It's great to see so many of you gathered here today.

The convention is an exciting time and it's an honor to be with all of you. But I'd be remiss, frankly, if I didn't acknowledge that there is also a touch of sadness as you gather, sadness that a former DAV member is no longer with us.

I'm speaking, of course, of Garry Augustine, whom we lost in March of this year. As most of you know, Garry was a Vietnam vet, a wonderful father, a family man, an iconic advocate for our nation's veterans, a man long noted for his devotion to DAV, to all of America's veterans, and to our great country.

Badly wounded by a landmine in Vietnam, Garry was hospitalized for more than a year and left with lasting injuries that led to his medical retirement from the Army in 1972. But determined to live a life of meaning and fulfillment, Garry married, had two wonderful children, whom I met last March, and was a 50-year life member of DAV.

He first entered service with DAV as a hospital service coordinator in the VA hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. Then he rose through the ranks to increasing levels of responsibility: as deputy national service director; as national service director; and, of course, culminating in 2013 with his appointment as your national service and legislative headquarters executive director.

While overseeing your outstanding service and legislative programs and acting as DAV's spokesman before Congress, the White House and the VA – by the way, I used to see him walking through the White House all the time – Garry became a friend to so many veterans, veterans' advocates, VA employees, and to all those pursuing the best interests of disabled vets. And I will say he was less friendly to those who tried to stop them. (Laughter)

We will all miss Garry, but his selfless spirit remains with all of us, inspires us all, and lives on in DAV's advocacy for America's veterans. So I just want to take a moment today to acknowledge him, and to pledge to do whatever I can to carry on his tireless, great work. (Applause) Yes, I'm for that.

And look, there is so much great work that Garry did and that DAV continues to do. The depth and breadth of DAV's contributions to veterans, of your contributions to veterans, is staggering.

In 2021, your volunteer drivers logged over a half-million hours and nearly 8 million miles transporting vets to VA medical facilities to get them the care they need and deserve.

Last year, alone, you took over 2 million actions to advocate for veterans, counseled over 290,000 claimants, and assisted over 20,000 transitioning service members.

And I'm in awe of the fact that since being chartered by Congress in 1932, DAV has helped veterans with filling more than 12 million claims – 12 million claims.

DAV is simply awesome. (Applause) You are awesome, some of our nation's premier advocates for disabled vets, so I thank each and every one of you for all you've done and all I know you will continue to do.

Now, I want to talk about what we've done over the past year and what we're going to do over the next year to deliver for vets. And I know that it hasn't been an easy year for anybody. But that just means that our shared mission has never been more important than it is right now. And I'm proud to say that together with DAV we're stepping up for vets and delivering.

Since President Biden took office we've delivered more care and more benefits to more veterans than any time in our nation's history – more care and more benefits to more veterans than at any time in our history. (Applause)

When it comes to delivering the benefits that vets have earned and deserve, we are processing veteran claims faster than ever before. And we've worked together to get the claims backlog down to the lowest total in years.

When it comes to honoring vets in the lasting resting places they deserve, we are now providing almost 94 percent of vets with access to burial sites within 75 miles of home.

And we've expanded our Veterans Legacy Memorial program, which keeps veterans' stories alive long after they're gone, to approximately 4.5 million vets.

When it comes to providing world-class health care to vets and their families, study after study shows that we're delivering better health care outcomes for veterans than the private sector, which is why 90 percent of vets now trust us to deliver their care.

And when it comes to advocating for vets, with your support, President Biden is leading the way by making veterans a core part of his unity agenda, including securing the biggest budget proposal for vets in VA history; (Applause) delivering the first toxic exposure presumptives for vets who have fought our wars for the past 30 years; and, most importantly, signing the historic PACT Act into law tomorrow, perhaps the biggest expansion of veteran benefit in history. (Applause)

And look, all of the work, every bit of it, adds up to the one statistic that will always matter most: veterans lives saved, veterans lives improved by the work that we do, DAV and VA, together.

We've made these strides by asking ourselves three core questions every day we come to work, every time we make a decision, and every time we set a goal.

First, “Are we putting vets at the center of everything we do?” That means making VA easy for vets to use via projects like the new VA mobile app which gives vets access to their benefits right there on your phone.

It means making sure that every pathway into VA is a front door to every VA service, so vets have access to everything we have to offer.

And it means making sure that we’re delivering for vets on time, every time, through projects like Rob Reynolds is leading on claims automation, which is cutting claims processing time for certain conditions from several months to several days.

The second question we ask is, “Are we improving outcomes for vets with everything we do?”

That means timely access to world-class care, to earned benefits and to the lasting resting places that vets deserve, no matter what, because vets, not us, are the ultimate judges of our success.

And the third question we ask ourselves goes back to something that President Biden charged VA to do the day I was sworn in, “to fight like hell for vets, their families, caregivers, and survivors.” “Fight like hell.”

So we use that charge, that question, to guide us every day. That’s our North Star. That’s what Garry did for so long. That’s how we’ve gotten to where we are. And that’s how we’ll get where we’re going in the future for vets, their family members, caregivers and survivors.

Let me give you a couple of examples.

First, we’re fighting like hell to maximize access to world-class care for vets. That’s why we’ll stop at nothing to make sure that vets have the best possible experience wherever they access care, whether that’s at home, through community care, or at the VA.

For those getting their care at home, we’re meeting vets where they are. We’re meeting you where you are by doubling down on tele-health and tele-appeals.

We’re also supporting our caregivers, who are critical to helping vets age at home where they want to be and where they deserve to be, by expanding the program of comprehensive assistance this October to cover all generations of vets, and by changing our policies to allow even more veterans and their caregivers into the program, so they can get the support they need.

For vets who are getting care in the community, we’re working to make their experiences as timely and as seamless as possible so they get the care they need wherever they live.

And those getting their care directly from VA, we’re going to modernize our facilities because vets in the 21st Century should not be forced to receive care in buildings built in the early 20th Century. (Applause)

Instead, we need to build a VA health care system with the right facilities in the right places to provide the right care for veterans in every part of the country, and that’s exactly what we’re going to do.

And look, the bottom line with access is the same as ever: vets who receive their care at VA do better. Our VA clinicians know vets. In many cases they are vets. And there is nobody better at caring for vets than they are. Just look at the statistics.

Vets who come to VA emergency rooms via ambulance are 20 percent more likely to survive in the following 30 days than those who were transported to private hospitals – 20 percent.

So please, whenever a veteran comes to you asking where they should get their care, send them to us because, I promise you this: we’re going to get them the world-class care they’ve earned and we’re going to do it in a timely way. (Applause)

Next, we’re fighting like hell to end veteran homelessness, a phrase that I believe should not exist in this amazing country. Our focus here is on two simple goals: getting vets into homes, getting homeless vets into homes; and preventing them from falling into homeless in the first instance.

And we’re making progress. Last October, for example, we set two ambitious goals to address veteran homelessness in Los Angeles, where there are more homeless vets than anywhere in America.

The first goal was to get all of the roughly 40 homeless veterans living on what they called “Veterans Row,” a homeless encampment right outside our West L.A. facility, into housing.

The second goal was to get 500 vets in L.A. into housing by the end of the year, making sure that they are home for the holidays. That’s not too much to ask.

I’m proud to say that with your help, we not only accomplished these goals, we exceeded them. And that is just the beginning. Nationwide this year we are going to get 38,000 homeless vets permanently housed, 38,000. (Applause)

We’re not going to try to do it, or just take our best shot at doing it. With your help, we’re going to do it. In fact, halfway through the year the data through the end of June shows that we’ve permanently housed more than 19,000 homeless vets, putting us on track to meet that goal. And, look, as we continue to get this done, we’ll be driving hard on prevention, too.

We all know it, the cost of housing is going up. So we need to increase the housing supply, make existing housing more affordable, and by getting every vet the wrap-around services for substance use disorder, for mental health, for general health, to get them those services that they need. Because no veteran should be homeless in the country they fought to defend. Not one. Not one. (Applause)

Third, we're fighting like hell on our Number 1 clinical priority and that's to prevent veteran suicide. You may have seen VA's recent report on veteran suicides in 2019. That's the most current year for which we have data. The next year, the 2020 data, will be coming out in the next several weeks.

A couple things stand out to me from that report. First, more than 6,000 veterans died by suicide in 2019. That's devastating. It's unacceptable. And it's why this work is so critical.

But that report also reminded me of something else, which is that suicide prevention is possible and that there is hope. Because there were 399 fewer veteran suicides in 2019 than in 2018, the biggest decrease in 20 years. That's 399 vets who are alive today, getting a second chance at life. Nothing, nothing, matters more than that. (Applause)

So we're looking to build on that momentum, together, by providing first-of-their-kind grants to suicide prevention organizations on the ground in communities, where communities know their vets best;

by rolling out the new 9-8-8, the national suicide prevention lifeline which connects vets quickly and directly to the Veteran Crisis Line by dialing 9-8-8 and then pressing 1;

by continuing to offer tele-mental health sessions to vets who want them, making sure that they get their mental health care exactly when they need it, and not a second later; by ramping up our lethal means safety efforts to prevent warning signs from turning into tragedies; and much much more.

Suicide prevention is our top clinical priority, bar none, and together we're going to keep saving lives and help them, help those vets not only survive but thrive.

Fourth, we're continuing to fight like hell to make sure that all vets feel welcome and safe at VA – not some vets – all vets. That means getting women vets, our fastest growing cohort of vets, the care they've earned and they deserve. (Applause) I'm for that.

It means making sure that LGBTQ+ vets feel supported and well served by every part of VA. It means investigating, identifying, and eliminating any racial disparities that exist at VA, and setting up processes to prevent them in the future because VA always leads the way on access.

It means helping non-citizen vets stay in the United States where they belong, and making sure that eligible deported vets have access to VA benefits.

And it means delivering care and benefits to those with Other-than-Honorable discharges, too. Because we at VA don't serve some vets; we serve all vets.

And the bottom line is that for too long too many vets who fought around the world to protect our rights and freedoms, to protect mine, have had to fight brutal battles here at home for their own rights and freedoms. But at VA those fights are over. They're over.

No veteran is going to have to fight to get the quality care and benefits they've earned, no matter who they are, where they're from, or who they love.

And last but in no way least, we're fighting like hell to deliver for toxic-exposed vets. (Applause)

As you know, while vets, while many of you, were out fighting for us, many of you, many of your battle buddies, were breathing in toxic fumes from burn pits and other sources, breathing in particulate matter from those deserts.

And months, even years later, they developed conditions that followed them home from war, that impacted their lives, in some cases took their lives, long after the guns had fallen silent.

It's our job as a nation to provide those vets, their families, and their survivors, with benefits and care for those conditions. And that's exactly what we're going to do. (Applause)

Over the past two years President Biden has added new presumptive service connection for asthma, rhinitis, sinusitis, and nine rare respiratory cancers. He did that of his own authority.

And tomorrow he will sign into law the historic PACT Act, a bill that will deliver care and benefits to millions of toxic-exposed veterans and their survivors, a bill that would not have happened without the tireless work of everybody here in this room, everybody watching us online, and this tireless national DAV team. (Applause)

It's a monumental moment for you, for VA, but, most of all, most important of all, for all those that we're blessed to serve.

With this new law, VA will recognize more than 20 new presumptions of service-connection for toxic exposure-related conditions, ensuring that vets who live with these conditions will get the care and benefits they deserve. It will affirm the new process that we have stood up to add yet more presumptions of service condition.

We will bring generations of new vets into VA health care, and increase the health care benefits of many more vets, which will result in better health outcomes across the board.

We will deliver benefits to many additional survivors of veterans who passed away from toxic exposure. And we will invest in our infrastructure and workforce to ensure that we can deliver those services in a timely way, including modernizing 31 – 31 – additional new CBOCs.

In short, this is perhaps the biggest expansion of veteran benefits in history. And that's a great thing. And rest assured, as I said a minute ago, it would not have happened without you and your hard work.

But, like anything else of this magnitude, implementing it and executing it won't be easy. So we're going to need DAV's help, especially, as Randy and I were just talking in the back room, especially with communicating to veterans what's in this bill and what it means for their families and for them.

So, please, share these messages with any veteran or survivor you know – any veteran or survivor you know.

First, we at VA want veterans and survivors to apply for their PACT Act benefits right now. We don't want them to wait. We want them to apply right now.

Second, we will begin processing PACT Act benefits for veterans and survivors on the earliest date possible, which is January 1st.

Third, any veteran or survivor can learn more about the PACT Act by visiting VA.gov/PACT or by calling 1-800-MY-VA-411. That's VA.gov/PACT and 1-800-MY-VA-411.

We put that website up the day the Senate finally passed this bill. And that night, alone, we had more than 20,000 visitors to the site. That's what every veteran needs to know about the PACT Act.

And we need your help communicating it because we want every veteran, every single one, to get the care they need and the benefits they have earned. And we won't rest until they do. (Applause)

So, from access to ending homelessness, to the PACT Act, that's what we're going to do. That's how we're going to fight like hell for vets, their families, caregivers, and survivors. And that's how I'll close my remarks today, with the story of one of those vets who we fight for, the story of Adam Alexander.

On November 10, 2011, the day before Veterans Day, Adam was grievously wounded in Afghanistan when enemy forces attempted to overrun his outpost.

During the fight, a sniper's bullet struck Adam in the forehead, the round exiting the side of his Kevlar helmet. Despite the devastating brain injury, Adam lived.

Six days later he woke up at Walter Reed in Maryland, and began a long road to recovery.

All told, Adam received more than 10 months of VA rehabilitation services, including almost every type of therapy we have to offer. And he came out the other side having met every single challenge.

Eventually, Adam returned home, was reunited with his former Army Battalion Commander Mike Hert. And Mike brought Adam to DAV, to you, to the camaraderie of fellow veterans.

Now, Mike and Adam, both DAV life members, have collaborated on a project that helps better serve their fellow vets. Together they host "The Outpost," a half-hour public-access television program launched in June 2021 that raises awareness about DAV and it provides a platform for local veterans.

And Adam has also provided testimony to the Wisconsin State Legislature for a bill to help other disabled vets.

Overcoming the greatest odds stacked against him, Adam has proven what other veterans can do for others, a model of tough, persistent, relentless grit in the face of adversity – tough, relentless grit. Those are adjectives I think of when I think of DAV.

But many of you already know this story because Adam Alexander is DAV's 2022 Disabled Vet – Disabled American Vet of the Year.

As your national commander said so well, "Adam's story is not one of struggle but one of triumph. His lights may have gone out across the world during a battle for his life, but they unquestionably came back. And now he's putting them and the cameras into action."

That story, Adams' story, is a perfect example of the perseverance of the veterans that we, together, get to serve, that we, together, are blessed to serve. And it's a perfect example of the impact of the work we do, together.

So, from the bottom of my heart I thank you for all that you do. And I thank you for working with us to ensure that vets like Garry Augustine and Adam Alexander receive the care and benefits they've earned and that they deserve.

Let's serve all of them, all of you, as well as all of them and each of you have served us.

God bless you all. God bless our nation's service members, our veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors. Thank you very much. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Secretary McDonough withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, again, Mr. Secretary.

I would like to call upon Chairman Jim Shuey for the report of the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services. Chairman Shuey. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services chair advanced to the podium.)

HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JAMES SHUEY: That's a tough act to follow. (Laughter) Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services was called to order on August 6th, 2022, by the Committee Advisors Marquis Barefield and John Kleindienst.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Jim Shuey was elected as chairman and Andrea Gail Bennett was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolutions.

010, support enhanced medical services and benefits for women veterans;

011, support legislation to grant the president, vice-president, and members of Congress the privilege to use the veterans' health care system and to receive their care exclusively from the VA; (Applause)

013, provide comprehensive dental care to all service-connected veterans; (Applause)

014, support sufficient resources for VA to improve health care for veterans living in rural and remote areas;

015, enhance CHAMP-VA benefits and services;

016, enhance long-term services and supports for service-connected disabled veterans;

017, ensure VA clinical appeals process protects veterans;

018, support legislation to authorize scholarships for new mental health practitioners in exchange for agreements to serve veterans in VA facilities;

019, support the provision of comprehensive VA health care services to enrolled veterans;

020, oppose any restriction or eligibility of military medically-retired veterans to receive care in DoD or VA health care systems;

021, support legislation to change eligibility for community nursing home program;

022, reduce VA medication copayments equal to or less than the lowest charged by private sector commercial outlets;

023, support modernizing of VA health care infrastructure;

024, require a veteran's attending VA physician to provide a medical opinion with regards to a claim for VA disability compensation benefits when requested;

025, urge VA medical facilities to provide reasonable access to service dogs, including enclosed animal relief areas;

026, support the expansion of stellate ganglion block and research and implementation to treat post-traumatic stress disorder;

027, support legislation to include 1151 protections under Title 38, United States Code, for veterans using VA community care services;

037, support sufficient resources for poly-trauma units at VA medical centers;

038, support sufficient funding for VA prosthetics and sensory aids service and timely delivery or prosthetic items;

039, require assistive technology training for VA staff who work to rehabilitate blind and visually-impaired veterans;

040, urge VA to provide service-connected veterans meaningful access to personal health information;

041, encourage Department of Veterans Affairs to submit candidates for the DAV Youth Scholarship Program;

042, support a robust, comprehensive rehabilitative and research program for veterans with traumatic brain injury;

055, oppose recovery of third-party payments for service-connected disabilities;

056, support effective recruitment, retention and development of the VA health care system workforce;

057, support improvements in provider training and beneficiary travel benefits for veterans seeking specialized treatment programs and care for military sexual trauma;

058, support legislation to improve VA programs designed to prevent and treat substance use disorders in veterans;

059, support program improvements and enhanced resources for VA mental health programs and suicide prevention;

060, support sustained and sufficient funding to improve services for homeless veterans;

071, support legislation to extend eligibility of a qualifying veteran's adult child for CHAMP-VA;

078, encourage VA to process volunteer applications in a timely manner;

080, adequately fund and sustain the successful readjustment counseling services of the VA and its highly-effective Vet Center program;

081, oppose means testing service-connected veterans for VA health care;

082, support programs to provide psychological support and mental health counseling to family members of veterans suffering from post-deployment mental health challenges for service-connected conditions;

083, support humane, consistent pain management programs in the veterans' health care system;

128, support VA research into the medical efficacy of cannabis for service-connected disabled veterans; (Applause)

131, ensure sufficient resources for VA research to improve care and benefits for veterans exposed to military toxic and environmental hazards;

147, support automatic enrollment of medically-retired veterans into VA health care system with an "opt-out" provision;

148, improve urgent and emergency care benefit for service-connected veterans;

149, strengthen and protect the VA health care system;

190, support mandated VA research on and expanded access to investigational drugs for ALS;

191, support new models of care within the VA for veterans with dementia;

192, urge VA to provide prompt screening and treatment of veterans exposed to depleted uranium and support additional research into the long-term health effects of such exposure;

193, support adequate funding for research and legislation to improve the care and benefits of veterans exposed to military toxic and environmental hazards;

194, VA should provide low-dose computer tomography scans as part of veteran's yearly physical to effectively screen and diagnose veterans with lung cancer;

227, improve timely reimbursements by VA for purchased care and protect veterans from debt collections and adverse credit reporting associated with such care;

251, support the rights and benefits earned by service-connected Native American and Alaska native veterans;

253, urge VA to apply a consistent, coordinated care policy for service-disabled veterans with chronic health conditions who have a home residence in two states;

258, expand eligibility for VA to provide hospital medical services and nursing home care to veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict;

328, improve the care provided to veterans with service-connected disabilities affecting the ability to procreate through assisted reproductive technology;

330, support state veterans' home programs;

385, support equity in access to service and benefits for racial and ethnic minority service-connected veterans;

397, encourage Department of Veterans Affairs to submit candidates for the Volunteer of the Year program;

398, implement a pilot program to assess the effectiveness of post-traumatic stress growth;

399, provide easy and equitable access to VA transportation benefits and services;

400, increase capacity at VA facilities by operating extended hours and weekends;

401, establish studies on the long-term effects on exposure to Bisphenol A, a substance found in plastic disposable water bottles;

402, provide beneficiary travel benefits for unscheduled acute and urgent care from VA;

426, support the top-priority access for service-connected veterans within the VA health care system;

427, support legislation to provide comprehensive support services for caregivers of severely-wounded, injured and ill veterans from all eras;

428, conduct well-designed studies to determine effectiveness of hyperbaric oxygen therapy on treatment-resistant traumatic brain injuries and PTSD;

429, ensure adequate representation of all subgroups of veterans that include service-connected veterans;

430, support VA medical and prosthetic research programs;

431, urge the VA to support comprehensive research on health effects of children of male Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange;

432, repeal beneficiary travel deductible for service-connected veterans and increase reimbursement rates;

433, address social determinants to promote health equity among veterans;

434, ensure equity in equality and access from VA and veterans' community care program providers;

435, ensure equality and timeliness of the VHA and veteran's community care program providers;

436, ensure VA facilities and information resources are accessible to veterans with disabilities;

437, support a consistent benefit for service and guide dogs prescribed by VA providers and examine the benefits of training service dogs;

440, extend appreciation to the VA Orlando Health Care System for their support of the medical room and the overall success of the 100th DAV National Convention. (Applause)

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Hospitals and Voluntary Services. On the behalf of the Committee I move for the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 010 SUPPORT ENHANCED MEDICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, the number of women serving in our military and veterans population continue to grow with women now comprising 10% of all veterans and 16% of our active duty service members; and

WHEREAS, women are now included in virtually all military occupations, including combat roles that expose them to the same injuries as their male peers; and

WHEREAS, the number of women veterans using Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care has doubled in the last decade, and women of recent service eras are younger, more likely to have service-connected conditions and are more reliant upon VA health care; and

WHEREAS, 42% of women veteran users of VA care are under the age of 45 and therefore within their child-bearing years, and their gender-specific needs often 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 VA; and

WHEREAS, 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 in VA's community care network, who fill gaps in critical gender-specific services for women veterans, including mammography, maternity care, and gynecology lack the training requirements to assure they are meeting VA quality and care standards and waiting times; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, DAV's 2018 report, Women Veterans: The Journey Ahead found that the VA system still struggles to provide equitable access to women veterans which requires adapting existing programs and facilities to meet their distinct needs in a culture that honors women's service and sacrifices, and assures that they feel safe and welcome; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, seeks to ensure the provision of health care services and specialized programs, inclusive of gender-specific services, by 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 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. 011
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO GRANT THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT
AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS THE PRIVILEGE TO USE THE VETERANS
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM AND TO RECEIVE THEIR CARE EXCLUSIVELY
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, even though veterans' health care is funded through an advance appropriation, it is still at the discretion of Congress to provide the level of funding necessary for the veterans' health care system to meet the medical care needs of ill and injured veterans; and

WHEREAS, despite the increases in funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system over the past decade, veterans often have difficulty accessing the care they need in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, 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 VA to enable it to provide timely, high-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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, supports legislation to grant the President, Vice President and members of Congress the privilege to use the veterans' health care system and to receive their care exclusively from the VA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 013
PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE DENTAL CARE TO ALL
SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, DAV recognizes that oral health is integral to the general health and well-being of a patient and is part of comprehensive health care; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system is mandated under section 1712, title 38, United States Code, to provide outpatient dental services to veterans rated 100% service connected, to veterans who were held prisoner-of-war or to those who have sustained dental trauma in performance of military service; and

WHEREAS, irrespective of service-connected disability, section 1701(9), title 38, United States Code, defines "preventive health services" as a broad collection of VA health services that improve, protect and sustain the general health and well-being of veterans enrolled in VA health care, to include "such other health care services as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to provide effective and economical preventive health care;" and

WHEREAS, according to the 2000 report by the Surgeon General of the United States, Oral Health in America, individuals who are medically compromised or who have disabilities are at greater risk for oral diseases, and, in turn, oral diseases further jeopardize their health, and that oral diseases are progressive, cumulative and become more complex over time, and can affect economic productivity and compromise the ability to work, and often significantly diminish the quality of life; and

WHEREAS, VA maintains oral and dental programs within its health care system; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide outpatient dental care to all enrolled service-connected disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 014
ENSURE SUFFICIENT ACCESS TO CARE TO MEET THE HEALTH NEEDS
OF VETERANS RESIDING IN RURAL OR REMOTE AREAS

WHEREAS, 44% of active-duty service members identify rural or highly rural areas as their home of record and 33% of all veterans enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) live in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, many rural areas are designated by the Health Resource Services Administration as Health Professional Shortage Areas for primary care, mental health and dental care or for any combination of these practice areas therein; and

WHEREAS, 56% of all rural veterans are enrolled in VHA, and rural veterans are older (57% of all enrolled rural veterans are elderly), poorer (52% are low income), sicker and less likely to have internet access (36% have no internet); and

WHEREAS, about half of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) community-based outpatient clinics are sited in rural areas, VA rural health and enterprise-wide initiatives have impacted close to a million veterans, VHA telehealth initiatives have served 84,500 enrolled veterans, the VA's Office of Rural Health has funded 450 projects in rural areas, including broadband and transportation programs, and trained 1,400 medical students in rural health; and

WHEREAS, VA's Office of Rural Health has identified strategies for improving health care for rural veterans including identifying more opportunities to collaborate with government agencies such as the Health Services Research Administration and the Indian Health Service; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 115-182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018, includes access standards that will enable many rural veterans to use care from community partners which may not have the veteran-specific expertise to which VHA patients are accustomed; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, fully supports the right of rural veterans to be served by VA to the maximum extent practicable, but urges VA to develop training materials and conduct training and outreach to its community and federal partners in rural areas to ensure that these providers have understanding of veteran-specific exposures, risks, and evidence-based practices to best address their needs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA continue to overcome barriers to care for rural veterans by continuing to improve access to telehealth initiatives and assisting veterans with transportation and travel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 015
ENHANCE THE CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), known as CHAMPVA, is a health benefits program in which the VA shares the cost of certain health services with eligible beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, eligible beneficiaries include: the spouse or child of a veteran who VA rated 100% permanently and totally disabled for a service-connected disability; the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who died from a VA-rated service-connected disability, or who, at the time of death, was rated 100% permanently and totally disabled; the surviving spouse or child of a military service member who died on active duty; and the primary caregiver of a veteran seriously injured during military service on or after September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, VA medical centers are authorized to provide services to CHAMPVA beneficiaries under the CHAMPVA In House Treatment Initiative (CITI) program at no cost to the beneficiary but are provided at the discretion of the VA medical center director and available only on a space-available basis, after the needs of veterans are met; and

WHEREAS, if the local VA medical facility does not participate in the CITI program, the beneficiary must seek care in the private sector and the CHAMPVA beneficiary is responsible for an annual \$50 deductible for medical services rendered and 25% of reasonable and customary charges for patient care and pharmaceuticals, up to \$3,000 each year; and

WHEREAS, beneficiaries who are chronically ill can incur out-of-pocket medical care costs up to \$3,000 per year and such costs can cause undue financial burden on a severely disabled veteran and family members; and

WHEREAS, numerous health care services such as chiropractic services, routine eye examinations, hearing aids, most dental benefits, and institutional and home-based long-term services and supports are not routinely covered under CHAMPVA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to make the CHAMPVA program more comprehensive, including dental and vision care, institutional and home-based long-term care, and eliminate the co-payments beneficiaries are required to pay out of pocket and lower the out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries who do not live near a VA medical facility that participates in the CITI health care program; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports the CITI program and urges VA medical center directors to make that program available to CHAMPVA beneficiaries when resources are available.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 016 ENHANCE LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, historically the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) occupied a leadership position in fostering many long-term services and supports (LTSS) programs now routinely available in the private sector, founded the medical specialty of geriatrics in conjunction with affiliated schools of medicine, and led the nation in biomedical research on aging, geropsychiatry and chronic illnesses prevalent in the veteran population; and

WHEREAS, today tens of thousands of service-connected veterans of all ages depend on the VA to meet their health care needs in post-acute and LTSS settings; and

WHEREAS, there is also a subset of service-connected veterans with chronic and terminal illnesses who need LTSS and will need institutional placements; and

WHEREAS, the number of veterans seeking LTSS has increased annually, and VA estimates this trend to continue into the future; and

WHEREAS, as our nation's veteran population ages, VA will face an ever-increasing demand for LTSS of all kinds; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act, Public Law 106–117, significantly enhanced VA's non-institutional LTSS and required such services be provided to any veteran for a service-connected disability and to any veteran who is service connected 50% or greater disabling, yet VA is only required to provide institutional LTSS to any veteran for a service-connected disability and to any veteran who is service connected 70% or greater; and

WHEREAS, lack of centralized planning upon which to base standardized policy leave VA facilities to determine locally their own mix of institutional and non-institutional approaches in providing LTSS, thereby relegating LTSS to a "second tier" of health care service and expectations within the VA system; and

WHEREAS, there is a large and glaring gap in VA's LTSS program with statutory authority prohibiting the Department from paying for veterans to reside in community residential care facilities such as assisted living and family group homes, despite referring thousands of veterans to and inspecting facilities nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the success of noninstitutional and home-based LTSS is critically dependent on the ability of veterans' caregivers, whether they be family or friends, to assist in their care; and

WHEREAS, VA home and community-based programs are not uniformly available in all VA health care facilities resulting in consistent waitlist of veterans in need of such care; and

WHEREAS, VA has not optimized its relationship with State Veterans Homes to ensure veterans in need of institutional and alternative forms of LTSS may avail themselves of state home facilities to consider all options for their provision; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to improve the VA's program of long-term services and supports for service-connected disabled veterans irrespective of their disability ratings; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges VA to ensure each VA medical facility is able to provide service-connected disabled veterans timely access to both institutional and non-institutional long-term services and supports.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 017
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 MISSION Act (Public Law 115-182) greatly expanded VA's purchased community care program making more than 40% of veterans enrolled in the VA health care system eligible for VA community care; and

WHEREAS, VA's current clinical appeals process is outlined in VHA Directive 1041, Appeal Of Veterans Health Administration Clinical Decisions which outlines procedures for resolving clinical disputes through the Department, but expert or external reviews are performed at the Chief Medical Officer's discretion rather than the veteran's request; and

WHEREAS, continuity of care or services during the clinical appeals process is not guaranteed under the current process; and

WHEREAS, veterans have no right to external, expedited, or independent review, or to timely and fair hearings, including before a multidisciplinary clinical team, an administrative law judge or federal district court in VA'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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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 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. 018
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 VA lacks the capacity to serve them; and

WHEREAS, recent public laws have authorized VA to expand the types and numbers of mental health and other services VA must make available to veterans, their caregivers, dependents and survivors; and

WHEREAS, an existing scholarship program under chapter 76, title 38, United States Code, targeted to physicians, nurses and a variety of other health professions has been highly successful in recruiting new practitioners to VA careers and has expanded and improved care to wounded, injured and ill veterans; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of VA community-based outpatient clinics and Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers do not directly participate in the existing scholarship program as an aid to their local recruitment and employment efforts; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 019
SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO ENROLLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, it is the policy of DAV that veterans should be afforded quality and timely health care services by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) because of their honorable service to our nation; and

WHEREAS, care provided to veterans in the community when VA care is inaccessible should be done through responsive integrated networks that deliver high value quality care; and

WHEREAS, it is the conviction of DAV that quality health care for veterans is achieved when health care providers are given the freedom and resources to provide the most effective and evidence-based care available; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration plays a critical role in the delivery of health care services to our nation's sick and disabled veterans and is the largest direct federal provider of health care services, the largest clinical training ground for the health professions and a leader in medical research; and

WHEREAS, although the veterans' health care system is provided advance appropriations for medical care, it is still at the discretion of Congress to provide a sufficient level of funding; and

WHEREAS, due to consistently inadequate appropriations levels, 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 complementary and integrative care such as yoga, massage, acupuncture, peer support, 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;
- Ensure barriers to care for veterans in ethnic, racial and sexual minority groups are addressed, including staff expertise in addressing these groups' needs with sensitivity;
- Furnish quality primary care and gender-specific services necessary to meet the needs of a growing population of women veterans;
- Provide all supplies, prosthetic devices and medications, including over-the-counter medication, necessary for the proper treatment of service-connected disabled veterans;
- Preserve VA's mission and role as a provider of specialized services in areas such as blindness, burns, amputation, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and dysfunction, mental illness and long-term care;
- Maintain the integrity of an independent VA health care delivery system as representing the primary responsible entity for the delivery of health care services to enrolled veterans;
- Modernize its human resources management system to enable 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; and
- Establish and sustain effective tele-health programs as an aid to access to VA health care, particularly for rural and remote populations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 020
OPPOSE ANY RESTRICTION ON ELIGIBILITY OF MILITARY MEDICALLY
RETIRED VETERANS TO RECEIVE CARE IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OR
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

WHEREAS, military medically retired veterans were promised and earned lifetime health care through the Department of Defense (DOD) for completion of the required period of military service; and

WHEREAS, as veterans, they are separately entitled to the same health care provided to eligible veterans generally through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, one of the two health care systems may offer advantages that the other does not offer; and

WHEREAS, a veteran's use of this dual entitlement to receive the best services of both systems does not constitute unnecessary duplicate use of health care services or duplication of costs to the government; and

WHEREAS, entitlement to care under one system is not itself justification to end separate entitlement to care through the other system; and

WHEREAS, by virtue of their service and sacrifices, veterans have earned special benefits that are separate and in addition to benefits the government provides to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in VA or DOD health care, especially in the case of service-connected disabled veterans, should never become a bar or obstacle to the receipt of benefits from either of these health care systems; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes any action to restrict health care eligibility for military medically retired veterans in either the DOD or the VA health care systems.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 021
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CHANGE ELIGIBILITY FOR
COMMUNITY NURSING HOME PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Notice 2020–32 establishes policy for new community care; and

WHEREAS, eligibility is mandatory for a veteran who has a single or combined service-connected disability rating of 70% or greater, that includes veterans with a single disability rated at 60% and has a total disability rating based on Individual Unemployability; and

WHEREAS, VHA Notice 2020–32 does not consider common etiology in determining the eligibility for community nursing care; and

WHEREAS, the lack of consideration of this factor may prevent veterans from qualifying for community nursing care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports VHA Notice 2020–32 be amended to make veterans eligible for community nursing care if they have disability evaluations in which common etiology are noted that significantly impair the veterans' ability to perform daily or independent living skills.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 022
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ELIMINATE OR REDUCE DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HEALTH CARE
CO-PAYMENTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, through dedicated service and sacrifice to a grateful nation, service-disabled veterans have earned the right to certain benefits; and

WHEREAS, as the beneficiaries of veterans' service and sacrifice, Americans 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; and

WHEREAS, studies have found that cost sharing reduces the use of care and can have detrimental health effects for the sickest and poorest participating patients; and

WHEREAS, subsequent research continues to determine adverse effects of cost sharing on health outcomes particularly for patients with chronic disabilities; and

WHEREAS, asking veterans to pay for part of the benefits a grateful nation provides for them is fundamentally contrary to the spirit and principles underlying the provision of benefits to veterans; and

WHEREAS, co-payments were initially imposed upon veterans using the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system under urgent circumstances and as a temporary necessity to contribute to reduction of the federal budget deficit; and

WHEREAS, cost sharing is considered as a means of generating revenues to replace Congressionally appropriated funding for 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 policies 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, including sustaining grave injuries that require a lifetime of care, they underwent for the good of our country; and

WHEREAS, based on practices in the private sector, the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs and Defense, in the recent past, moved to dramatically impose fees and increase premiums and co-payments, as if operating a commercial enterprise; and

WHEREAS, as a continuing cost of national defense and as our nation's foremost moral obligation, benefits for service-connected disabled veterans must remain a first priority of our government; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 023
SUPPORT MODERNIZING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) primary mission is to meet the needs of ill, injured and disabled veterans through inpatient hospital care, outpatient primary and specialty care, and long-term care, which is best accomplished through facilities operated by VA for the exclusive benefit of veterans; and

WHEREAS, VA operates the largest integrated health care system in the United States with over nine million enrolled veterans, and annually provides medical care to over seven million veteran users; and

WHEREAS, VA operates over 170 medical centers (VAMCs), almost 1,300 community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs), over 100 nursing homes known as "community living centers" (CLCs), over 300 readjustment counseling "Vet Centers," and other facilities that deliver health care to veterans; and

WHEREAS, the majority of VA's medical centers are over 50 years old and were designed and built under an outmoded model of health care delivery based on centralized hospital inpatient episodes of care; and

WHEREAS, VA must continue modernizing its health care system to meet veterans' current and future health care needs, enhance access to its system of care, and optimize its use of federal resources; and

WHEREAS, VA's Strategic Capital Investment Planning (SCIP) program estimates it could require \$70 billion over the next 10 years to maintain VA's existing health care facilities and expand capacity to meet rising demand for care; and

WHEREAS, there has been a consistent pattern over many years of VA requesting, and Congress appropriating, far less than the level of funding required to maintain VA's health care infrastructure based on SCIP estimates; and

WHEREAS, the current budget and appropriations process is not conducive to fully funding VA's health care infrastructure needs; and

WHEREAS, congressional budget rules require the 10-year cost of VA leases to be offset in the first year of operation, making it difficult to renew or sign new leases for CBOCs, thereby threatening VA's timely delivery of health care; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–182) included a section to establish an Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) to assess all VA health care facilities and develop a plan to strengthen, expand and realign them to more effectively deliver health care in the future; and

WHEREAS, the AIR process began in 2021, requires VA to produce a comprehensive plan for its infrastructure by January 2022, which will be reviewed and approved by an independent commission in January 2023, and subsequently will be approved or rejected by the President and Congress in 2023; and

WHEREAS, the AIR process will only be successful if VA develops its infrastructure plan in consultation and collaboration with veterans service organization (VSO) stakeholders, and if VA and the commission operate in an open and transparent manner that listens to the concerns and preferences of veterans who use the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, there is a history of ineffective VA management and congressional oversight of VA health care construction projects that requires fundamental reforms to streamline the approval, management and oversight processes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports modernization of VA's health care infrastructure and urges VA to request, and Congress to approve, at minimum the level of infrastructure funding VA's SCIP process estimates is required; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should carefully monitor any proposed changes in VA's infrastructure that could jeopardize VA's ability to meet veterans' needs for primary and specialized VA health care and rehabilitative services, or that would threaten VA's medical education, biomedical research or national emergency missions; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA and Congress must implement the AIR process fully and faithfully, consulting with VSOs and operating in an open and transparent manner, fulfilling the core principle that VA remain the primary provider and the coordinator of care for enrolled veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should examine new models for funding VA infrastructure to guarantee that adequate funding is readily available to maintain existing and build new health care facilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA and Congress should reform and streamline the approval, management and oversight of construction projects to more quickly deliver health care facilities and more efficiently use appropriated funding.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 024
REQUIRE A VETERAN'S ATTENDING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS (VA) PHYSICIAN TO PROVIDE A MEDICAL OPINION WITH
REGARD TO A CLAIM FOR VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, section 5103A, title 38, United States Code, requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist a veteran by providing a medical examination and opinion when necessary to make a decision on a claim for disability benefits; and

WHEREAS, section 3.159, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, requires Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care providers, under specified circumstances, to provide statements and medical opinions on conditions, employability and degree of disability; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) policy describes Disability Benefit Questionnaires (DBQ) as a documentation tool designed for easy use and provides a format for documenting medical evidence that aids Veterans Benefits Administration rating specialists in making decisions on claims; and

WHEREAS, it is also VHA policy that DBQs are intended for use by VHA primary care and specialty care providers, and VHA clinicians who are not disability examiners may complete DBQs; and

WHEREAS, 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 the VHA to provide comprehensive care and place a serious burden on veterans who may not be able to afford a private medical opinion; and

WHEREAS, providing medical information for disability evaluations or examinations to support adjudication of claims remains inconsistent, because some local VA facilities' practices resist completing DBQs requested by claimants; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges 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.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 025
URGE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITIES
TO PROVIDE REASONABLE ACCESS TO SERVICE DOGS AND GUIDE
DOGS INCLUDING ENCLOSED ANIMAL RELIEF AREAS

WHEREAS, many veterans have service-connected conditions including visual, hearing or significant mobility impairments or mental illness for which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will approve use of a service or guide dog upon completion of approved training protocols; and

WHEREAS, the VA recognizes the benefit of service and guide dogs to veterans when their use can facilitate the rehabilitation goals, increase functionality, enhance independence, and improve the quality of life for certain veterans; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive 1188(1) states that it is VHA policy to permit service animals to accompany individuals with a disability to all areas of a VHA property on the same terms and conditions, and subject to the same regulations, as generally govern the admission of the public, while maintaining a safe environment for patients, employees, visitors, and the service animal; and

WHEREAS, section 1.218, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations and VHA Directive 1188 states the veteran is responsible for the service dog while on VHA property and such responsibility includes providing water, food, and elimination breaks for the service dog in an outdoor area; and

WHEREAS, veterans with service-connected visual, hearing, significant mobility impairments or mental illness require service and guide dogs to safely navigate VHA property to access needed benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, receiving needed medical benefits and services often requires the veteran and their service animal to remain at the VA medical facility for extended periods; and

WHEREAS, veterans must have reasonable access to safe enclosed areas to meet the required responsibility for care and stewardship of service dogs while on VHA property for extended periods; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges that 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 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; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each VA medical center provide enclosed areas in which a service dog has access to water and a safe area for exercise and elimination.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 026
SUPPORT THE EXPANSION OF STELLATE GANGLION BLOCK RESEARCH
AND IMPLEMENTATION TO TREAT POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

WHEREAS, every June is designated as “National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Month” to help raise public awareness, reduce the associated stigma, and help ensure that those individuals suffering from the invisible wounds of war promptly receive proper treatment; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reports that approximately 20%, 12% and 30% of service members and veterans that served in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring

Freedom, the Persian Gulf War and the Vietnam War respectively, have had post-traumatic stress (PTS) in a given year; and

WHEREAS, both government and non-governmental organizations have made significant advances in the identification, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of PTS; and

WHEREAS, one of the most promising PTS treatment is Stellate Ganglion Block (SGB) and the VA Long Beach Healthcare System in California and the VA Center for Compassionate Care Innovation (CCI) are leading an effort to offer SGB to a subset of veterans who have not experienced relief from traditional PTS treatments; and

WHEREAS, there is growing evidence that SGB may alleviate certain PTS symptoms such as hyperarousal, exaggerated startle responses and anxiety, and it appears to calm an exaggerated “fight or flight” survival reflex in people living with PTS, which can become triggered by various events that do not warrant it, and veterans who received SGB for other health conditions like nerve pain report positive effects for their PTSD symptoms, including reduced anxiety and hypervigilance; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges the entire federal government to accelerate SGB research and that VA advertise SGB in all VA facilities, and that the VA expand the CCI-led clinical demonstration nationwide.

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RESOLUTION NO. 027
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO INCLUDE 1151 PROTECTIONS UNDER
TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE, FOR VETERANS USING DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the primary care provider for millions of the nation’s wartime and disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, veterans, when receiving services at a VA medical facility or from a VA physician, are provided recourse when an additional disability or death is proximately due to or caused by such care is deemed to be negligent or careless; and

WHEREAS, compensation can be awarded if an additional disability or death of a veteran was caused by a VA employee or facility’s carelessness or negligence when providing hospital care, medical or surgical treatment, or examination; and

WHEREAS, veterans have increasing options to receive care in their local communities paid for by VA including from providers who participate in the VA’s community care network established under Public Law 115-182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that the quality of care provided by the contracted non-VA medical facility or contracted non-VA physician would be as good or better than the care provided by the VA; and

WHEREAS, in the unfortunate circumstance that an additional disability or death occurs due to the carelessness, negligence, lack of proper skill or error of medical judgment of a community care provider’s services, paid for by VA, the veteran or his or her family would not have similar recourse as veterans receiving care within the VA under title 38, section 1151 of United States Code; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation that would afford veterans the same protection under title 38 section 1151 of United States Code, if care rendered by a VA community care network provider (paid for by VA), results in an additional disability or death of the veteran due to carelessness, negligence, lack of proper skill or error of medical judgment of said community care provider.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 037
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 noncombat-related traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and polytrauma; and

WHEREAS, catastrophically injured veterans are treated at five Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers (PRC), located in Tampa, Richmond, Minneapolis, San Antonio and Palo Alto, for intensive care and long-term restoration and rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, Polytrauma Support Clinic Teams or Polytrauma Points of Contact are located in VA medical centers across the country to provide specialized outpatient care in coordination with their Polytrauma Network Site (PNS) and offer continuing medical and rehabilitation care and support closer

to the home community for veterans who have experienced a mild to moderate TBI or polytraumatic injury; and

WHEREAS, veterans spend long periods in VA recovering from their injuries and receiving patient-centered care in specialized polytrauma settings; and

WHEREAS, this specialized care is extraordinarily expensive and complex, often addressing complications from multiple amputations, TBI, burns, hearing and visual impairments, multiple shell fragment wounds and other catastrophic injuries; and

WHEREAS, since VA's current nursing home capacity is primarily designed to serve elderly veterans, VA must make every effort to create an age-appropriate environment for younger veterans that recognizes their different psychosocial needs; and

WHEREAS, having the support of their families and friends is an integral part of these veterans' treatment and recovery process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to continue to request and allocate sufficient resources for polytrauma centers and PNSs to ensure these centers include adequate space and other services for veterans' ongoing 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; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on the Secretary to support provision of longer-term neurobehavioral and vocational support in age-appropriate settings within or outside of VA for veterans with moderate to severe injuries who require such programming.

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RESOLUTION NO. 038
SUPPORT SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS PROSTHETICS AND SENSORY AIDS SERVICE AND
TIMELY DELIVERY OF PROSTHETIC ITEMS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has operated a nationwide prosthetics and sensory aids program, organized as Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS), for more than a half-century; and

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of veterans need 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, in FY 2021, VA provided 21 million prosthetic items or devices to 3.3 million veterans; and

WHEREAS, in FY 2021, VA provided artificial limbs to almost 27,000 veterans and wheeled mobility to about 148,000 veterans; 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, VA must maintain flexibility in ordering and delivering a variety of state-of-the-art prosthetic aids to meet the unique needs of wounded, ill and injured veterans, including women veterans who require prosthetics that are sized appropriately for their bodies, and allow for the physical changes in their bodies during pregnancy and menses; and

WHEREAS, PSAS is nearing completion of regulations designed to standardize its procurement policies and administrative processes, and to improve its purchasing power and leverage its position in the prosthetic, orthotic and medical device marketplace; and

WHEREAS, changes in procurement practices have in some cases negatively affected the timeliness of delivery and quality of prosthetic, orthotic and other items to many veterans and may limit veterans' access to prosthetics that "promote, preserve or restore" function in accordance with current law; and

WHEREAS, throughout the process, VA should ensure appropriately trained prosthetic representatives and rehabilitation specialists are available to maintain VA's strong connection between veterans and clinical components of prosthetic care and services; and

WHEREAS, VA must rededicate itself to becoming a leader in prosthetic care by providing cutting-edge services and items to help injured, ill and wounded veterans fully regain mobility and achieve maximum independence in their activities of daily living, and in sports activities such as running, cycling, skiing, rock climbing and other physical exercises if they so choose; and

WHEREAS, research and development funding in addition to ongoing training to ensure that prosthetists and procurement officers are up-to-date on all available technologies is integral to VA's ability to provide such leadership to the field; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to retain centralized funding for PSAS, which enables the program to deliver high-quality prosthetic items to all enrolled veterans needing such items and to train veterans on appropriate use and care of the device; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges VA to retain its goal of maximum recovery and independent living for our highest-priority veterans, to adopt procurement policies and staff training on advances in and other practices that accelerate the timely delivery of, and responsive maintenance and repair of, all prosthetic items, and to take fully and fairly into account the unique needs of severely injured and wounded veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 039
ENSURE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STAFF WHO
WORK TO REHABILITATE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED VETERANS
HAVE ADEQUATE TRAINING IN ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has established training and assessment protocols for blind and visually impaired veterans and provides them assistive technology training; and

WHEREAS, training on technology-related devices and equipment encompasses a growing proportion of the rehabilitation needs of veterans with blindness or visual impairment; and

WHEREAS, the VHA acknowledges competition for scarce computer assistive technology instructor specialists; and

WHEREAS, staff and supervisors within Blind Rehabilitation Service acknowledges difficulties recruiting and retaining certified computer assistive technology specialists and ensuring staff 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

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges that the VA 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 aids.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 040
ENSURE A SAFE, SECURE AND EFFECTIVE ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD
FOR VETERANS THAT ALLOWS THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
TO FULFILL CORE MISSIONS OF PATIENT CARE, RESEARCH AND TRAINING

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is engaged in a multi-billion-dollar, decade-long roll-out of an "off-the shelf" electronic health record through Cerner Corporation that is interoperable with military, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) and some private sector health records which will largely replace the Veterans Health Information and Technology Architecture (VISTA) and its current computerized patient record; and

WHEREAS, interoperability with its community care providers, including its academic affiliates and partners in military treatment facilities, has been a long time goal of VA allowing it to become more integrated with its increasingly diverse network of federal and community health care providers by allowing more timely referrals, transfer of medical records, diagnostic and laboratory testing, pharmaceutical data and billing information; and

WHEREAS, another goal of the modernization project is to create a longitudinal patient record for the veterans which incorporates military records including exposures and medical records during service; and

WHEREAS, veterans and their families would benefit from better means to schedule their own appointments and access to real-time information about their health in a timely and secure manner; and

WHEREAS, the VA has experienced significant challenges in the initial phases of the roll out—patients have been endangered because the new records do not accurately capture data about prescribed medication and other key data and the difficulty of implementing the new record is causing staff fatigue and low morale at the pilot site in Spokane; and

WHEREAS, VA researchers have expressed concerns about losing access to the richness of the data captured in VA's computerized medical record which have allowed them to identify and explore unique issues and trends in veterans' health; and

WHEREAS, recent reports indicate VA must improve cybersecurity to ensure veterans' private health and data are protected from illicit use; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges caution in ensuring that VA's new information technology architecture allows it to fulfill all of its core missions—maintaining patient safety should be the foremost concern as the system is updated, but adequate staff support and training is also critical at this juncture; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, VA must continue its modernization effort in a manner that ensures personal data is secure but accessible to veterans to allow them to be partners in their health care.

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RESOLUTION NO. 041
ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SUBMIT
CANDIDATES FOR THE DAV SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

WHEREAS, DAV created the DAV 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 \$110,000 in 2022 to 10 deserving youth volunteers in the form of a first place \$30,000 scholarship; a second-place \$20,000 scholarship; a \$15,000 third-place scholarship, a \$10,000 fourth-place scholarship, two \$7,500 fifth-place scholarships and four \$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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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.

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RESOLUTION NO. 042
SUPPORT A ROBUST COMPREHENSIVE REHABILITATIVE AND RESEARCH
PROGRAM FOR VETERANS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

WHEREAS, traumatic brain injury (TBI) has been called the signature wound of veterans serving in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, since 2000, 380,000 service members have been diagnosed with traumatic or acquired brain injury and brain injuries accounted for 22% of all combat injuries in recent deployments (compared to 12% in Vietnam); and

WHEREAS, veterans struggling with the chronic effects of combat injuries, falls, vehicular accidents and other trauma and illness leading to chronic brain injury that, in the most severe cases, will require a lifetime of services including extensive rehabilitation and lifelong personal and clinical support, including neurological, medical and psychiatric services, and physical, psycho-social, occupational and vocational therapies; and

WHEREAS, blast injuries were responsible for only a small portion of traumatic brain injury among post-9/11 veterans and service members, and despite significant drawdowns in those returning from deployment, workload in the polytrauma rehabilitation systems of care is projected to grow as veterans and service members continue to be exposed to falls, vehicular accidents and other acquired brain injuries that result in lasting brain damage and that the longer term rehabilitative needs of veterans continue; and

WHEREAS, VA has not yet developed the programs to meet the full spectrum of longer term needs to fill programmatic gaps VA acknowledges in neurobehavioral rehabilitation and community

reintegration or to provide assisted living or other supported housing arrangements for veterans with moderate to severe traumatic brain injuries; and

WHEREAS, VA must also maintain programs to identify veterans with milder forms of TBI may experience a variety of symptoms, including headaches, irritability, sleep disorders, memory problems and depression; and

WHEREAS, research demonstrates that even mild TBI may have long-term mental health and medical consequences including a higher risk of developing dementia, and that symptoms are often co-morbid with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and post-traumatic visual syndrome that can further confound diagnosis and treatment; and

WHEREAS, generations of veterans from earlier wars and conflicts may have suffered TBI, but this injury went unrecognized or was treated as mental illness; and

WHEREAS, milder forms of TBI may not be detected immediately, and the Department of Defense (DOD) and VA have recently released a suite of cognitive rehabilitation products for veterans and service members who sustain mild-to-moderate TBI, and have lingering cognitive impairment; and

WHEREAS, VA maintains active research collaborations with the National Institutes of Health, the National Institutes of Disability Rehabilitation Research "model centers" and the Defense Centers of Excellence in Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury and is an acknowledged world leader in research into TBI; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to authorize full payment for VA's Traumatic Brain Injury Residential Rehabilitation program to include payments for room and board that must now be made by veterans and to look for opportunities to ensure greater expansion of the program across the Nation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to support permanent supported housing arrangements with specialized neurobehavioral rehabilitation for veterans with service-connected moderate to severe traumatic brain injuries; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on VA to expand the universal screening it now provides to post-9/11 veterans to all generations of veterans and maintains resources within its polytrauma system of care to ensure their access to appropriate rehabilitation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges that VA and DOD continue to engage in TBI studies such as LIMBIC (Long-Term Impact of Military Relevant Brain Injury) or research and that such research includes older veterans of past military conflicts who may have suffered similar injuries that went undetected, undiagnosed and untreated.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 055 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, VA is authorized to recover or collect the cost of care from third-party health insurers when insured veterans receive health care from VA for nonservice-connected conditions; and

WHEREAS, the collection of payments from third parties for the treatment of veterans' service-connected disabilities would abrogate VA's and the federal government's responsibility to provide such care and may result in increased premium payments by veterans; and

WHEREAS, to improve its ability to generate revenue on the backs of service-connected disabled veterans, some continue to propose implementing a policy to eliminate the current practice of first applying third-party payments to offset veterans copayment debts; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes any legislation that would require VA to recover third-party payments for the care and treatment of a veteran's service-connected disabilities.

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RESOLUTION NO. 056
SUPPORT EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND
DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WORKFORCE

WHEREAS, staffing shortages and vacancies at every level of the VA health care system and across numerous critical positions impedes service-connected disabled veterans who rely on VA to receive timely, high quality veteran-centric medical care; and

WHEREAS, VA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) annually determines and reports on clinical and nonclinical occupations shortages within the Veterans Health Administration; and

WHEREAS, the VAOIG's report for FY 2022 (IG Report 22-00722-187) indicates that every VA medical center surveyed reported at least one severe staffing shortage; and

WHEREAS, the two most common critical occupation shortages identified for FY 2022 are medical officers (severe shortages at 87% of facilities) and nurses (severe shortages at 91% of facilities); and

WHEREAS, the remaining clinical shortages are practical nurses, psychologists, psychiatry service, medical technologists, and primary care positions; and

WHEREAS, shortages in non-clinical personnel such as custodians, medical support assistants, police officers, food service, and general engineers may also affect operations; and

WHEREAS, health care professionals undergoing separation from the armed services are aware of many of the particular health care challenges of veterans and have worked within a large federal health care system; and

WHEREAS, there is a nationwide shortage of qualified doctors, nurses and specialists particularly in rural areas because VA must compete with other health care providers to recruit and retain the best and brightest clinical staff, and the federal hiring process for clinical staff remains lengthy and convoluted;
NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges VA to consider campaigns to target service members in health care and other appropriate occupations separating from the military and develop systems for expedited hiring and credentialing to onboard them.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 057
SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS IN PROVIDER TRAINING AND BENEFICIARY
TRAVEL BENEFITS FOR VETERANS SEEKING SPECIALIZED TREATMENT
PROGRAMS AND CARE FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) reported an estimated 20,500 service members experienced sexual assault in fiscal year (FY) 2019 (6.2% in active duty women and .7% of active duty men); and

WHEREAS, the growing prevalence of sexual assault in the military is alarming and often results in lingering physical, emotional or chronic psychological symptoms in assault survivors; and

WHEREAS, 33% of women and 2% of men enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system report they had experienced military sexual trauma (MST); and

WHEREAS, each VA medical center has an MST coordinator who can assist veterans in identifying specialized residential and outpatient counseling programs and evidence-based treatments for MST survivors within VA medical centers, clinics and Vet Centers—regional offices also have an MST outreach coordinator to assist survivors with filing claims for conditions related to MST; and

WHEREAS, based on VA clinical determinations, some veterans request or are referred to VA medical facilities other than their local facilities or closest Veterans Integrated Service Network to receive the specialized care they need; and

WHEREAS, 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, 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, VA offers MST-related training and has produced clinical practice guidelines and formulated evidence-based treatments and states that its mental health providers who treat MST survivors complete specialized training to treat such patients; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on VA to authorize beneficiary travel to distant VA medical centers for veterans seeking specialized MST care; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls upon Congress to grant authority for beneficiary travel to Vet Centers for such purposes, to ensure all MST survivors gain access to the specialized treatment programs and services they need to fully recover from sexual trauma that occurred in military service and are enabled to choose gender exclusive treatment options, including their preferred sex of provider, to the maximum extent possible; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports legislation to require all VA providers offering MST-related treatment, in addition to providers in the Veterans Community Care Program offering such care, to receive specialized training in addressing the needs of individuals who have experienced sexual assault; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges VA to continually improve its MST treatment programs and ensure dissemination of MST evidence-based clinical practice guidelines throughout the VA health care system.

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RESOLUTION NO. 058
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO PREVENT
AND TREAT SUBSTANCE-USE DISORDERS IN VETERANS

WHEREAS, the misuse and abuse of alcohol and other addictive substances is a major health problem for many Americans, including veterans; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2021, 540,000 veterans had diagnoses related to substance use or abuse within VA, but less than 30% received specialized care for these diagnoses; and

WHEREAS, trends in opioid abuse had been improving prior to the pandemic, but CDC estimates deaths from overdoses of opioids, especially synthetic non-methadone products such as fentanyl, increased for all Americans by at least 30% over the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, substance-use disorders result in significant health and social deterioration and financial costs to veterans, their families and the nation; and

WHEREAS, data from a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national study showed that 40% of VA outpatients reported hazardous use of alcohol and 22% reported full alcohol abuse, but only 31% of the respondents reported being counseled about alcohol use and fewer referred to care; and

WHEREAS, substance abuse increases risk for suicidal behavior in veterans, especially in women; and

WHEREAS, substance-use disorders are also associated with family instability, homelessness, decreased worker productivity and declining health status; and

WHEREAS, veterans are at risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and a wide array of other medical and psychological conditions, which may be associated with veterans' increased use of substances; and

WHEREAS, VA offers evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders including stepped care and medication assisted withdrawal for opioid abuse, few integrated treatment programs that would work to address both the substance-use disorder and co-occurring PTSD, depression, anxiety, or other medical or mental health conditions which may cause or exacerbate veterans' inappropriate use of substances; and

WHEREAS, in some locations, VA lacks timely access to a continuum of available services that ranges from detoxification to rehabilitation in order to effectively treat substance-use disorders; and

WHEREAS, few locations may offer gender exclusive care options that may be conducive to recovery for veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports program improvement and enhanced resources for VA substance-use disorder programs, including gender-exclusive options for veterans who prefer them, to achieve a full spectrum of evidence-based accessible and available treatment; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this treatment must include identification of effective evidence-based psychotherapeutic programs for veterans with co-morbid mental health and substance-use disorder conditions, regardless of their place of residence.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 059
SUPPORT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCED
RESOURCES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) research indicates that rates of suicide among service members and veterans are significantly higher than for age-adjusted cohorts in the civilian population, with an average of 17.6 veterans a day committing suicide in 2018; and

WHEREAS, veterans are 21% more likely to commit suicide than their civilian counterparts, while the risk for suicide among female veterans was 2.4 times higher compared to civilian adult females; and

WHEREAS, VA has made suicide prevention its top clinical priority and developed a national strategy using a public health model to provide population-based initiatives to veterans who use VA health and those who do not; created a crisis intervention hotline, employing suicide prevention coordinators and developing a clinical algorithm to detect veterans with the most risk factors for suicidal ideation or suicide; and

WHEREAS, addressing the underlying conditions that may increase risk of suicide require a multidisciplinary, comprehensive mental health program that identifies, screens, diagnoses, treats veterans with evidence-based protocols, in a manner that is recovery-oriented, patient-centered, culturally sensitive and strives to tailor care to factors such as ethnic background and gender to ensure treatment engagement; and

WHEREAS, VA frontline staff often lack the skills to effectively manage crises and deescalate situations with veterans with mental health disorders; and

WHEREAS, the most recent eras of veterans have demonstrated high reliance upon VA and higher utilization of mental health and substance use disorder services; and

WHEREAS, the President has recently expanded eligibility to mental health care to all service members within their first year of separation from the military and to emergency mental health care for those veterans who may have discharges characterized as other than honorable; and

WHEREAS, the VA reports that veterans of these recent eras have sought care for a wide range of medical and psychological conditions, including mental health conditions, such as adjustment disorder, anxiety, depression, and PTSD; and

WHEREAS, between FY 2006 and FY 2020, more than 1.72 million veterans received specialized mental health care from the VA, an increase of 85%; and

WHEREAS, VA has improved access to mental health services at its 820 community-based outpatient clinics, but such services still are not readily available at all sites; and

WHEREAS, we remain concerned about the capacity in specialized PTSD programs and the availability of a full continuum of VA substance-use disorder services from inpatient detoxification to long-term residential treatment beds; and

WHEREAS, although additional funding has been dedicated to enhancing and improving capacity in these programs, VA mental health providers continue to express concerns about sustained resources to support, and consequent rationed access to, these specialized services; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense and VA share a unique obligation to meet the health care, including mental health care and rehabilitation needs, of veterans who are suffering from readjustment difficulties as a result of wartime service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA security officers and other frontline staff receive training in crisis management and de-escalation techniques including safely restraining patients who have mental health crises on campus.

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RESOLUTION NO. 060
SUPPORT SUSTAINED AND SUFFICIENT FUNDING TO
IMPROVE SERVICES FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

WHEREAS, compared to nonveterans, veterans are at higher risk of homelessness, and women veterans, especially face unique challenges that increase their risk of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, many veterans experience post-deployment readjustment conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder, substance-use disorders acquired during or worsened by their military service, or traumatic brain injuries that may make their participation in the workforce difficult or impossible, making them more prone to homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs' (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, with greater numbers of women serving in military deployments and the greater likelihood of women veterans being single parents, new and more comprehensive housing and child care services are needed; and

WHEREAS, a wide variety of public and private programs are in place to assist veterans in preventing or overcoming chronic homelessness, but these programs are often underfunded; and

WHEREAS, the VA initiatives to end homelessness among veterans through enhanced collaboration with other federal, state, faith-based, veterans service organization and community partners have made significant inroads in decreasing homelessness among veterans; and

WHEREAS, annual point-in-time counts, a "snapshot" of homelessness on a given night in America, have demonstrated downward or stable trends in homelessness since 2009, but have not yet registered the economic or psychosocial impact of quarantine and lockdowns related to the COVID-19 pandemic; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to sustain sufficient funding to continue to support VA's initiative to eliminate homelessness among veterans and strengthen the capacity of the VA Homeless Veterans program to include: increasing its mental health and substance-use disorder programs' capacity, providing vision and dental care services to homeless veterans as required by law, incorporating child care and legal aid for veterans in homeless programs where possible, and improving its outreach efforts to help ensure homeless veterans gain access to VA'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 for transitional housing to community-based organizations; that it fund the Supportive Services for Veterans Families program to ensure prevention of homelessness among veterans and their families; that it authorize vouchers through Department of Housing and Urban Development and require VA to provide to effective case management and health and supportive services to necessary for them to stay housed; and that it fund the Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program to reengage veterans in employment or other productive activity.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 071
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND ELIGIBILITY OF A QUALIFYING
VETERAN'S ADULT CHILD FOR THE CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL
PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, dependent children of certain veterans are provided medical care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA); and

WHEREAS, a child of a veteran is eligible for CHAMPVA if the veteran is rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected disability, was rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition at the time of death, died of a service-connected disability or died on active duty, and the dependent is ineligible for Department of Defense TRICARE benefits, and

WHEREAS, the eligibility of a dependent child for CHAMPVA ends at the age of 18, unless that dependent is enrolled in an accredited school as a full-time student until the age of 23, or marries or is a stepchild who no longer lives in the household of the CHAMPVA sponsor; and

WHEREAS, current law requires private health plans and insurers to offer coverage to adult children of beneficiaries to age 26 regardless of the child's financial dependency, marital status, enrollment in school, residency or other factors; and

WHEREAS, children of severely disabled veterans and survivors of veterans who paid the ultimate sacrifice should not be penalized or denied the same rights and privileges as other citizens of a grateful nation enjoy; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 078
ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO
PROCESS VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER

WHEREAS, many DAV members want to join the ranks of volunteers who serve disabled veterans in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and in local communities associated with the VA; and

WHEREAS, there is great variability in both the process and timeliness of providing prospective volunteers all the required screenings, interviews, orientations, and training prescribed by the VA facility; and

WHEREAS, these volunteers must undergo an arduous clearance process and background check that can require months of delay, as well as complete a lengthy application to volunteer and thus lose their services and the opportunity for voluntary activities to aid veterans; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the VA Voluntary Service program manager to ensure that volunteer applications are processed in an expeditious manner, because volunteers perform a valuable service to veterans in facilities and save taxpayers millions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 116-315, the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, passed in January 2021; and

WHEREAS, section 7001 of that law required the Department establish a national policy regarding the medical exams required to certify volunteer drivers for the VTN no later than 90 days following its passage; and

WHEREAS, despite briefings alluding to VA's work responding to this requirement and multiple requests for updates, Congress is not aware of any such policy more than a year after that deadline passed; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, are calling on VA to quickly develop and disseminate a straightforward, standardized and timely process for certifying volunteer drivers. Once this process is finalized, VA should undergo a concerted effort to not only disseminate the updated guidance, but also seek out and recruit volunteers, especially those who began the certification process but discontinued it after facing too much bureaucracy to continue.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 080
ADEQUATELY FUND AND SUSTAIN THE READJUSTMENT
COUNSELING SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND ITS VET CENTER PROGRAM

WHEREAS, in 1979, Congress authorized the establishment of the Readjustment Counseling Service, an independent counseling activity within the then-Veterans Administration's Department of Medicine and Surgery; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, the Veterans Administration opened the first "Vet Center" to provide readjustment services and psychological counseling to Vietnam combat veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other conditions related to combat exposure and their experiences in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the Vet Centers, now numbering 300 locations, 83 mobile vet centers and 19 vet center outstations nationwide, have proven to be a most useful and effective tool to assist veterans of all eras who seek care for issues associated with exposure to traumatic combat situations, challenges with

reintegrating into families and communities and military sexual trauma, in addition to other problems and to certain family members; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers provide cost-effective and highly beneficial services, including counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other readjustment challenges, suicide prevention and crisis intervention, marriage and family counseling, and family bereavement counseling beneficial to recovery; and

WHEREAS, the Vet Center program has been successful counseling veterans from all prior conflicts needing such readjustment services, including World War II, the Korean War, the war in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, and veterans of combat service in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers lead all Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) mental health programs in conducting veteran-to-veteran peer counseling services, wherein veterans who have themselves experienced post-deployment mental health issues related to their military experience are trained to provide counseling to those still suffering ill effects; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers are now charged with selecting and administering the peer retreats in both gender-exclusive and mixed gender groups of veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, commends the work of the Readjustment Counseling Service and of its Vet Centers of the VA, and encourages the Vet Centers to maintain funding levels commensurate with the growth in veterans' demand for services and to accommodate outreach to meet unmet needs of additional veterans within the Vet Center catchment areas.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 081
OPPOSE MEANS TESTING SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS
FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS, Public Law 104-262 requires 0% service-connected disabled veterans to be means tested in order to receive treatment in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility; and

WHEREAS, countless thousands of veterans have relied on care from VA medical facilities for decades and now face the possibility of losing access to VA medical care because of income levels, consequently causing them undue financial hardship, pain and suffering; and

WHEREAS, these 0% service-connected disabled veterans have been relegated to the lowest eligibility categories for care and, in some cases, below nonservice-connected veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the exclusion of service-connected disabled veterans from the requirements of means testing for treatment or service received at VA medical facilities and the inclusion of 0% service-connected disabled veterans in Priority Group 3.

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RESOLUTION NO. 082
SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MENTAL
HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS
SUFFERING FROM POST-DEPLOYMENT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES
OR OTHER SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, veterans exposed to combat and other hardship deployments are known to be at risk for development of post-deployment mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and other serious mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS, left untreated or inadequately treated, a veteran suffering the chronic effects of PTSD, depression or other mental illnesses may suffer marriage and relationship breakdown, underemployment or loss of employment, financial hardship, social alienation and even homelessness, or involvement with the justice system; and

WHEREAS, a combat-exposed veteran who is not appropriately counseled for the psychological effects of PTSD or depression stands at greater risk of emotional and mental decompensation, whose consequences often fall directly on family members and dependents of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) embraces recovery from mental illness as its guiding principle in all VA mental health programs, and involvement of family members and dependents is often vital to a veteran's eventual recovery from mental illness; and

WHEREAS, subsection 1712A(b)2, title 38, United States Code, authorizes the VA Readjustment Counseling Service, through its Vet Center program, to provide psychological counseling and other

necessary mental health services to family members of war veterans under care in such Vet Centers, irrespective of service-connected disability status; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted section 301 of Public Law 110–387 for the express purpose of authorizing marriage and family counseling in VA facilities to address the needs of veterans’ families, including spouses and other dependent family members of veterans who are experiencing mental health challenges with attendant marital or family difficulties; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted sections 101–103 of Public Law 111–163 and sections 161-163 of Public Law 115-182 for the purpose of authorizing a wide array of support, care and counseling services for personal caregivers of severely injured veterans from all eras of military service; and

WHEREAS, Congress has recently established a grant program under section 201 of Public Law 116–171, the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019, which would allow grantees to provide a variety of supportive services to at-risk veterans and family members; and

WHEREAS, section 1782, title 38, United States Code, authorizes a program of counseling, training and mental health services, including psychological support, for immediate family members of disabled veterans who need care for service-connected disabilities; who have service-connected disabilities rated at 50% or more disabling; who were discharged or retired from the armed forces for injuries or illnesses incurred in the line of duty; who are World War I or Mexican Border Period veterans; who were awarded the Purple Heart; who are former prisoners of war; who were exposed to radiation or toxic substances; or who are unable to defray the expenses of their care; and

WHEREAS, section 1781, title 38, United States Code, authorizes a program of health care, including certain mental health services, for immediate family members and dependents of a veteran who is totally and permanently disabled from service-connected disabilities or who died from disabilities incurred during military service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 083
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, the serious adverse side effects of opioids, including physical dependence, overdose and suicide, have made Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other health care providers reconsider clinical guidance, policy and programming for pain management; and

WHEREAS, because of these adverse side effects, the number of veterans using opioid medications for pain management prescribed by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), which skyrocketed in the 2000s and peaked in 2012, have plummeted (the veterans to whom it dispensed an opioid fell by 56% and those to whom it co-prescribed opioid/benzodiazepine by 83%) due to VHA’s revision its policies and programs for managing opioids; and

WHEREAS, VA has adopted a stepped, interdisciplinary approach to pain management using 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 VA’s pain management program has been emulated in other public and private health care settings nationwide; and

WHEREAS, access to opioids has been compromised for many disabled veterans who have used these medications as prescribed for many years to reduce pain and maintain their quality of life and productivity; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of veteran patients with chronic pain who have been prescribed pain medication over long periods have been abruptly denied without the benefit of tapering or counseling or provision of alternate means of pain relief to reduce or eventually discontinue opioid therapy; and

WHEREAS, abrupt denial of opioid medications can lead to devastating health consequences, including compromised health, overdose or suicidal behavior; and

WHEREAS, VA has not made access to substance use disorder treatment or medications for opioid use disorder including first line opioid agonists such as methadone, buprenorphine, or overdose reversal drugs such as naloxone universally available and accessible to veterans (even those at highest risk) across the system; and

WHEREAS, VA recognizes non-pharmacological therapies, including complementary and integrative health therapies such as yoga, massage, acupuncture, and chiropractic, as the best alternative in managing pain, yet VA policy does not require such therapies be available and be offered without locally imposed restrictions; and

WHEREAS, 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to redouble its efforts to conduct a uniform national pain management program to ensure that veterans requiring pain management including those who have used prescribed pain medications for long time periods are managed with patient-centered, interdisciplinary and holistic approaches 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 to continuously review and update its clinical guidance, policies and programming to ensure compliance with federal law and adherence to best practices in prescribing, dispensing and disposing of controlled substances.

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RESOLUTION NO. 128
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 37 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Guam and Puerto Rico, state medical marijuana laws vary greatly, but all recognize the therapeutic effect of cannabis and cannabinoids; and

WHEREAS, the growing accessibility of cannabis and acceptance of its use for medical purposes by states set against federal law have raised important issues including public health concerns; and

WHEREAS, the lack of any amalgamated knowledge of cannabis-related health effects has led to uncertainty about what, if any, are the harms or benefits from its use; and

WHEREAS, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine conducted a rigorous review of scientific research published since 1999 about what is known about the health impacts of cannabis and cannabis-derived products—such as marijuana and active chemical compounds known as cannabinoids—ranging from their therapeutic effects to their risks; and

WHEREAS, the study, published on January 12, 2017, considered more than 10,000 scientific abstracts, many of which did not have control study groups, to reach nearly 100 conclusions; and

WHEREAS, the study found evidence to support that patients who were treated with cannabis or cannabinoids were more likely to experience a significant reduction in pain symptoms; oral cannabinoids provided relief for multiple sclerosis-related muscle spasms; and there was conclusive evidence the use of certain oral cannabinoids was beneficial for patients with chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting; and

WHEREAS, the study suggests that cannabis use increases certain risks, including but not limited to, being involved in a motor vehicle accident, developing schizophrenia, other psychoses, and social anxiety disorders, developing cannabis use disorder; and

WHEREAS, this and other studies in their entirety are not conclusive, comprehensive clinical studies of cannabis, cannabis-derived products and their delivery systems are needed to prove medical efficacy for veterans who receive health care as provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports more comprehensive and scientifically rigorous research by the VA into the therapeutic benefits and risks of cannabis, cannabis-derived products as a possible treatment for service-connected disabled veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 131
ENSURE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS RESEARCH TO IMPROVE 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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 147
SUPPORT THE AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT OF MEDICALLY
RETIRED VETERANS INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WITH AN OPT-OUT PROVISION

WHEREAS, some service members, while on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, may experience disabilities of varying degrees and these disabilities may impact job performance; and

WHEREAS, in some cases, these service members may be medically retired by physical and/or mental conditions, as determined by the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB), which stand in the way of completing their duties; and

WHEREAS, despite the availability of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to help active duty members, who are medically retired understand available benefits, the medical retirement process is often confusing; and

WHEREAS, as part of the TAP process, a presentation is made describing the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System and Benefits; and

WHEREAS, enrollment into the VA health care system is presented as an opt-in option, placing the responsibility of enrollment on the veteran being medically retired and transferring veterans' medical records from the Department of Defense (DOD) to VA, is at times, problematic; and

WHEREAS, making enrollment into the VA health care system automatic during the separation process would relieve veterans being medically retired of responsibilities for enrolling themselves and would make the transfer of medical records from DOD to VA more seamless; and

WHEREAS, some veterans being medically retired may choose not to enroll in VA and an opt-out provision should be included in the automatic enrollment process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the automatic enrollment of medically retired veterans into the VA health care system with an opt-out provision.

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RESOLUTION NO. 148
IMPROVE URGENT AND EMERGENCY CARE BENEFIT
FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) aims to provide enrolled veterans a uniform benefits package that emphasizes preventive and primary care, and provides a comprehensive health care benefit plan including hospital, outpatient and long-term care; and

WHEREAS, a health care benefits package is incomplete without access to and coverage for urgent and emergent care; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–182) authorizes the VA furnish veterans urgent care, which is typically lower cost than emergency treatment, and with sufficient access can encourage veterans to receive health care in the appropriate setting; and

WHEREAS, the VA's emergency care statutory authorities, regulations, processes, and procedures are complex, inconsistently applied across the Veterans Health Administration and cause significant confusion for VA staff, veterans and community care providers; and

WHEREAS, the August 2019 VA Office of Inspector General report found a significant number of emergency care claims were inappropriately denied and many rejected claims were inappropriately processed, with some leading to wrongful denials and rejection of claims, and potentially placing undue financial risk on thousands of veterans; and

WHEREAS, such denied claims have transferred the liability of billions of dollars from the VA to veterans, resulting in serious financial challenges; and

WHEREAS, fear of incurring enormous financial liability from denied VA payment or reimbursement for emergency care causes many veterans to avoid or otherwise delay seeking or contacting emergency medical services; and

WHEREAS, Congress over the years enacted legislation to address barriers to emergency care and payment or reimbursement for such care for disabled veterans due to the VA's narrow interpretation of the existing authority for emergency care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to simplify the eligibility for urgent and emergency care paid for by the VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges the VA to provide a more liberal and consistent interpretation of the law governing payment for urgent and emergency care and reimbursement to veterans who have received emergency care at non-VA facilities.

RESOLUTION NO. 149
STRENGTHEN AND PROTECT 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 became 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, there are over 9 million veterans who have enrolled in the VA health care system, of whom over 7 million receive some medical services from VA each year; and millions of service-connected disabled veterans who rely on VA for all or most of their medical care; 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, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system's primary mission is to provide service-connected veterans timely, high-quality health care that offers a full continuum of services, including, but not limited to foundational services such as primary care, mental health care, and specialized care for prosthetics, spinal cord injury and disease, blindness, amputees, polytrauma, toxic and environmental exposures, as well as pharmacy, and long-term services and supports in both institutional and non-institutional settings; and

WHEREAS, while funding for VA to furnish medical care has increased year after year, it has not kept pace with demand from the rising number of veterans using the VA, the growing volume and intensity of health services being used and the increasing reliance on using the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, VA and Congress must work together to 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 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 that VA provides health care that is as good or better than private sector health care, and does so at a lower cost compared to other national health care systems; and

WHEREAS, veterans who use the VA health care system have repeatedly indicated their preference for and satisfaction with the care they receive directly from VA, notwithstanding existing problems that VA must overcome, including the lack of timely and convenient access in some locations; and

WHEREAS, independent assessments of the VA health care system have found that the principal cause of access problems was insufficient funding provided to VA to meet the growing demand for care by veterans; and

WHEREAS, VA must successfully complete the Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) currently underway to implement a long-term strategy to rebuild, modernize, maintain and expand medical facilities; and

WHEREAS, VA must continue to fully and faithfully implement the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115-182) to ensure that VA remains the primary provider and coordinator of care for veterans, while optimizing the use of new community care networks to fill in gaps when and where VA is unable to deliver timely, convenient care; and

WHEREAS, VA must realign and expand availability of health care services to meet the diverse needs of future veterans, including women and minority veterans, and those who reside in rural and remote regions far from VA facilities; and

WHEREAS, VA must reform its management by increasing efficiency, transparency and accountability to become more veteran-centric and responsive as an organization; and

WHEREAS, in addition to its first mission of providing care to ill and injured veterans, VA is also expected to fulfill three other critical health care missions: educating and training health care professionals; conducting medical and prosthetic research; and serving the nation in times of national emergency; and

WHEREAS, VA facilities are affiliated with 168 medical schools for physician education and 40 other health professions represented through affiliations agreements with more than 1,800 colleges and universities, and annually train over 69,000 medical students and residents—about 70% of all physicians in the United States—nearly 29,000 nurses and more than 30,000 other health professionals; and

WHEREAS, 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 elevated the standard of medical care for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, VA has a federal emergency preparedness responsibility to assist the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services with natural disasters and national emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and VA also serves as a backup for the Department of Defense in times of war; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, believes the nation must continue to honor the service and sacrifices of our nation's ill and injured veterans by strengthening and protecting a modern, high-quality, accessible and accountable VA health care system; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to provide timely and convenient access to enrolled veterans, the VA health care system remain the primary provider and the coordinator of care, while continuing to optimize the use of community care networks to fill in gaps, particularly in rural and remote areas; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on Congress and the Administration to provide timely and sufficient funding 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 medical education programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 190 SUPPORT RESEARCH ON, AND EXPAND ACCESS TO, INVESTIGATIONAL DRUGS FOR AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS

WHEREAS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a terminal neurodegenerative disease that leads to loss of muscle strength and coordination causing people affected to lose their ability to perform routine tasks of daily living and eventually lose control of motor functions such as swallowing and breathing; and

WHEREAS, for reasons not clearly understood, and unrelated to specific duties, eras, or locations of service, military service itself is a risk factor for future diagnosis of ALS; and

WHEREAS, a veteran who served between 1910 and 1982 is about 1.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with ALS compared with someone who never served in the military; and

WHEREAS, current law and regulations direct the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide presumptive service-connected compensation for ALS (38 CFR §3.318); and

WHEREAS, the average age of patients with ALS is 55 years old and ALS has a poor prognosis with life expectancy after diagnosis, ranging from three to five years for most individuals; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no "cure" for ALS, but some treatments can slow progression or ease symptoms that lead to improved quality of life; and

WHEREAS, some promising investigational drugs and therapies, including stem cell therapy, have demonstrated increased survival and function for people diagnosed with ALS, but veterans have not had optimal access to these breakthrough therapies through the VA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, encourages VA to seek out collaborative partnerships to allow veterans to participate in multi-site clinical drug and treatment trials that will expand access to breakthrough treatment for interventions intended to prevent, diagnose, mitigate, treat, or cure ALS; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA should prioritize research into the causes and effective treatment of ALS as a service-connected condition disproportionately affecting veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 191
SUPPORT EFFECTIVE CARE FOR VETERANS WITH DEMENTIA
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) faces a large and growing number of veterans with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease and other organic diseases of the brain, it is prevalent in more than 774,000 veterans, including over 400,000 veterans enrolled in VA health care; and

WHEREAS, the risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia is higher for populations in VA that are already at risk for certain adverse health outcomes including women (2.5 times higher risk than men) and higher for African Americans (2 times) and those of Hispanic ethnicity (1.5 times) than white individual populations; and

WHEREAS, research shows that military-related exposures such as traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as depression, are linked to an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and VA estimates that as many as a quarter of new cases of dementia may be associated with these military exposures; and

WHEREAS, advanced age also disproportionately affects veterans risk for developing dementia (46% of veterans are more than 65 years old compared to the 16.5% in the general population of the United States); and

WHEREAS, dementia is a chronic and incurable condition, costing VA three times more than the average patient; and

WHEREAS, dementia impairs key executive functions, such as memory and cognition, including language, insight, judgment, 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, and there are high levels of off-label use of antipsychotic medications, particularly in institutional settings, that may be inappropriate or even harmful for patients with dementia; and

WHEREAS, a team approach to supporting family caregivers of dementia patients by assisting them with navigating VA's complex array of health care and financial benefits, coaching them on effective approaches to managing challenging behaviors, diversional activities and non-verbal communication has proven more effective than off-label use of antipsychotic medication; and

WHEREAS, lifestyle changes that have been proven to delay or prevent disease for as many as a quarter of veterans with cognitive impairment; and

WHEREAS, VA's Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) teams which include a memory care coordinator may assist family caregivers with education about VA services, patient health and wellness, patient safety, and making legal and care plans for the future; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, urges VA to increase support and resources for improved dementia care and programming, including GEMs with a dedicated memory care coordinator at each VA medical center.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 192
URGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE
PROMPT SCREENING AND TREATMENT FOR VETERANS EXPOSED
TO DEPLETED URANIUM AND SUPPORT ADDITIONAL RESEARCH INTO
THE LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS OF SUCH EXPOSURE

WHEREAS, the military utilized the extreme density of depleted uranium in projectiles and tank armor during the Persian Gulf War, Bosnia, and in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF); and

WHEREAS, exposure to the heavy metal depleted uranium as a result of friendly-fire incidents, cleanup and salvage operations, and proximity to burning tanks and ammunition containing depleted uranium, poses hazards, including chemical toxicity to humans when internalized through ingestion inhalation, shrapnel and contaminated wounds; and

WHEREAS, over 1.1 million service members have deployed to the Southwest Asia theater of operations, and over 2 million OIF/OEF service members have deployed, and the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Depleted Uranium Program, established in 1993, has assessed over 3,000 veterans exposed to depleted uranium; and

WHEREAS, during the Gulf War, an estimated 134 to 164 people experience “level 1” exposure (the highest of three exposure categories as classified by the Department of Defense(DOD)) through wounds caused by depleted uranium fragments, inhalation of airborne depleted uranium, particles, ingestion of depleted uranium residues, or wound contamination by depleted uranium residues; and

WHEREAS, hundreds or thousands more may have been exposed to lower exposure through inhalation of dust containing depleted uranium particles and residue or ingestion from hand-to-mouth contact or contamination of clothing; and

WHEREAS, questions remain regarding testing process used by the DOD and VA, 10 veterans who served in OIF had confirmed depleted uranium detected in their urine, and all had depleted uranium embedded fragments or fragment injuries; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Committee, mandated by Congress to examine scientific and medical literature on the potential health effects of chemical, biological, and radiological agents, could not determine the likelihood of increased risk of adverse health outcomes among Gulf War veterans due to exposure to the agents examined in its 2000 report, due to the lack of exposure data; and

WHEREAS, the IOM Committee in its 2008 updated scientific and medical literature review regarding exposure to depleted uranium and long-term human health outcomes assigned a high priority to continue monitoring a possible association between exposure and several diseases and conditions; and

WHEREAS, the VA Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses recognized the limited number of research projects to examine the impact of the total exposures and experience of deployment and war on veterans’ health; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to provide prompt medical screening and treatment to any veteran that may have been exposed to depleted uranium; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DAV supports additional research to examine the health effects of exposure to depleted uranium.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 193

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO 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 have 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 Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to actively oversee its established mechanism of delegation to the National Academy of Sciences and 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 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. 194
DEVELOP CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES ON PREVENTION, EARLY
DETECTION AND INTERVENTION FOR LUNG CANCER

WHEREAS, lung cancer is the second most common cancer in men and women and the leading cause of death from cancer; and

WHEREAS, veterans are more likely to be exposed to hazardous and potentially carcinogenic agents such as dioxin, burn pits and environmental agents than non-military personnel; and

WHEREAS, individuals may not experience or recognize symptoms of lung cancer until the disease has progressed to an advanced stage; and

WHEREAS, even when lung cancer does cause symptoms, many people may mistake them for acute health conditions such as infections which may delay the diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, based on findings that low-dose cat scans (LDCT) caught more early stage lung cancer than chest x-rays, the American Cancer Society has developed guidance for screening high-risk individuals including use of annual LDCT screening for people at higher risk for developing lung cancer; and

WHEREAS, early detection may significantly increase the likelihood of successful treatment of lung cancer; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the Department of Veterans Affairs developing and implementing new clinical guidance on the prevention, detection and treatment of lung cancer, including the appropriate use of LDCT scans for early detection of lung cancer in at-risk populations.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 227
IMPROVE TIMELY REIMBURSEMENTS BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS FOR PURCHASED CARE, PROTECT VETERANS FROM DEBT
COLLECTION AND ADVERSE CREDIT REPORTING FROM SUCH CARE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized to provide a full continuum of health care to all service-connected veterans enrolled in the VA health care system, including preventive, primary, acute, specialty and rehabilitative care as well as pharmaceutical, mental health and readjustment counseling services; and

WHEREAS, to ensure veterans are able to receive timely comprehensive care, Congress authorized numerous VA programs since the early 1920s to purchase care for veterans from non-VA community providers; and

WHEREAS, according to the Government Accountability Office, VA's use of purchased care programs has increased 82% since the access to care crisis in 2014; and

WHEREAS, veterans who are treated by non-VA community providers under any of VA's community care programs should not be under any financial obligation to defray the full costs of VA authorized care; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115-182) amended most but not all of VA's community care programs and instituted standards for VA to promptly pay for care provided to veterans by community care providers; and

WHEREAS, in innumerable cases, service-connected veterans have been billed directly for care provided by community providers despite VA's obligation to pay in a timely fashion; and

WHEREAS, in some cases, veterans do not receive timely billing or copayment due notification for services rendered through VA or a network community care provider, for more than six months or a year, to include services for emergency care or transportation; and

WHEREAS, should service-connected veterans be without the means to rectify debt assigned by community providers when VA payment is deficient or delinquent, providers are referring such debt to debt collection agencies as well as reporting such debt to credit reporting agencies, adversely affecting these veterans' credit worthiness when in fact no justification supports such collection actions or credit reporting against veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to improve its administrative practices to promptly pay non-VA community providers for care under all of VA's purchased care program; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to enact legislation requiring VA to reimburse or require non-VA community providers to forgive any veterans' copayments for community care, including emergency care or transportation, that are billed more than 180 days after services are rendered; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV urges Congress to enact legislation to properly protect veterans' credit ratings and require VA to protect veterans from collections actions against service-disabled veterans because of delinquent or delayed payment to non-VA community providers.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 251 SUPPORT THE RIGHTS AND BENEFITS EARNED BY SERVICE-CONNECTED NATIVE AMERICAN AND ALASKA NATIVE VETERANS

WHEREAS, a higher percentage of Native Americans have served in the armed forces than any other racial or ethnic group, and many return to their communities in Indian Country upon discharge from the military; and

WHEREAS, the sovereign lands in Indian country are often 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 great travel distances without safe and accessible transportation to VA health care services, affordable and available housing, and a lack of local employment opportunity as pressing needs; and

WHEREAS, many Native American veterans who have completed military deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan and who may be challenged by readjustment and mental health disorders are not afforded responsive medical attention due to insufficient mental health service availability from Indian Health Service or Tribal Health Programs; and

WHEREAS, many VA clinical care providers lack knowledge and understanding of Native American and Alaska Native cultures, including traditional healing and ways of managing illness and disability that are culturally and religiously appropriate, causing additional barriers to care for Native American and Alaska Native veterans; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 and renewed in 2010, VA executed with the Indian Health Service (IHS) of the Department of Health and Human Services, Memoranda of Understanding to coordinate and provide health care services, including mental health services, to Native American and Alaska Native veterans; and

WHEREAS, nearly a decade after its approval in 2010, the VA and IHS have yet to comprehensively implement the Memorandum of Understanding; and

WHEREAS, due to lack of implementation, tribal governments do not have broad knowledge of the existence of, or commitments in, the Memorandum of Understanding, and therefore have not generally disseminated relevant information to Native American and Alaska Native veterans about their VA and IHS rights and benefits under the agreement; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of Health and Human Services to ensure the Memorandum of Understanding between the VA and the 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.

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RESOLUTION NO. 253
URGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO APPLY
A CONSISTENT COORDINATED CARE POLICY FOR ENROLLED
VETERANS WITH A HOME RESIDENCE IN TWO STATES

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 (VHA) 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 VHA Handbook 1101.11(3), 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 two geographically distant facilities; and

WHEREAS, some service-connected veterans who would otherwise be eligible for a secondary VA primary care provider may be denied this critical service; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected veterans are unaware that their VA provider may assess their need for assignment to another facility to manage complex health needs to better coordinate execution of a personal health care plan between the preferred and alternate VA facilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges the VA to improve its care coordination policy for enrolled veterans with a home residence in two states, especially service-disabled veterans with complex medical needs, who may require the assignment of two primary care providers.

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RESOLUTION NO. 258
EXPAND ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO
PROVIDE HOSPITAL CARE, MEDICAL SERVICES AND NURSING HOME CARE
TO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II AND KOREAN CONFLICT

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Veterans Health Care Eligibility Act of 1996 to exempt veterans from the Mexican border period or World War I from having to meet requirements in order to receive Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical benefits; and

WHEREAS, more than 25% of the living veterans from World War II and the Korean War are not using the medical benefits they have earned because they are not deemed eligible by the VA; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 104-262 requires 0% service-connected disabled veterans to be means (income) tested in order to receive treatment by the VA at their medical facilities; and

WHEREAS, according to statistics proved by the VA, a total of 234 World War II veterans pass away on a daily basis and only 240,329 of these veterans are still alive; and

WHEREAS, the DAV, at its 2018 National Convention, has previously gone on record supporting “the exclusion of service-connected disabled veterans from the requirement of means (income) testing for treatment or service received at VA medical facilities;” NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress to amend title 38, United States Code, section 1710(a)(2)(E) by adding the words “or World War II; or Korean Conflict.”

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 328
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 (IED) have significantly increased genitourinary (GU) trauma; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 12% of war injuries involve some kind of genitourinary trauma; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DOD) Joint Theater Trauma Registry reports that the highest percentage of trauma admissions were GU injuries (the largest report of GU injuries during any military conflict), and, of those, more than half of those injured were within child-bearing age and were injured due to explosions; and

WHEREAS, sexual functioning can also be impaired by other physical, psychological and social factors that can diminish the quality of life of veterans or service members; and

WHEREAS, the DOD currently offers multiple assisted reproductive technology services for military service personnel who have lost procreative ability due to grave service-related illness or injury, to include those suffering neurological, physiological and/or anatomical loss; and

WHEREAS, emerging evidence suggests mental health conditions related to military service, including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression, in addition to toxic exposures during military service, may be associated with infertility; and

WHEREAS, VA assistive reproductive services are currently only provided to legally married heterosexual couples in which a partner has lost the ability to procreate due to certain specific service-related injuries and the other partner is capable of producing their own genetic material; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has based its guidance on providing assisted reproductive technology to gravely injured veterans or their legal different-sex spouses on DOD policy which limits options available to many other veterans who have made great sacrifices in the protection of the nation; and

WHEREAS, veterans who, due to their military service, are unable to procreate and require reproductive assistance or who are unmarried or married to same-sex partners have already paid a price greater than any monetary assessment and have earned the right to have a family and it is incumbent on the VA to make them whole to every extent possible; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, 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, including any conditions that may affect fertility that were not present prior to military service and regardless of marital status or the ability to furnish one's own genetic material.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 330

SUPPORT STATE VETERANS HOME PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the State Veterans Home program is a partnership between the federal government and the states to provide long-term care for aging, ill and disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, there are 158 State Veterans Homes in all 50 states and in Puerto Rico, which provide skilled nursing care, domiciliary care and adult day health care daily to almost 30,000 veterans and their dependents; and

WHEREAS, State Veterans Homes provide more than 50% of VA-supported skilled nursing beds for veterans while receiving only 25% of VA's budget for skilled nursing care; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides a per diem payment that is authorized to cover up to 50% of the cost of care for skilled nursing care provided to veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 60% or lower and pays the full cost of skilled nursing care for veterans with 70% or higher service-connected disabilities or who require nursing home care for service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, VA also provides lower per diem payments for eligible veterans receiving domiciliary care and adult day health care (ADHC) in State Veterans Homes; and

WHEREAS, some State Veterans Homes also provide specialized care for veterans with severe mental health, behavioral and memory issues; and

WHEREAS, under the State Home Construction Grant Program the federal government provides grants to cover up to 65% of the cost to construct, expand, rehabilitate, or repair a State Veterans Home, with states required to match a minimum of 35% of the cost; and

WHEREAS, lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the advantages of modern nursing home designs that provide veterans with single rooms in smaller communal facilities, which can improve safety during health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as improve their quality of life through greater social interaction; and

WHEREAS, the costs to construct and operate more modern designs of State Veterans Homes are higher than for traditionally designed nursing homes; and

WHEREAS, a fiscal year 2019 regulation (RIN 2900-AO88) changed the rules and requirements for operating domiciliary care and ADHC programs, which increased the cost of these programs without providing commensurate increases from VA per diem support; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the growing number and needs of elderly veterans, including those with mental health, behavioral and memory issues, the State Veterans Home program must continue to be a major partner with the VA in meeting the long-term care needs of aging veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on Congress and VA to provide sufficient funding to support State Veterans Homes, including adequate per diem payments for skilled nursing care, domiciliary care and adult day health care, which properly support different levels of care within each program; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV supports sufficient funding for the State Home Construction Grant Program, to include adequate funding to support renovations of existing and construction of new State Veterans Homes using more modern designs, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress and VA should explore additional innovative programs to partner with State Veterans Homes to address the lack of options for aging veterans with severe mental health, behavioral and memory issues.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 385 SUPPORT EQUITY IN ACCESS TO SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITY SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

WHEREAS, veterans from minority or ethnic backgrounds are expected to comprise an increasingly large proportion of the veterans population growing from 23.5% in 2014 to 36% by 2043; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has been unable to provide data to demonstrate equity of access to benefits and services among racial and ethnic veterans and has not implemented repeated recommendations by the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans to make such data available; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has identified higher rates of service connection and higher utilization of mental health and substance use disorder services among minority veterans, more research is needed to understand disparate patterns of diagnosed condition rates between whites and minority veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VHA has been successful in reducing disparities in some care outcomes, it finds that disparities that are often the result of social and behavioral determinants of health, including financial and nonfinancial barriers to care, remain and often result in adverse health outcomes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges the VBA to routinely report data on numbers of applications, utilization and completion of programs for veterans by racial and ethnic background and gender; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge VA to continue identifying and addressing social and behavioral determinants that may affect health outcomes in addition to barriers to health care for all service-connected veterans by minority and ethnic groups.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 397 ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SUBMIT CANDIDATES FOR THE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM

WHEREAS, DAV created the Volunteer of the Year 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 Volunteer of the Year 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 Volunteer of the Year Award, with little response; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, strongly encourages each Voluntary Service program manager at every VA medical facility to submit the name of a deserving member of DAV and the Auxiliary to be considered for this

prestigious award in appreciation of their dedication and service to America's veterans through their voluntary service efforts.

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RESOLUTION NO. 398
IMPLEMENT A PILOT PROGRAM TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS GROWTH

WHEREAS, a significant portion (10-30%) of veterans from all combat eras experience the chronic effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, without effective treatment, PTSD is associated with significant adverse consequences such as substance use disorders, family dissolution, unemployment, homelessness, involvement in the justice system and even suicide; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has developed effective programs for addressing the chronic needs of most veterans struggling with PTSD through trauma exposure-based therapies and pharmaceutical interventions; and

WHEREAS, VA is an acknowledged world-leader in developing effective care for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and continues to explore promising interventions; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding its use of effective VA treatment protocols for PTSD, there are high rates of dropouts in many traumatic exposure therapies and significant numbers of veterans continue to struggle; and

WHEREAS, post-traumatic stress growth emphasizes the development of resiliency by encouraging veterans to adopt different belief systems that may improve their abilities to cope, problem solve and find meaning in their lives after exposure to trauma; and

WHEREAS, certain post-traumatic stress growth programs such as the US Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness initiative—Master Resilience Training and the Boulder Crest Warrior programs have been associated with improved psychological health which may be sustained for months after treatment; and

WHEREAS, these programs are often provided by trained peer counselors who may themselves be in recovery from PTSD; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to develop a pilot program to assess standardized post-traumatic stress growth programs to ensure effectiveness in achieving long-term health outcomes in meeting the needs of veterans with treatment-resistant, complex PTSD.

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RESOLUTION NO. 399
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, 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 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 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, VA lacks a consistent and comprehensive transportation policy for all service-connected disabled veterans across all established VA transportation and travel programs, benefits and services; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 400

INCREASE VETERANS' ACCESS AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES BY EXTENDING COVERAGE ON WEEKDAYS 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, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, VHA had made some progress to improve access to health care services as the needs and preferences of the veteran patient population evolved; and

WHEREAS, regular business hours for VHA services are considered to be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, but offering extended operating hours could ease the burden on service-connected disabled veterans in balancing family, employment, community obligations and other commitments; and

WHEREAS, VHA Directive 2013-001 states Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers and Community-Based Outpatient Clinics that treat more than 10,000 unique veterans per year must provide access to a full range of primary care, including Women's Health and Mental Health General Outpatient services at least two hours beyond regular business hours at least once on weekdays and once every weekend; and

WHEREAS, local data including feedback from service-connected veterans and local DAV members should be used to determine which extended hour options would best meet the needs of each facility's enrolled patient population; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to, based on local access data and patient feedback, implement extended operating hours at VHA health care facilities for services such as primary, specialty and mental health services.

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RESOLUTION NO. 401

ESTABLISH STUDIES ON THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO BISPHENOL A, A SUBSTANCE FOUND IN PLASTIC DISPOSABLE WATER BOTTLES

WHEREAS, according to studies by the National Institute of Environmental Health, plastic disposable water bottle can leach bisphenol A (BPA) (also known as Phthalates), from the plastic into the drinking water when exposed to extreme or moderate heat over time; and

WHEREAS, according to studies by Johns Hopkins University researcher, Dr. Rolf Halden, chemicals called phthalates are "environmental contaminants that can exhibit hormone-like behavior by acting as endocrine disrupters in human and animals;" and

WHEREAS, studies reveal that heated plastics can increase the leaching of phthalates from containers into food or water and studies further reveal that some of the common effects are cancers; and

WHEREAS, plastic disposable water bottles were used on a massive scale in Iraq, Afghanistan and other extreme temperature locations for active duty personnel; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to allow for additional research and studies from the National

Academy of Science and/or other research facilities to determine the long-term health effects, to include cancers, of exposure to heated plastics and water bottles.

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RESOLUTION NO. 402
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, 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 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 encounters thus limiting travel benefits for service-connected veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VA MISSION Act (Public Law 115–182) provides veterans urgent care benefits through contracted community providers but will only pay beneficiary travel on a one-way basis having also defined urgent care as an unscheduled visit; and

WHEREAS, VA policy also subscribes to the principle that access to appropriate primary and urgent care must ensure sufficient capacity to accommodate unscheduled "walk-in" patients; and

WHEREAS, VA beneficiary travel partial reimbursement for unscheduled visits runs counter to the stated purpose of the benefit, which is to "help ensure that beneficiary travel is covered only when necessary for the provision of care or services;" NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges Congress and the VA to change current beneficiary travel policy to pay round-trip travel expenses to veterans who receive VA care without a scheduled appointment.

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RESOLUTION NO. 426
SUPPORT TOP PRIORITY ACCESS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has issued national directives and policies to affirm its commitment to providing top-priority access to hospital care and medical services to veterans with service-connected disabilities, regardless of the percentage assigned to the service-connected disability rating, in absence of compelling medical reasons to the contrary; and

WHEREAS, many VA facilities are struggling to fulfill this mandate because of budget pressures, insufficient local resources and demand exceeding capacity because of increasing patient workloads; and

WHEREAS, DAV continues to receive complaints from service-connected veterans who are being denied priority access to VA health care services or report their access to care is being delayed; and

WHEREAS, due to inadequate resources, VHA at times has been forced to establish waiting lists and implement other types of health care rationing, absent compelling medical reasons; and

WHEREAS, VA is poised to realign and expand availability of health care services to meet the diverse needs of future veterans, reform its management by increasing efficiency, transparency and accountability to become more veteran-centric, and restructure all its community care programs into flexible and responsive integrated networks to deliver high value quality care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports strict enforcement by the 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. 427
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE AND PROVIDE
COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR CAREGIVERS OF SEVERELY
WOUNDED, INJURED AND ILL VETERANS OF ALL ERAS

WHEREAS, severely disabled veterans present great challenges to the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for acute, rehabilitative and long-term care health needs; and

WHEREAS, immediate family members and dependents are involved in the care and rehabilitation of severely injured veterans and are responsible for performing complete clinical care once provided by medical professionals, often with little to no relief while shouldering a great and lifelong burden as home and institutional caregivers and attendants, giving up or severely restricting their employment, future financial security, education and social interactions and suffering severe financial and personal penalties as a consequence in order to care for a severely ill loved one; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of such caregivers, the burden of direct care would fall on DOD and VA facilities or other institutions, at significantly higher financial cost and a reduced quality of life for these veterans; and

WHEREAS, the United States government owes its highest obligation to those who are put in harm's way at the call of the nation and become wounded, injured, and ill as a consequence of that service; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Public Law 111-163 established VA's family caregiver program, which includes a Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS) for all caregivers, and a Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) for the most severely disabled veterans, which provides family caregivers with a stipend, health insurance, additional respite care, and case management services; and

WHEREAS, when Public Law 111-163 was enacted, only severely disabled veterans who were injured on or after September 11, 2001 were eligible for the PCAFC, excluding equally deserving disabled veterans and their caregivers from the program; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 115-182, enacted in 2018, extended eligibility for the PCAFC to prior generations of veterans in two phases: first for World War II, Korean War and Vietnam veterans, which took effect on October 1, 2020, and then for veterans injured after the Vietnam war through 9/11, which is scheduled to take effect on October 1, 2022; and

WHEREAS, VA's eligibility criteria for the PCAFC has been the source of significant confusion and difficulty, particularly during the application, approval and reassessment processes, such that in 2017, 2018 and again in 2022, it was found that veterans and their family caregivers were being discharged from the PCAFC at such alarming rates that three different VA Secretaries placed a temporary moratorium on discharges and tier reductions; and

WHEREAS, the Court of Veterans Appeals for Veterans Claims ruled in the Beaudette v. McDonough case that veterans and caregivers who disagreed with a decision about eligibility for PCAFC must be provided full judicial review and due process rights, including the right to appeal unfavorable decisions to the Board of Veterans' Appeals, the right to see all evidence and the right to representation in their claims; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration's Caregiver Support Program (CSP) has had great difficulty implementing the Court-ordered appeals rights, which include application of the Appeals Modernization Act's requirements, which include mandatory requirements for decision notification letters; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, calls on the VA to complete the final phase of the caregiver expansion required by Public Law 115-182 so that severely disabled veterans of all eras are equally eligible for the PCAFC; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should conduct aggressive oversight of the PCAFC and ensure the VA receives all the resources needed to timely and equitably expand eligibility, process all applications, and provide adequate supports and services to meet the needs of family caregivers; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA must expeditiously and fully implement the mandate of the Court's Beaudette decision to ensure that all veterans and family caregivers who make an application to the PCAFC and receive unfavorable decisions, have full judicial review and due process rights, including

the right to representation, the right to review all evidence used to make their decisions, and the right to all options included in the Appeals Modernization Act; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should increase funding and enact legislation that would strengthen and expand access to and improve the provision of caregiver support services, including but not limited to fully recognizing family caregivers, adequate financial support, sufficient health and homemaker services, respite, education and training, and other necessary relief, to caregivers of all veterans severely ill and injured due to military service; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress and the VA must create and execute a strategic plan for military and veteran caregiver research, including longitudinal surveys and assessments, to evaluate current programs and services and monitor the health and well-being of caregivers to ensure the program's effectiveness and better inform policymakers.

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RESOLUTION NO. 428

CONDUCT WELL-DESIGNED STUDIES TO DETERMINE EFFECTIVENESS OF HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY ON TREATMENT-RESISTANT TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES AND POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

WHEREAS, thousands of veterans have received treatment from VA for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) (or both), which are often related to their military service, but have not experienced significant or sustained improvements in health; and

WHEREAS, the FDA has cleared Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT), as a combination treatment of increased oxygen (hyperoxia) at increased hydrostatic pressure for several types of injury indications such as wound healing, necrotizing infections, burns, radiation injury, and carbon monoxide poisoning, and its use for treating these conditions does not appear to have significant side effects for most populations; and

WHEREAS, in case series of TBI and/or PTSD populations, HBOT, has statistically significantly improved cerebral blood flow and mean scores on post-concussion symptoms (PCS), PTSD, depression, and anxiety symptom checklists, as well as cognitive functioning and quality of life, but these physiological changes have not necessarily been associated with clinically significant improvements; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, VA published its Evidence Brief: Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) for Traumatic Brain Injury and/or Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, which reviewed available high-quality studies (Randomized Controlled Trials or RCTs), in response to veterans and other stakeholders anecdotal reports of improvements in functionality and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, VA's analysis found that there were no high quality studies available on the effect of HBOT on post-traumatic stress disorder and those available for TBI showed inconclusive benefits; and

WHEREAS, the inconsistent evidence of effectiveness and lack of significant red flags for adverse health effects have led some to call for further evidence development on the off-label use of HBOT for TBI and/or PTSD for veterans in whom standard treatments have not been successful; and

WHEREAS, there is a significant need for innovative treatments for many veterans with treatment-resistant TBI and PTSD who have also expressed the desire for mental health and symptom relief that does not require the use of controlled substances that can lead to overuse and addiction; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to conduct randomized controlled trials to determine the effectiveness of HBOT for veterans with treatment-resistant PTSD, and TBI; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should VA determine that HBOT is effective, it should determine appropriate means of making this therapy accessible to appropriate veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 429

ENSURE ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION FOR ALL SUBGROUPS OF VETERANS THAT INCLUDE SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

WHEREAS, adequate representation is an important social determinant of health ensuring the special needs and preferences of a subgroup are voiced, understood and addressed; and

WHEREAS, many veterans with service-connected disabilities using the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) belong to subpopulations including racial or ethnic minorities; LBGTQ+ groups; women or from geographically remote areas (rural, underserved or outlying areas); and

WHEREAS, these subgroups are gradually making up greater portions of the veterans population; and

WHEREAS, racial or ethnic minorities now comprise 28% of the veterans' population, but, by 2047, they will make up 42% of all veterans; and

WHEREAS, women veterans today make up about 11% of the veterans population, but this will increase to almost 18% by 2047; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ+ veterans are also likely to increase from an estimated 5-6% in the population today due to liberalized policies allowing them to serve openly in the military; and

WHEREAS, VA will also begin to collect data systematically on sexual and gender identity; and

WHEREAS, VA researchers have found that many veterans in subgroups do not feel safe or welcome in its facilities; for example, a quarter of women veterans claimed to be sexually harassed by other patients causing many to delay or forego care; and

WHEREAS, Black veterans also indicated that they believed VA providers often exhibited biases against them; and

WHEREAS, VA has a number of campaigns, including its White Ribbon Campaign, which aim to ensure that all veterans feel safe and welcome in VA facilities; and

WHEREAS, VA has also found disparities in health outcomes and perceptions of access for many veterans including women, racial and ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ veterans; and

WHEREAS, veterans living in rural or remote areas comprise about 40% of VA's patient population but VA's rural facilities receive only about 32% of VA expenditures and access often compromises their ability to receive high quality and timely care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6-9, 2022, urges VA to establish program offices and advisory committees for unrepresented subpopulations to ensure representation of subgroups within VA and promote understanding of unique needs and preferences among these groups in VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA must take steps to identify and resolve issues identified by representatives that lead to health disparities and develop programs to address them.

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RESOLUTION NO. 430 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 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, VA's clinician-scientists in VA Rehabilitation Research and Development Service, who constitute the world's foremost scientists working in this field, invent and adapt specialized prosthetic, orthotic and other appliances, supports and treatments, using numerous ground-breaking technologies,

to improve the lives of countless numbers of severely disabled veterans, including many members of DAV; and

WHEREAS, the annual VA Medical and Prosthetic Research appropriation constitutes less than of 1% of VA's health care budget, but research funding has been subjected to rescissions, does not generally keep pace with research inflation and uncontrollable costs; and

WHEREAS, VA requires significant funding for repairs, restorations and replacements for VA's research laboratories, some of which involve life and safety risks for VA employees and veteran volunteers; and

WHEREAS, significant investment in scientific computing including cloud storage and credits is integral to manipulate large databases to identify genomic patterns and other associations between veterans and health outcomes, including the effectiveness or adverse outcomes of particular treatments for a given population; and

WHEREAS, VA researchers have benefited from the richness of the electronic patient health record developed by VA clinicians for veterans and unique missions they serve and must preserve this unique resource as VA undertakes a major modernization effort; and

WHEREAS, dedicated resources to the development, operations, and maintenance of information technology proportional to the resources provided the VA Medical and Prosthetic Research budget is key to sustaining a robust and vital research program dedicated to the Nation's veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, strongly supports VA's Medical and Prosthetic Research program as a vital investment in the future, affecting wounded, injured and ill veterans, and urges VA and Congress to adequately fund this program by ensuring there is adequate eradication of infrastructure and information technology deficits, so that it may continue its remarkable traditions in helping veterans recover and rehabilitate, to improve the quality of their lives.

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RESOLUTION NO. 431
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, the NAM continues to recommend that laboratory research be conducted to characterize herbicides and their contaminants' potential for inducing epigenetic modifications, study paternal exposure in the absence of maternal exposure, review systematically defined clinical health conditions that are manifested later in the lives of offspring; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to conduct comprehensive research, including those recommended by the NAM, to determine the level of association between herbicide exposure and birth defects and other conditions of children of male Vietnam veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 432
REPEAL BENEFICIARY TRAVEL DEDUCTIBLE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED
DISABLED VETERANS AND INCREASE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized under section 111 (g)(1), title 38, United States Code, to reimburse transportation expenses for certain service-connected veterans for VA authorized examination, medical treatment or care; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 110–387 required VA to permanently reduce to \$3.00 the applicable deductible, but service-connected disabled veterans are still subject to the deduction from the amount otherwise payable for each one-way trip unless the Secretary determines in an individual case that such deductible would cause severe financial hardship; and

WHEREAS, veterans currently receive a flat rate of 41.5 cents per mile for all transportation effective November 17, 2008; and

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans eligible for beneficiary transportation reimbursements should not be required to help defray the cost of travel, in the form of a deductible, to and from a VA medical facility for medical examination, or health care treatment; and

WHEREAS, it is grossly unfair for the VA Secretary to impose the deductible upon service-connected disabled veterans seeking treatment for service-connected conditions and service-connected veterans rated 30% or more when traveling in connection with any disability; and

WHEREAS, adequate travel expense reimbursement is directly tied to access to care for many veterans and is not a luxury; and

WHEREAS, 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 as of July 1, 2022 is 62.5 cents per mile; and

WHEREAS, VA continues to maintain that increasing veterans' beneficiary travel reimbursement rate to a rate more comparable to the GSA-approved rate would result in a reduction of funds available for direct medical care to our nation's veterans, and service-connected veterans should not shoulder the burden of receiving either medical care or adequate beneficiary travel payments; and

WHEREAS, when rates do not cover the cost of travel, veterans without resources are likely to delay health care access until their needs may become critical, resulting in higher health care costs and poorer health outcomes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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 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 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. 433 ADDRESS SOCIAL DETERMINANTS TO PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY AMONG VETERANS

WHEREAS, social determinants including health behaviors (30%), social and economic factors (40%), and physical environment (10%) are understood to affect about 80% of the variance in health outcomes for all people, while clinical care is only responsible for 20%; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the importance of social determinants in affecting health, starting in fiscal year 2022, the classification for disease codes (ICD-10) will permit social determinants of health to be coded as the primary diagnosis for outpatient visits; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization defines social determinants of health as “conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies and political systems;” and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has programming, services, and benefits available to address many of the social determinants that affect veterans' health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, such wraparound programs include compensation for the service-connected disabled veterans; housing and safety net programming, including pension, for low income veterans; support for

caregivers of certain veterans; education, vocational rehabilitation and job training; health and mental health care services for eligible veterans, including case management or care coordination for certain veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration's Office of Health Equity espouses a vision "to champion the advancement of health equity and reduction of health disparities and to ensure appropriate individualized care to each Veteran," and

WHEREAS, VA should strive for equity in all programming to be measured by disaggregating such data by sex, minority, ethnicity and LGBTQ status on applications for, awards for, and utilization of, its programs and services; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, will advocate for holistic programming to address social and economic factors (income, employment, education and family and community support), health behaviors (substance use, sexual behavior, diet and exercise) and physical environment (access to nutritional food, housing and transit) in addition to culturally relevant and personalized clinical care necessary to address health disparities among service-connected veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 434
ENSURE EQUITY IN QUALITY AND ACCESS FROM
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND VETERANS'
COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM PROVIDERS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) use of community care is rapidly increasing in terms of the portion of the budget it expends on such care and as a share of all care provided to enrolled veterans; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 115-182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018, requires VA to assess the availability of appointments in the Veterans Community Care Program provider network that meet a veteran's particular needs prior to scheduling that appointment in the community, but VA has not had data to make such determinations; and

WHEREAS, much of the information Congress intended VA to use in electing use of community providers under Public Law 115-182, including assessing comparable quality and timeliness for certain service lines, is not systematically collected by these providers; and

WHEREAS, VA providers have access to special training and clinical practice guidelines for certain types of issues veterans experience or are significantly more at risk of experiencing due to military service, including post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, blast injuries, the aftereffects of military sexual trauma, certain toxic exposures, and suicidal ideation; and

WHEREAS, a recent RAND report found that many community providers express concerns about being adequately prepared to address some of the issues veterans experience as a result of military service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports a requirement that VA contracts with care intermediaries such as TRIWEST, Optum and Humana require their network providers to collect information comparable to standardized outpatient data that VA collects including process, outcome and access data; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that providers be required to receive VA training in basic VA benefits and services and in best practices managing common veterans' conditions including suicidal ideation, post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, traumatic brain injuries, and toxic exposures.

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RESOLUTION NO. 435
ENSURE QUALITY AND TIMELINESS FOR THE
VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION AND VETERANS
COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM PROVIDERS

WHEREAS, Congress established the Veterans Community Care Program under Public Law 115-182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018 to ensure that veterans have timely access to quality care when they are unable to receive care in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Community Care Program providers are deemed to be part of the VA integrated high-performing networks; and

WHEREAS, VA establishes many goals for its performance and measures outcomes using standardized metrics for the health care industry including Healthcare Effectiveness Data and

Information Set (HEDIS), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) and other appropriate measures; and

WHEREAS, all VA facilities have participated in the Joint Commission for the past 35 years, and relevant facilities participate in the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCACPS) (patient surveys) and other programs establishing standards for the health care industry; and

WHEREAS, VA and the Department of Defense routinely develop and revise clinical practice guidelines for best practices for treatment of many conditions for which veterans and service members are at risk, including suicidal ideation and behavior, post-traumatic stress disorder (including for military sexual trauma), substance use disorders, traumatic brain injury, depression, diabetes mellitus and hypertension; and

WHEREAS, VA routinely collects information on wait times for each of its points of access to the health care system for primary, mental health and specialty care including for both new and established patients; and

WHEREAS, many private sector health care providers do not participate in programs that support quality or collect and publish data on quality or timeliness; and

WHEREAS, comparison data used by VA is based on regional data collected by CMS; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to improve real time access to quality and timeliness measures to ensure continued improvement in these measures; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress must require VA to include key measures of quality and access in its contracts for intermediaries administering the Veterans Community Care Program to allow true comparisons between VA and its network of providers and to ensure that all VCCP providers are in good standing in the states in which they practice by accessing data from national resources and state licensure boards; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that veterans community care providers be required to participate in annual training on VA resources available to veterans, and its clinical practice guidelines for conditions associated with military service.

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RESOLUTION NO. 436
ENSURE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
FACILITIES AND INFORMATION RESOURCES ARE
ACCESSIBLE TO VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 serves as the basis for allowing individuals with disabilities to enjoy mainstream access to opportunities for employment, commerce and governmental activities; and

WHEREAS, ADA requires new construction projects to use barrier-free design and older facilities to use modifications to allow access to individuals with disabilities including those using wheelchairs to areas that fulfill the primary function of the business; and

WHEREAS, access to some Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health facilities, services and equipment remains problematic for some disabled veterans using wheelchairs and service dogs; and

WHEREAS, Section 504 of the American Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that reasonable accommodations be made to allow people with disabilities to access benefits and services available to individuals without disabilities including for written and electronic materials; and

WHEREAS, recent reports have found only about 8% of VA websites are accessible to those with visual impairments; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, calls on VA to ensure its physical space comports to regulations for barrier-free design and address other environment of care deficiencies that impact patients' safety and comfort, and that it has equipment necessary to address the needs of veterans with disabilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA should create project milestones and timelines to ensure that all of its primary websites, documents and social media allow veterans with visual impairment to access information within the next five years.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 437
SUPPORT A CONSISTENT BENEFIT FOR SERVICE AND
GUIDE DOGS PRESCRIBED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS PROVIDERS AND EXAMINE THE BENEFITS OF TRAINING
SERVICE DOGS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, trained guide dogs and other trained service dogs can have a significant role in restoring or 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 able to better engage in their recovery and live more independently when prescribed service and guide dogs; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) prescribes the use of guide and service dogs to veterans enrolled in VA health care when therapeutically indicated to perform specific tasks to allow veterans to restore or maintain function or maximize independence; and

WHEREAS, VA provides a veterinary benefit for all prescribed service dogs meeting the standards of certain accredited training organizations; and

WHEREAS, VA has recently completed a multi-site, multi-year study of the use of service dogs for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder compared to those with emotional support dogs which found that veterans paired with service dogs had more significant reductions in the severity of symptomology and suicidal behavior and ideation; and

WHEREAS, VA is experimenting with dog training programs led by veterans for veterans, to determine if the training of service dogs itself is a therapeutic method to reduce symptoms in veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, urges VA to continue research to determine the most efficacious use of service dogs for defined populations, and, in particular, for veterans with mental health conditions, and to broadly publish the results of that research; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA determine any additional benefit for veterans with mental health issues involved in training service dogs for themselves or other veterans with disabilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that VA ensure that any veteran for whom a service dog is ordered receive the dog at no cost, including reimbursement for any follow-up training deemed appropriate, and a veterinary benefit for the life of that service dog.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 440
EXTEND APPRECIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ORLANDO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA FOR THE
SUCCESS OF THE 100TH DAV NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the cooperation and professionalism extended by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical personnel to the delegates and guests of the 100th 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 VA Orlando Health Care System, staffed and maintained a high-quality outpatient clinic and prosthetic service within the Hyatt Regency Orlando International Drive; and

WHEREAS, the medical care and prosthetic services rendered to the delegates to this 100th National Convention were extended in a highly compassionate and professional manner; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation to the VA Orlando Health Care System in Orlando, Florida for the professional and skillful health care delivered to the delegates to this 100th National Convention and for contributing to the overall success of this Convention.

* * *

(Whereupon, the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you. You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MS. DEBBIE MANN: Debbie Mann from Chapter 5, great District of Florida, and I so move it.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 9 now is the time for any rejected resolutions you wish read. Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Thank you, Jim.

(Whereupon, the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services chair withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I'd like to call upon Chairman Matt Kempainen for the report on the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership.

(Whereupon, the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership chair advanced to the podium.)

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MATT KEMPAINEN: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KEMPAINEN: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee Chairman on General Resolutions was called to order on Saturday, August 6th, 2022, by the Committee advisors Jon Retzer and Scott Hope.

The first order of business was the election of Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Matt Kempainen was elected as chairman. And Anna Schermer was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolutions.

003, seek the immediate release of any Americans who may still be held captive following any war and return and identification of any Americans who died during these wars;

004, support former POW slave labor claims against Japanese firms;

005, support move to renew prisoner of war and missing in action discussions;

028, support meaningful accountability measures, but with due process for employees of the VA;

029, encourage all disabled veterans to become registered voters and vote;

030, support the continued growth of veterans' treatment courts for justice involved veterans;

049, provide weekend burials at National Cemeteries;

050, 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 1st, 1949;

051, condemn public desecration of the flag of the United States;

052, support the construction of a courthouse for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims;

053, oppose any authorization of use of members of the Armed Forces for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent;

054, support legislation to extend U.S. citizenship to honorably-discharged service-connected veterans at the time of discharge;

283, support for defense POW/MIA accounting command;

416, extend the travel area that the service-connected disabled veterans having a permanent disability rating of 100 percent may travel from within the CONUS to CONUS and overseas;

417, extend the space-available air travel to caregivers of eligible veterans;

418, support legislation to protect honorably-discharged wartime non-citizen veterans with service-connected injuries or illnesses from deportation while applying for citizenship;

419, support federal laws, regulations, programs and policies that oppose those that diminish DAV's ability to fulfill its mission of assisting service-disabled veterans, their families and survivors;

441, appreciation to the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel for the success of the National Convention;

442, appreciation to all who are responsible to the success of the 100th National Convention;

443, appreciation to National Commander Andrew Marshall.

According to tradition, I will Resolution Number 443, appreciation to National Commander Marshall, in its entirety. Expressing appreciation to National Commander Andrew Marshall.

"WHEREAS, DAV National Commander Andrew Marshall of Palm Harbor, Florida, served honorably in the United States Army; and

"WHEREAS, his military career included service as an airborne infantryman in the Americal Division in the 173rd Airborne Brigade;

"WHEREAS, in December 1970, while serving in the Republic of Vietnam, Marshall was injured as a result of friendly fire while engaged in combat against the enemy; and

"WHEREAS, while on patrol in January 1971, he stepped on a concealed improvised explosive device, resulting in extensive damage to his left leg and foot; and

"WHEREAS, after receiving the Bronze Star, Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster in lieu of a second award, Army Commendation Medal with "V" device, Marshall was medically retired from the United States, Army; and

"WHEREAS, after returning home he became a DAV national service officer, beginning a 41-year career with the organization; and

"WHEREAS, during his storied career he held positions of national service officer supervisor, national area supervisor, and appellate counsel with the DAV's Judicial Appeals Office in Washington, D.C.; and

"WHEREAS, he has held several leadership positions with DAV at the chapter, department, and national levels, including adjutant, treasurer and commander for DAV Chapter 4 in Tampa, Florida; adjutant, executive director and commander for the DAV Department of Florida; and Judge Advocate for the DAV Department of Maryland; and

"WHEREAS, the membership of the DAV unanimously elected Marshall to lead the more than one million member organization as its national commander during the 2021 National Convention in Tampa, Florida; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Marshall has shown outstanding leadership during his year as national commander, while advancing DAV's mission and promoting DAV's message before Congress, at events and throughout media across the country;

"WHEREAS, Commander Marshall made it a key priority, working tirelessly throughout his tenure, to ensure veterans timely access to mental health care, supports and services and improve suicide prevention efforts by the Department of Veteran Affairs;

"WHEREAS, he has advocated on behalf of all veterans to ensure properly funded VA so veterans receive the health care and benefits they have earned and the proper recognition of services and sacrifices made by their family members and caregivers and survivors;

"WHEREAS, he was a fierce advocate for his fellow veterans exposed to toxic substances, pushing hard for the passage of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robertson Honoring our Promises to Address Comprehensive Toxics, PACT, Act of 2022; and

"WHEREAS, because of his strong leadership and advocacy we saw this enactment of this historical legislation, the most comprehensive toxic exposure legislation ever considered by Congress; and

"WHEREAS, now veterans from all eras who were exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, radiation, and other toxic substances will have the health care and benefits they have earned for their sacrifice;

"WHEREAS, Commander Marshall has shown incredible compassion during his year as national commander by visiting numerous injured and ill veterans at VA medical facilities nationwide and leading the DAV at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, all while advancing DAV's mission;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That DAV, in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6th through the 9th, 2022, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Marshall for his sacrifices, selfless service, professionalism, and dedication to his fellow wounded, ill and injured veterans, their families, their survivors, and the DAV during his year as DAV National Commander; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That DAV also salutes and extends our sincere appreciation to Commander Marshall's wife, Susan, and his family for their steadfast support and sacrifices during his year as DAV National Commander."

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on General Resolutions. On behalf of the Committee I move for the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention. (Applause)

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 003
SEEK THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ANY AMERICANS WHO
MAY STILL BE HELD CAPTIVE FOLLOWING ANY WAR AND
THE RETURN AND IDENTIFICATION OF THE REMAINS OF ANY
AMERICANS WHO DIED DURING THESE WARS

WHEREAS, the members of DAV are deeply concerned for the thousands of American service members still unaccounted for in the aftermath of wars; and

WHEREAS, numerous efforts by high-level American delegations, including members of Congress, have visited Southeast Asia in continuing efforts to solve the mystery of the whereabouts and fate of our missing in action (MIA) from the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, the brave families of the missing continue to live in uncertainty and anguish regarding their sons, husbands and other family members; and

WHEREAS, still today more than 73,000 are unaccounted for from World War II, though some 40,000 are deemed unrecoverable, mostly deep sea losses, some 7,500 from the Korean War, over 1,600 still missing in Southeast Asia from the Vietnam War, two from the Persian Gulf War and two from the Afghanistan/Iraq War, who have not been forgotten; and

WHEREAS, though DAV was disappointed with the timing of our government's decision to normalize relations with the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), prior to having achieved the fullest possible accounting of our prisoners-of-war (POW) and missing in action from Southeast Asia; and

WHEREAS, DAV believes that the SRV can increase its unilateral efforts to account for Americans still missing in action, especially those who were last known alive in captivity or immediate proximity to capture; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 004 SUPPORT FORMER PRISONER-OF-WAR SLAVE LABOR CLAIMS AGAINST JAPANESE FIRMS

WHEREAS, on May 30, 2009, the government of Japan, through then–Ambassador to the United States Ichiro Fujisaki, offered an official apology to American prisoners of war (POWs) for their abuse, misuse, pain and suffering caused by Imperial Japan; and

WHEREAS, in September 2010, the government of Japan reinforced its apology by initiating a visitation program for former POWs to visit Japan, to return to the sites of their imprisonment and to receive the apology directly from senior Japanese government officials; and

WHEREAS, the United States owes much to these soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen, the majority of whom fought in the early heroic battles of World War II in the Philippines, on Wake Island, Guam, Java and in the Sunda Strait; and

WHEREAS, the American POWs of Imperial Japan were forced into slave labor throughout the Japanese Empire in the most unjust, brutal and inhumane conditions; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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, that it be expanded to include family members and descendants, and funds be provided for a dedicated program of research, documentation, exchange and education; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED 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. 005

SUPPORT RENEWED PRISONER-OF-WAR/MISSING-IN-ACTION DISCUSSIONS

WHEREAS, DAV has long been and is now deeply committed to accounting as fully as possible for United States personnel previously listed as prisoners, missing and unaccounted for from all of our nation's past wars; and

WHEREAS, DAV recognizes the utility and importance of bilateral discussions, separate from those held on strategic issues, but fully integrated with broader policy and national security priorities in an effort to reach agreement for proceeding on a humanitarian basis with prisoner-of-war/missing-in-action accounting cooperation; and

WHEREAS, DAV also recognizes the lead time required between renewing bilateral discussions to reach humanitarian agreements and restoring and increasing unilateral, bilateral and, as needed, multilateral field recovery operations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports renewing and expanding direct bilateral humanitarian efforts for the purpose of restoring and improving US agreements and processes with counterpart nations required to account as fully as possible for unreturned American military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 028

SUPPORT MEANINGFUL ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES, BUT WITH DUE PROCESS, FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, in order to ensure 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 never appointed, demoted or terminated for political or personal reasons; and

WHEREAS, sanctions against VA employees based on performance must be made only if measurable performance standards have been clearly communicated but still violated; and

WHEREAS, VA managers must be empowered to use existing policies in a timely manner to sanction employees who fail to meet their documented performance standards; and

WHEREAS, applying sanctions exclusively to VA employees in the wake of a scandal is in contravention of civil service rules that regulate the entire federal workforce; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 029
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 Administration have failed to fulfill their obligation to our nation's disabled veterans, providing inadequate funding for veterans' benefits and health care; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the Administration have targeted veterans programs for unwarranted spending cuts and reductions under the mistaken and misguided theory that veterans do not base their votes on veterans' issues; and

WHEREAS, the failure of disabled veterans to register and vote will result in the perpetuation of this theory; and

WHEREAS, because of their disabilities, disabled veterans have more difficulty than their nondisabled peers in complying with some of the stricter requirements in voter registration laws; and

WHEREAS, veterans, their families and all Americans concerned about veterans' issues need to make their voices heard by becoming registered voters and exercising their votes in local, state and federal elections; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 030
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 substances in their attempts to cope with their chronic physical and mental health challenges, other barriers and obstacles, and pain; and

WHEREAS, as a consequence of chronic substance-use disorder or lasting residuals of combat exposure, a minority of veterans display antisocial and even criminal behaviors, and thus become involved with law enforcement and justice systems; and

WHEREAS, veterans treatment courts evolved from a proven national model of diversionary drug courts and mental health courts, to address the specific situations of veterans, and to maximize efficiency of available resources while making use of the distinct military culture to which veterans are accustomed; and

WHEREAS, in a 2016 report, the Government Accountability Office found large increases in workloads and heard reports from justice-involved veterans indicating that there is a need to add staff and resources to the Veterans Justice Outreach Program, in addition to improving effectiveness by developing and monitoring goals for its coordinators;

WHEREAS, many justice-involved 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 veterans; and

WHEREAS, veterans in general deeply value their military experiences and share an inimitable bond with their peers, and the veterans courts build upon this bond by enabling veterans to proceed through the treatment court process with people who are similarly situated, and by pairing together veterans and mentors; and

WHEREAS, years of experience from the veterans treatment courts now in existence nationwide has produced a statistically significant reduction of recidivism rates in veterans compared to persons in other treatment courts and individuals not involved in any sort of alternative or diversionary court; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the continued growth of the veterans treatment courts throughout our nation and urges adequate support for the increasing resource needs of the VA program in addition to identification of appropriate goals and metrics to determine the programs' effectiveness; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all DAV departments and chapters are encouraged to support additional veterans courts and work with local VA officials and law enforcement to build support for the establishment of these courts; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls on departments and chapters to work in support of state legislation where necessary to authorize veterans' courts.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 049 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 final respects and honor their loved one as he or she is laid to rest; and

WHEREAS, DAV and other veterans service organizations often provide volunteers who conduct military honors at funeral service burials; and

WHEREAS, weekend burial at National Cemeteries will allow more volunteers an opportunity to participate in military honor guard at funeral services due to scheduling; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks legislation that would authorize weekend burials for service-connected veterans at cemeteries operated by the NCA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 050 EXTEND MILITARY COMMISSARY AND EXCHANGE PRIVILEGES AND SPACE-AVAILABLE AIR TRAVEL TO CERTAIN SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, disabled active-duty personnel who were discharged from military service prior to October 1, 1949—the effective date of the Career Compensation Act—are not entitled to disability retirement from the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected disabled veterans have been deprived of the various benefits which all other disabled retired military personnel have enjoyed; and

WHEREAS, due to inflation, service-connected disabled veterans receiving Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation as a sole source of income are experiencing difficulties in keeping pace with the increased cost of living; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation that would extend military commissary and exchange privileges, as well as space-available air travel aboard military aircraft, to enlisted personnel who were discharged from active military service prior to October 1, 1949, for a service-incurred injury or disease rated by the VA as 30% or more disabling and who retained at least a 30% evaluation for a period of five years from the date of separation from active duty.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 051

CONDEMN PUBLIC DESECRATION OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court, by a 5–4 decision, ruled that public desecration of the American flag, as a form of free speech and expression, is legal and permissible; and

WHEREAS, the American flag—Old Glory—is our national ensign, the proud and beautiful symbol of our country’s precious, free heritage; and

WHEREAS, this symbol, in the form of our irreplaceable Stars and Stripes, has been carried and defended in battle, revered and cherished by citizens, and viewed as a beacon of hope and fulfillment by all the world since it was first unfurled at the birth of our nation; and

WHEREAS, the first amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, and was not intended by our founding fathers to enable individuals—who enjoy unfettered freedom to express their views, no matter how abhorrent, in both oral and written form—to publicly and contemptuously desecrate our beloved flag; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, condemns any individual or group who at any time publicly and willfully desecrates the flag of the United States.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 052

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 34 years; and

WHEREAS, the courtroom, chambers and other space are inadequate to meet the current and future needs of the Court and those it serves; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of veterans and their dependents that the Court be accorded the same appurtenances enjoyed by other appellate courts of the United States; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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. 053

OPPOSE ANY AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES FOR HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION WITHOUT THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMED CONSENT

WHEREAS, those who serve in our nation’s armed forces make personal sacrifices to maintain our national security; and

WHEREAS, members of the armed forces should be accorded respect and the gratitude of the nation; and

WHEREAS, their willingness to sacrifice and relinquish their liberty while serving does not surrender their natural right to determine what shall be done with their own bodies and their right to personal dignity; and

WHEREAS, it is a violation of the ethical principle of the right of self-determination to use service members for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent; and

WHEREAS, our government has in the past used military members as “guinea pigs” to test the effects of harmful and injurious substances on the human body; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, opposes any rule or provision that would authorize human experimentation on service members without their knowledge and informed consent.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 054
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO GUARANTEE UNITED STATES
CITIZENSHIP TO HONORABLY DISCHARGED SERVICE-DISABLED
NONCITIZEN VETERANS AT TIME OF DISCHARGE

WHEREAS, noncitizen service members have played an important role in the United States military since the Revolutionary War and thousands continue to serve honorably today; and

WHEREAS, persons with noncitizen status, who are permanent residents of the United States have permission to work in the United States and those who have obtained a high school diploma and speak English are eligible to enlist in the United States military; and

WHEREAS, current law allows noncitizen veterans to apply for expedited citizenship if they meet age and length of service requirements, and demonstrate English proficiency and knowledge of the history and government of the United States—however, meeting these criteria does not guarantee citizenship will be awarded; and

WHEREAS, honorably discharged veterans with: disabilities due to military service; service-related disabilities pending awards of service connection; or disabilities incurred during or as a result of military service but not awarded service connection should be guaranteed citizenship for their honorable service; and

WHEREAS, these veterans should have the opportunity to live without fear of deportation from the country they fought for; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to provide honorably discharged veterans with disabilities as a result of their military service, regardless if service connection has been established for such conditions, guaranteed citizenship.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 283
SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE PRISONER-OF-WAR/MISSING-IN-ACTION
ACCOUNTING COMMAND

WHEREAS, members of DAV have long been deeply committed to achieving the fullest possible accounting for United States personnel still captive, missing and otherwise unaccounted-for from all of our nation's wars; and

WHEREAS, personnel and funding for the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Accounting Agency (DPAA) have not been increased at a level commensurate with the expanded requirement to obtain answers on Americans unaccounted-for from all of our country's wars and conflicts; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the United States government to account as fully as possible for America's missing veterans, including—if confirmed deceased—the recovery and identification of their remains when possible; and

WHEREAS, DAV deeply appreciates Vietnam's 2009 proposal to expand the pace and scope of POW/MIA accounting cooperation, including use of United States Navy vessels for underwater operations; and

WHEREAS, the DAV recognizes the contributions to successful investigative efforts made by the Defense Intelligence Agency's Stony Beach Team of specialists; and

WHEREAS, this accounting effort should not be considered complete until all reasonable actions have been taken to achieve the fullest possible accounting; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, 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 Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory, including specific authorization to augment assigned personnel when additional assets and resources are necessary.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 416

EXPAND THE TRAVEL AREA THAT SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS HAVING A PERMANENT DISABILITY RATED 100% MAY TRAVEL FROM CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES TO CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES AND OVERSEAS

WHEREAS, the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act allows totally disabled service-connected veterans to travel space-available aboard military aircraft; and

WHEREAS, the military has interpreted the language in the act to authorize disabled veterans to travel in the Continental United States (CONUS) or directly between the CONUS and Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa (Guam and American Samoa travelers may transit Hawaii or Alaska), or traveling within Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands on flights operated by Air Mobility Command; and

WHEREAS, totally disabled service-connected veterans have sacrificed greatly in terms of their impairments and loss of earning capacity; and

WHEREAS, more than any other living group of Americans, such veterans should be eligible for all benefits and privileges that Congress may provide; and

WHEREAS, such totally disabled veterans should be extended the same privileges as other personnel currently authorized to utilize space-available military air travel; and

WHEREAS, the extension of such travel to totally disabled service-connected veterans would not place any additional burden upon the administration of this program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, seeks the enactment of legislation that would extend the travel area for space-available travel that service-connected veterans having a permanent disability rated 100% to and from CONUS and overseas.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 417

EXTEND SPACE-AVAILABLE AIR TRAVEL TO CAREGIVERS AND DEPENDENTS OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS

WHEREAS, the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act allows totally disabled service-connected veterans to travel space available on military aircraft; and

WHEREAS, this benefit does not include a veteran's caregiver or dependent; and

WHEREAS, active military and retirees are authorized to travel via space available travel with their dependents; and

WHEREAS, veterans that are eligible are severely disabled and often need the aid or assistance of a caregiver or family member to deal with the rigors of travel; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports legislation to authorize air travel for caregivers or dependents traveling with eligible veterans on a space available basis in order to provide aid or assistance as well as to provide parity with Department of Defense eligibility for military retirees.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 418

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 U.S. citizens through military service and less than half (43.8%) of noncitizen service members naturalize while on active duty; and

WHEREAS, noncitizen veterans arrested for crimes that may be due to underlying and untreated conditions incurred in military service are subject to immediate deportation; and

WHEREAS, current law does not provide any special protection for wartime service-disabled veterans who may become subject to deportation post-service; and

WHEREAS, wartime service-disabled noncitizen veterans who get deported effectively lose access to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care services and access to VA benefits; and

WHEREAS, Veteran Treatment Courts allow wartime veterans arrested for service-related, nonviolent non-felony crimes to address their service-related mental health or substance abuse issues which may result in removing charges upon successful completion; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports the enactment of legislation to protect honorably discharged wartime noncitizen veterans with service-related disabilities, from deportation without due process and the opportunity to participate in any VA program, including the Veterans Treatment Court; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DAV supports the enactment of legislation to protect honorably discharged war-time noncitizen veterans with service-related disabilities, from deportation while filing and awaiting a decision on their application for U.S. citizenship.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 419
SUPPORT FEDERAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, PROGRAMS AND
POLICIES THAT ENHANCE, AND OPPOSE THOSE THAT DIMINISH,
DAV'S ABILITY TO FULFILL ITS MISSION OF ASSISTING
SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND SURVIVORS

WHEREAS, DAV was founded by Judge Robert Marx and several hundred other fellow veterans on September 25, 1920 in Cincinnati, Ohio in order to rally their collective voice in the halls of Congress and help their fellow disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, DAV was chartered by Congress on June 17, 1932 as a nonprofit war veterans organization to advance the interests, and work for the betterment, of all wounded, injured, and disabled American veterans; and

WHEREAS, DAV is recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as a congressionally chartered veterans service organization for the purpose of preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits; and

WHEREAS, DAV is a tax-exempt veterans organization under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code, and is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable war veterans organization eligible to receive tax deductible contributions; and

WHEREAS, DAV has a National Headquarters in Kentucky, a National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C. and hundreds of service officers working inside VA offices and on military bases across the country to support veterans and their families seeking benefits and services earned through their service; and

WHEREAS, DAV has 52 departments, over 1,200 chapters and approximately 1 million members who provide their time, talents and resources to help fulfill DAV's mission of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with dignity and respect; and

WHEREAS, DAV provides meaningful support free of charge to more than 1 million veterans and family members every year through its service, volunteer, transportation, employment, legislative, communications and charitable programs; and

WHEREAS, changes to federal laws, regulations, programs and policies can enhance or diminish DAV's ability to fulfill its mission as a federally chartered, nonprofit charitable veterans service organization and its members ability to support that mission; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, supports federal laws, regulations, programs and policies that enhance, and will oppose those that diminish, DAV's ability as a non-profit veterans organization to assist ill and injured veterans, their families and survivors.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 441
APPRECIATION TO HYATT REGENCY ORLANDO FOR THE
SUCCESS OF THE 100TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the excellent service and ambience of the Hyatt Regency Orlando contributed greatly to the success of the 100th National Convention of the DAV convened in Orlando, Florida; and

WHEREAS, the courteous team members of the hotel staff ensured the comfort and satisfaction of the DAV officers, delegates and guests; and

WHEREAS, the classic setting, friendly environment, and numerous amenities helped make the 100th National Convention a truly memorable experience; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, expresses its deepest appreciation for the Hyatt Regency Orlando and to its entire staff for their friendly, personalized attention which helped make the 100th National Convention a resounding success.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 442
APPRECIATION TO ALL WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
SUCCESS OF THE 100TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the success of the 100th DAV National Convention convened in Orlando, Florida, August 6–August 9, 2022, 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. Laymond Rose; and

WHEREAS, we wish to commend all the news media for their encouragement and assistance at all of our Convention activities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, expresses its sincere appreciation to all groups and/or agencies whose dedication to our principles has made our Convention a successful one; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we wish to extend to the citizens of Orlando, Florida, our deepest gratitude for their personal interest in our great organization; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we wish to extend our appreciation to all of the distinguished guests who participated in our convention and support the ideals and principles of our great organization; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we extend our gratitude to Convention Chairman Mr. Laymond Rose, and his entire Committee for providing personalized assistance to our friends and delegates during our Convention stay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 443
EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO NATIONAL
COMMANDER ANDREW MARSHALL

WHEREAS, DAV National Commander Andrew Marshall, of Palm Harbor, Florida, served honorably in the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, his military career included service as an Airborne infantryman with the Americal Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade; and

WHEREAS, in December 1970, while serving in the Khe Sanh Valley of Quảng Trị Province, Republic of Vietnam, Marshall was injured as a result of friendly fire while engaged in combat against the enemy; and

WHEREAS, while on patrol in January 1971, he stepped on a concealed improvised explosive device, resulting in extensive damage to his left leg and foot; and

WHEREAS, after receiving the Bronze Star, Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster in lieu of second award and Army Commendation Medal with "V" device, Marshall was medically retired from the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, after returning home, he became a DAV national service officer, beginning a 41-year career with the organization; and

WHEREAS, during his storied career, he held the positions of national service office supervisor; national area supervisor; and appellate counsel with DAV's Judicial Appeals Office in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, he has held several leadership positions with DAV at the chapter, department and national levels, including adjutant, treasurer and commander for DAV Chapter 4 in Tampa, Florida; adjutant, executive director and commander for the DAV Department of Florida; and judge advocate for the DAV Department of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, the membership of DAV unanimously elected Marshall to lead the more than 1 million-member organization as its national commander during the 2021 National Convention in Tampa, Florida; and

WHEREAS, Commander Marshall has shown outstanding leadership during his year as national commander, while advancing DAV's mission and promoting DAV's message before Congress, at events and throughout media across the country; and

WHEREAS, Commander Marshall made it a key priority, working tirelessly throughout his tenure, to ensure veterans have timely access to mental health care, supports and services, and improved suicide prevention efforts by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, he has advocated on behalf of all veterans to ensure a properly funded VA, so veterans receive the health care and benefits that they have earned, and the proper recognition of the service and sacrifices made by their family members, caregivers and survivors; and

WHEREAS, he was a fierce advocate for his fellow veterans exposed to toxic substances, pushing hard for passage of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022; and

WHEREAS, because of his strong leadership and advocacy we saw the enactment of this historic legislation (Public Law 117–168) the most comprehensive toxic exposure legislation ever considered by Congress; and

WHEREAS, now—veterans from all eras who were exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, radiation and other toxic substances will have access to the health care and benefits they have earned from their service; and

WHEREAS, Commander Marshall has shown incredible compassion during his year as national commander by visiting numerous injured and ill veterans at VA medical facilities nationwide and leading DAV at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, all while advancing DAV's mission; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that DAV in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Marshall for his sacrifices, selfless service, professionalism and dedication to his fellow wounded, ill and injured veterans; their families; their survivors; and DAV during his year as DAV national commander; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV also salutes and extends our sincere appreciation to Commander Marshall's wife, Susan, and his family for their steadfast support and sacrifices during his year as DAV national commander.

* * *

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Matt.

(Whereupon, the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MR. GREG PALAU: Mic 3.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mic 1.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MR. GREG PALAU: Greg Palau, Madison, Number 2, Wisconsin, I move, or second.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: 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 aye; opposed. So ordered.

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KEMPAINEN: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Committee on General Resolutions and Membership chair withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: It is now my honor and privilege to introduce the president of the DAV 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 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 service-connected disability in 1958. Please give a very warm welcome to the revered leader, Past National Commander Dick Marbes. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Chairman Marbes advanced to the podium.)

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 Veteran of the Year. Since his retirement in 1987, he has pursued his passion full time for helping ill and injured veterans.

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, for your kind introduction. And thank you to my fellow veterans for this opportunity to speak with you about our Charitable Service Trust.

As president let me introduce the Trust's governing board. They are Vice-President Marc Burgess, Secretary-Treasurer David Tannenbaum, and our Directors: National Commander Andy Marshall, Denise Williams, Danny Oliver and Dennis Nixon.

In this day and age, it's easy to get caught up in what divides us, what worries us, and what's wrong in the world. No matter how you get your information, we're all bombarded by an abundance of headlines that stoke those negative feelings.

But from my perspective, the headlines are misleading. They don't accurately capture all the good that is truly happening in our country, including what so many organizations are doing for our ill and injured veterans and their families. (Applause)

In my role, I am privileged to highlight their work and the Trust's role in keeping the promise we've all made to those who changed in service.

While it's not always in the headlines, I could not be prouder of this community of organizations and donors brought together by the Trust. You've all provided hope, help and healing to the lives of countless veterans and their families. I applaud you for that. (Applause)

The Trust exists because of donor support. Without their gifts, we would be unable to do our work of helping renew the lives of veterans and their families. Their contributions are evidence of their continued commitment to those who defended our way of life.

As we have for the past 35 years, the Trust continues to carefully evaluate those whom we partner with. Our nation's veterans deserve the very best support and we will continue to provide grants to those organizations that deliver.

We've also committed to sound financial stewardship. More than 95 cents out of every dollar – donated dollar – directly supports programs that contribute to the victories the Trust makes possible. People can confidently give to us and know exactly how we use their money.

The Trust has been awarded a perfect overall score twice from Charity Navigator, the nation's largest independent charity evaluator. (Applause) And we've received their coveted Four-Star Rating more than 15 times since first being evaluated. (Applause)

The Trust also maintains a GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition offered by GuideStar.

These recognitions wouldn't be possible without the diligent effort of Bridgette Sorrell and her team that administers the Trust. Thank you for all your hard work. (Applause)

Corporate matching gift programs, bequests and other forms of contributions from corporations, foundations, and individual donors enable the Trust to fulfill its mission.

In 2021 these gifts, along with income derived from investments, totaled \$21 million, allowing the Trust to devote nearly \$7 million toward critical health care, education, employment, transition assistance, creative healing, legal services, and therapeutic activities addressing both physical and psychological barriers.

Every organization we support does important work for veterans and their families. They reflect our mission of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. And we are proud to back their initiatives.

One organization I would like to highlight today has taken up the fight against the suicide epidemic afflicting our veteran community. And they're seeing encouraging results.

The statistics we hear about service member and veteran suicides are heartbreaking, with 17 a day choosing to end their lives.

This affects everyone in our community. Whether it's someone we know, something we face ourselves, struggles with mental health are pervasive. And we must respond with urgent force to eliminate suicide in our ranks.

Save A Warrior is a leader in this fight and a partner you will hear about more in the years to come. To date, more than 2,000 men and women have gone through their program, which begins with an intensive 72-hours of cohort-based healing.

Facilitators go beyond a veteran's experiences during service to explore the root of what, in some cases, is a lifetime of pain. They have saved and transformed lives. People who have felt they were at their end have come through this program finding purpose and healing.

We want to see this continue, so the Trust granted Save A Warrior \$1 million to build its National Center of Excellence for Complex Post-Traumatic Stress. The building's dedication was this past June. We've also awarded another \$200,000 for its programming.

Here's a look at our support of Save A Warrior and how the organization is helping to change the lives of veterans who are experiencing mental health issues.

(Whereupon, a video on Save A Warrior 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 Jake Clark, president and founder of Save A Warrior. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Clark and Adam Carr joined Charitable Service Trust President and Past National Commander Marbes at the podium.)

MR. ADAM CARR: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. CARR: My name is Adam Carr and I'm a lifetime member of DAV. (Applause) It's an honor to be down here. I represent an organization called Save A Warrior.

Over a decade ago I was on the phone with my team trying to call a former teammate. And I will tell you what, that silence on the other end of the line was louder than any combat zone I've ever served in. That teammate's name was Tim Maholic. And little did we know that Tim would take his life that day.

We've lost about three veterans around this country since we had breakfast and coffee this morning. And we have it that that's unacceptable.

Now you heard the secretary come up here and he talked about nearly 6,000 people in 2019 around this country in the veteran community that had taken their lives. That's nearly the same amount of people that died in combat for this country over a 20-year period in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. That's also unacceptable.

Now, I spent my career in the United States Army as a Green Beret, operating on the front lines in combat zones all over this country, right at the tip of the spear because I believe in this country. I believe in what it stands for.

And when I transitioned out, I was looking for an organization to work with, to dive my life's work into, to be a part of, that was doing something at the tip of the spear.

Save A Warrior is that organization, looking in disciplines from neurobiology, psychology, psychiatry, mythology, anthropology, mindfulness and meditation.

And to date, we've served over 2,000 people with a 99.9 percent success rate when they've come to us like this. (Applause)

We're so grateful to DAV's executive leadership team, to the Charitable Service Trust, for building this partnership and looking into the future, because we're an organization of innovation. We never stop. We never turn this off. How could we with those numbers? How could we?

Barry Jesinoski said to us when we created this partnership, "As long as you guys are doing this work, DAV will be there with you to have your back." And we're honored. We're grateful for that because we're just getting started.

And it's my honor this morning to introduce to you the founder, a friend of mine, a mentor of mine, of Save A Warrior.

Jake Clark spent his entire career serving both on the federal side, as an FBI agent, as an L.A.P.D. police officer, serving in the Army as an enlisted soldier in Panama in the '80s, and as an officer serving overseas in the Balkans during that conflict.

He started this organization with a declaration out of the trunk of his car. And now we stand here before you, two months removed from the ribbon cutting of the first and only National Center of Excellence for Complex Post-Traumatic Stress.

So without further ado, let me introduce to you Jake Clark. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Carr withdrew from the stage and Clark advanced to the podium.)

MR. JAKE CLARK: Thank you. Thank you. Good morning. Thank you so much. Thank you to everyone at DAV Charitable Service Trust.

That's a good looking young man, huh? Wow. That's hard to follow. Thank you, Dick. Thank you to the secretary. Challenge accepted. Veterans center, Save A Warrior, all day long. Improve outcomes, all day long. Fight like hell, all day long.

I'm not going to embarrass anybody other than myself here today but I want you to know that there is a veteran in this space today – it happens everywhere we go, and I had the opportunity to meet this person. This person is going to be coming to Warrior Village in the coming months. And that experience will be transformative and, perhaps, lifesaving.

You know, when you have an idea like Save A Warrior, you start by yourself. And it was scary, you know, giving up a paycheck for about four years. There were times when we didn't know how we were going to pay for the next cohort, the direction that we were headed.

But it doesn't look anything like that today. Your name is on that building if you're part of DAV. Every time we walk out to that new center, on a facility that was donated by a very gracious man in Central Ohio. The facility is in Southern Ohio. It's 350 beautiful acres that this retired business man spent millions of dollars to buy it out of his own trust to give it away because he was so moved by the mission.

You know, I'm going to tell you something. Barry said it in his statement about pre-service experiences. We specialize in that. After talking to more than 2,000 returning veterans over the last decade, after spending 25 years in recovery myself – because not only am I “the hair club president, I am also a client.” (Applause)

You know, I grew up as a little kid – and I don't recommend this – starting at six years old visiting my mother in mental institutions. And I knew two things: Number 1, my mother was not going to get better and come home; and, Number 2, unfortunately, the people to whose care she was entrusted were not that interested in seeing her get well.

When you come to our facility, I'm very interested. I'm very interested that you get well because my heroes my entire life – my father is a, my late father is a prior service Marine of the Vietnam era (Hooah) – Dad is that you? (Laughter) He said he would haunt me. (Laughter) Dad, hold my water.

You know, when this idea struck me, because I was very bothered, like a lot of you are, by these suicides, all of which are preventable, you know he voiced his objections about why I shouldn't do it. You know, I'd come home from deployments. It was my second time in the military.

And he said, “You know, you are in your mid-40s now. You're getting your life back together.” And I said, “Dad, listen, I got nothing but love for you but I'm going to do this. I love you Dad. I'm not asking your permission.”

And he said, “You know, if you just save one it will all be worth it.” And I said, “Do you mean that?” And he said, “Yes, I mean that.” And I said, “Okay. That's a done deal, then.”

And I love your motto of keeping our promise to America's veterans. I give you my word that inside of your promise we're keeping our promise because if you know someone (Applause) – thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

And, you know, I had a chance to speak with someone today, as I said, who is going to spend time with us. And I was so moved. You know. I got to see all the folks from DAV, got to shake hands with the secretary. I invited him to Warrior Village.

You want to do me a favor? Get that secretary to Warrior Village because we'll show you what the solution looks like for a particular subgroup in the veteran population.

When he talks about “fight like hell,” and Barry Jesinoski talked about “pre-service experiences,” that's all we deal with all day long. And those secrets come to Save A Warrior to be exposed, processed, mourned, grieved, and put to death.

There is a part of us that needs to die and it's the story that goes with why we want to kill ourselves, because people just want to be acknowledged for what happened.

They want to have their dignity preserved. And they want to heal and they want to get on with their life. And they want to pay this thing forward.

And that's who we are as a community of warriors. We're really, really, really good at coming back for each other. And we stake our lives on that. You don't know what Adam Carr looked like six years ago when I met him.

He was on the Internet with a bottle of booze, a bag of pills, and a gun and his wife looking at him in terror as he went live and that went viral. And that's how I met Adam Carr. You wouldn't know that when he comes up here today looking cleaner than the Board of Health. (Laughter) I can go all day. I can go all day.

We have almost 2,000 stories like that ten years later with three suicides. And your help makes all the difference in the world.

Please, I beg of you, please help us be in a position where when somebody comes and asks us for our support that support is going to be there because there is – again, there is a slice in that broad ecosystem of solving this problem, we will absolutely do our part.

Please, we are so grateful for everything you've done for us. Bringing that building up out of the mud is a miracle. That started with nothing and now it's on this beautiful facility that your name is on. You have an open invitation, just let us know that you're coming. We would love to show you what you made possible.

God bless you. Thank you for everything you paid for. And God bless America. Thank you, DAV. Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Clark withdrew from and President Marbes returned to the podium.)

CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MARBES: Thank you, Jake. We are proud to stand alongside your organization and support the work you do for the veterans on their healing journey. (Applause)

Every veteran's path is different. And no one organization can do it all. This is why the Trust exists, to find and partner with the very best organizations in the country that are working toward a common goal of helping veterans and their families.

Some veterans need legal assistance. Others need help as they face food insecurity. Some need assistance completing their education or job training. Others may find relief through animal therapy or music therapy or family counseling and programs.

Some have found their purpose because of Save A Warrior. Others have benefited from housing assistance from programs, including Swords to Plowshares and Welcome Home, Incorporated. Organizations such as Got Your Six Support Dogs provide trained service dogs to veterans in need.

Veterans experiencing PTSD have gained valuable job-skill training through Patriot's Landing. Another organization I wanted to briefly highlight is Concussion Legacy Foundation.

We provided a grant for their "Project Enlist" program, which does outreach to increase the number of veteran brains donated for research on traumatic brain injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other conditions. They are with us this week so if you'd like to learn more, I encourage you to visit the booth they have here.

The Trust can make impactful contributions in all these areas and more because of the generosity of loyal supporters, corporations, and foundations.

Thank you to every donor. In this season of uncertainty with the economy, you have continued to prioritize giving in support of those who have given so much of themselves for our country.

We promise to continue to be good stewards of your gifts. As I close out this year's report, I also want to thank each of you for the work you've done, the work you continue to do, all in the name of our brothers and sisters who served this nation.

You can learn more about the DAV Charitable Service Trust and keep up-to-date with our initiatives at CST-dot-DAV-dot-org or by liking us on Facebook.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation. And thank you for allowing me to share some of the incredible work the Trust grant recipients do.

God bless each and every one of you. Thank you for your attention.

This concludes my report, Commander. (Applause)

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2021, and
Independent Auditor's Report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust:

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust (the "Trust"), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2021, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cashflows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Trust as of December 31, 2021, 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.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Trust and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for 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.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date that the financial statements are issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Deloitte + Touche LLP

April 7, 2022

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021

ASSETS

CASH	\$ 11,682,989
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	37,105
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	568,418
CAMPAIGNS' PLEDGES RECEIVABLE—Net of allowance for uncollectible pledges of \$186,698	83,259
PREPAID EXPENSES AND OTHER	20,287
INVESTMENTS—Includes charitable gift annuity reserve balance of \$7,312,656	44,262,533
SOFTWARE—Net	<u>38,907</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 56,693,498</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

LIABILITIES:

Accounts payable—Disabled American Veterans	\$ 219,338
Accounts payable—other	64,582
Annuity payment liability	<u>3,887,883</u>
Total liabilities	4,171,803

NET ASSETS WITH AND WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Without donor restrictions	52,502,695
With donor restrictions	<u>19,000</u>
Total net assets	<u>52,521,695</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 56,693,498</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:			
Contributions—net of assessment fees and provision for uncollectible pledges of \$177,628	\$ 11,008,974	\$ 1,080,937	\$ 12,089,911
Contributions of charitable gift annuities	291,151		291,151
Bequests	1,899,891		1,899,891
Net investment return	5,300,469		5,300,469
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>1,122,937</u>	<u>(1,122,937)</u>	
Total support and revenue	<u>19,623,422</u>	<u>(42,000)</u>	<u>19,581,422</u>
EXPENSES:			
Program services	6,755,004		6,755,004
Management and general	195,887		195,887
Fundraising	<u>84,136</u>		<u>84,136</u>
Total expenses	<u>7,035,027</u>		<u>7,035,027</u>
CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY VALUATION ADJUSTMENT	<u>392,100</u>		<u>392,100</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	12,980,495	(42,000)	12,938,495
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	<u>39,522,200</u>	<u>61,000</u>	<u>39,583,200</u>
NET ASSETS—End of year	<u>\$ 52,502,695</u>	<u>\$ 19,000</u>	<u>\$ 52,521,695</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Total
EXPENSES:				
Allocations to charitable programs	\$6,637,105	\$ -	\$ -	\$6,637,105
Administrative charges		47,235	59,708	106,943
Professional fees	16,824	77,888		94,712
Grant proposal processing	70,853			70,853
Banking fees		38,789		38,789
Advertising	13,694	913	3,652	18,259
Maintenance		12,920		12,920
Printing, postage, and supplies	4,946	7,889	60	12,895
Travel	3,720	4,497		8,217
Legal fees			6,840	6,840
Depreciation	5,952			5,952
Insurance	1,910	1,910		3,820
Other expenses		3,846	13,876	17,722
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$6,755,004</u>	<u>\$195,887</u>	<u>\$ 84,136</u>	<u>\$7,035,027</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	\$ 12,938,495
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Noncash investment contributions	(126,401)
Net change in depreciation of investments	1,427,995
Net gain on sale of investments	(5,451,562)
Depreciation	5,952
Charitable gift annuity valuation adjustment	(392,100)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:	
Interest and dividends receivable	26,217
Accounts receivable	(462,569)
Campaigns' pledges receivable	(5,294)
Prepaid expenses and other	(7,569)
Accounts payable—DAV and other	(36,682)
Annuity payment liability	<u>(291,151)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>7,625,331</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Purchase of software	(8,613)
Purchases of investments	(54,479,659)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	<u>51,152,077</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(3,336,195)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:	
Proceeds from gift annuity agreement contributions	647,250
Payments to annuitants	<u>(574,658)</u>
Net cash provided by financing activities	<u>72,592</u>
NET INCREASE IN CASH	4,361,728
CASH—Beginning of year	<u>7,321,261</u>
CASH—End of year	<u>\$ 11,682,989</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

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 June 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (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, 2023. A modified retrospective approach is to be used for certain parts of this standard, while other parts are to be applied using a prospective approach. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In September 2020, the FASB issued ASU No. 2020-07, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation and Disclosures by Not-for-Profit Entities for Contributed Nonfinancial Assets*. The amendments require not-for-profit entities to present contributed nonfinancial assets as a separate line item in the statement of activities, apart from contributions of cash and other financial contributions. The standard also requires additional disclosure related to contributed nonfinancial assets. The amendment, which requires retrospective application, is effective for annual periods beginning after June 15, 2021. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2020-07 on the financial statements.

Cash—The Trust considers all highly liquid instruments purchased with a maturity date of three months or less to be cash equivalents and are stated at cost, which approximates fair value. The earnings credit received on the Trust's checking accounts was \$13,755 in 2021. The Trust maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. The Trust has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Revenue Recognition—The Trust is a member of Independent Charities of America (ICA) and Military Family & Veterans Service Organizations of America (MFVSOA). ICA and MFVSOA are charitable agency

federations, certified by the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to participate in the annual combined federal campaigns, as well as state and corporate workplace giving campaigns.

The Trust recognizes contribution revenue as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions when notification of the campaign designations is received and also recognizes an allowance for uncollectible pledges. Pledge receivables that are outstanding for more than one year are written off in their entirety. The Trust also evaluates pledges receivable for any amounts to be specifically reserved. Pledges receivable of \$83,259 are expected to be received in 2022. Amounts received from accounts previously written off are recognized as contribution revenue when received.

As a member of MFVSOA during 2021, the Trust was assessed a portion of MFVSOA's annual operating budget based on the relative amount of total pledges made to the Trust compared with the sum of all member agency pledges. Pledges designated to MFVSOA (versus a member agency) and other revenue, such as interest income, are shared among all member agencies in this same proportion. Therefore, if MFVSOA's revenue exceeds expenses, the member agencies share the excess income. This excess income is distributed in the following year. The Trust recognizes such distribution as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions when received. The Trust received \$10,683 in 2021, included in contributions within the statement of activities, for excess income recognized by MFVSOA in 2020.

Investments— Investments include investment of contributions and charitable gift annuity agreements (see Note 7). Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of the Trust's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or model-derived valuations, in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments. The Trust's policy is to report cash and cash equivalents, which include money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

Contributions and Bequests—The Trust recognizes contributions when cash, securities or other assets; an unconditional promise to give; or a notification of a beneficial interest is received. Conditional promises to give—that is, those with a measurable performance or other barrier and a right of return—are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend have been met.

Contributions and bequests received are recorded as support with and without donor restrictions depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. The Trust received noncash contributions at a fair market value of \$126,401, included in contributions within the statement of activities, in 2021.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more program or supporting services of the Trust. Those expenses include grant proposal processing, administrative charges, professional fees, travel, printing, postage and supplies, insurance, advertising and other expenses. All expenses are allocated based on estimates of time and effort toward each program or supporting service. Allocation estimates are reviewed annually based on the specific expense and adjusted accordingly.

Income Taxes—As a not-for-profit service organization, the Trust has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c) (3) organization. Contributions made to the Trust are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Use of Estimates—The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Risks and Uncertainties—In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic. As a result, economic uncertainties have arisen which are likely to negatively impact the Trust’s financial position, cash flows, or results of operations. Other financial impact could occur though such potential impact is unknown at this time.

3. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTION

Net assets are released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions in 2021 are as follows:

Purpose restrictions accomplished:	
To Disabled American Veterans	\$ 963,315
To DAV Departments and Chapters	6,622
To National Service Foundation	4,000
Program services	<u>149,000</u>
Net assets released from donor restrictions	<u>\$ 1,122,937</u>

4. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The Trust’s working capital and cash flows are attributable to the contributions, net of assessment fees and uncollectible pledges, received throughout the year. As of December 31, 2021, the Trust’s financial assets (total assets, less prepaid expenses and software) totaled \$56,634,304. All financial assets with the exception of the Charitable Gift Annuity Reserve investment of \$7,312,656 as of December 31, 2021, are available to fund expenditures within one year following the Statement of Financial Position date.

The Trust has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its fundraising costs and general and administrative expenses come due. In addition, the Trust awards grants to board-approved applicants. As part of its liquidity management, the Trust invests cash in excess of daily requirements in various short-term investments. The short-term investments are invested for capital preservation and liquidity for cash flow requirements, such as money market funds, certificates of deposit, and commercial paper.

The Trust’s long-term investment portfolio is for the deposit of proceeds and payment of obligations from charitable gift annuities. The portfolio is invested in marketable fixed-income and equity securities, index and actively managed mutual funds, and exchange traded funds. A portion of the balance is invested as required in accordance with governing regulatory agencies to pay the long-term charitable gift annuity beneficiary obligations. See Note 7 for further information. The remaining is invested with the intent of providing capital appreciation and total return to cover future expenditures and grants awarded.

5. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Accounting Standards Codification 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, provides a framework for measuring fair value. This framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value, as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market, but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The Trust did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3) during 2021.

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, 2021.

Cash equivalents, composed of money market funds, are categorized as Level 1, and are valued at cost, which approximates fair value. The money market funds represent the Trust's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

US government securities (US Treasury notes), common stocks, and exchange-traded funds (ETFs), categorized as Level 1, are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

Certificates of deposit and commercial paper categorized as Level 2 are valued at fair value, which approximates amortized cost.

US government agency notes and municipal and corporate bonds, categorized as Level 2, are valued using third-party pricing services. These services may use, for example, model-based pricing methods that utilize observable market data as inputs. Broker-dealer bids or quotes of securities with similar characteristics may also be used.

Shares of registered investment companies (mutual funds), categorized as Level 1, and 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, 2021, are as follows:

Asset Category	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,216,118	\$ -	\$ 2,216,118
US government securities	1,798,005		1,798,005
US government bonds		149,743	149,743
Certificates of deposit		681,633	681,633
US government agency notes		801,563	801,563
Municipal bonds		138,411	138,411
Corporate bonds		3,667,479	3,667,479
Common stocks	1,534,205		1,534,205
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic equity funds/ETFs	24,652,546		24,652,546
Domestic fixed income funds	357,867		357,867
International fixed income funds	1,100,148		1,100,148
International equity funds	7,164,815		7,164,815
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>33,275,376</u>		<u>33,275,376</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 38,823,704</u>	<u>\$ 5,438,829</u>	<u>\$ 44,262,533</u>

Fair value of the annuity payment liability of \$3,887,883, classified as Level 2 within the fair value hierarchy, as of December 31, 2021, was calculated as the net present value of expected annuity payments based on the following significant assumptions:

- (1) The discount rate expected to reflect yields available on high-quality investments; and
- (2) The mortality assumption based on expected annuitant longevity.

6. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During 2021, DAV personnel assisted the Trust on a limited basis in administering its business operations, fundraising, and grant programs. For these personnel services, the Trust reimbursed DAV \$177,796 in 2021. As of December 31, 2021, the Trust owed DAV \$219,338. DAV provides the Trust with the use of facilities, equipment, and occasional magazine space at no charge.

In 2021, the Trust distributed the following in support of DAV programs and services:

DAV Employment Initiative	\$ 781,000
Assistance to disabled veterans and their families	593,163
DAV "Just B Kids" Scholarship	308,500
Transportation Network	200,000
Veterans retreats	150,000
Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program	45,000
DAV Night Out Program	38,000
DAV 5K Program	14,852
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	2,500
DAV Disaster Relief	2,000

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 2021, the Trust provided \$4,000 to the DAV National Service Foundation for use in assisting disabled veterans and their dependents.

7. ANNUITY PAYMENT LIABILITY

The Trust enters into charitable gift annuity agreements with donors. In the statement of activities, contributions of charitable gift annuities of \$291,151 for the year ended December 31, 2021, 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, 2021.

In 2021, the Trust used the mortality table IAR-2012 in determining the liability to reflect the most up-to-date expectations with regard to longevity for individual annuitant lives.

In 2021, the Charitable Gift Annuity Valuation Adjustment of \$392,100 consists of:

- Gain from deceased annuitants of \$779,325, and
- Other actuarial adjustments of \$(387,225), which are primarily related to discounting of the liability during the year ended December 31, 2021.

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 \$6,133,419 as of December 31, 2021.

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 \$1,179,237 as of December 31, 2021. The minimum required balance of the segregated accounts for California donors is calculated and invested in accordance with applicable California statutes and regulations.

The Trust also maintains the minimum amount of net assets without donor restrictions as required by any state for the acceptance of charitable gift annuities, which is \$1,000,000. The total net assets without donor restrictions that are subject to state statutes or regulations (calculated as the reserve funds (investments), less the annuity payment liability) amounted to \$3,424,773 as of December 31, 2021.

8. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No other events have occurred after December 31, 2021, but before April 7, 2022, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, that require consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the financial statements.

* * * * *

(Whereupon, President Marbes withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Dick. May I have a motion to accept that impressive report?

MR. BACON: Mic 3.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MR. BACON: Comrade Commander, I, Albert J. Bacon, Sr., as Department of Florida Commander, Chapter 17, so move.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: May I have a second.

MR. TIM WALLS: Mic 4.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 4.

MR. WALLS: Tim Walls, Chapter 1, Department of South Dakota, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All those in favor, aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon President Marbes withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: DAV played a pivotal role in the implementation of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, which opened October 5th, 2014, and has since become a prominent and profoundly important monument in Washington, D.C.

We are proud to be joined today by a well-known DAV leader who helped lead the charge to establish this memorial. He has been an endless presence and determined advocate for its use.

Without further delay, please welcome to the stage the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation President and my good friend, Past National Commander Dennis Joyner.

(Whereupon, DVLMF President and Past National Commander Joyner advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: DAV Past National Commander Dennis Joyner, was appointed board president for the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation in 2015.

While speaking about the importance of the memorial during its dedication ceremony on October 4, 2014, Mr. Joyner said:

"Although I've been blessed with many achievements in life, the achievement I am most proud of is this memorial, a memorial that gives me and the many thousands of other disabled veterans like me a sense of contentment knowing that what we gave, what our families gave, and what we continue to give will be forever remembered here in our Nation's Capital."

DVLMF PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DENNIS JOYNER: Thank you, Commander Marshall, for your kind introduction. Adjutant Burgess, national officers, delegates and guests.

It has been nearly eight years since our aspiration of a memorial dedicated to the sacrifice of disabled American veterans became reality. This deeply moving memorial did not happen by accident; it was realized through the hard work and determination of DAV and the Auxiliary.

If you haven't had the pleasure of walking or rolling through the memorial, I encourage you to check it out the next time you are in Washington, D.C. Trust me; it doesn't disappoint.

DAV was a driving force behind this venture, including hundreds of our chapters and thousands of our members. For those of you here who helped support the memorial with donations at the individual, chapter, or department levels, thank you. Please give yourselves a round of applause. (Applause.)

Now I would like to take a moment and introduce the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation Board of Directors: Vice-President Marc Burgess; Secretary-Treasurer Gene Murphy; and our Directors: National Commander Andy Marshall, Dave Riley, Dave Gorman, Don Samuels, and Ex-Officio member Art Wilson.

Maintaining the memorial at the heart of our democracy in our nation's capital is no easy task and would not be possible without the thoughtful consideration of these dedicated veterans. I thank all of you. (Applause)

October 5th, 2014, the day the American Veterans' Disabled for Life Memorial was dedicated. It is a date seared into my memory and my heart. It was the pinnacle of nearly a two-decade campaign to honor those men and women who have given so much for our nation. Thank you. (Applause)

But our work did not stop there. When one task is completed, even one as demanding as building such a beautiful memorial, many more opportunities arise.

Since 2014, our foundation has concentrated on getting the word out so current and future generations will come to fully appreciate everything disabled veterans have done for them. It has also set out to maintain the memorial and improve its existing structures.

Despite the turbulent past few years, the memorial has stood as a symbol and vigorous reminder of those who shed blood to defend our freedom.

Throughout the pandemic, the memorial's message with the YouVisit virtual tour was more important than ever, offering visitors the opportunity to experience it from the comfort and safety of their homes.

This technology allows more people to become aware of the memorial and its important message. DAV has also promoted it across its social media pages, underscoring the deep partnership that we have together.

In 2021, the tour captured the attention of more than 1,400 unique visitors, bringing the total visitors to roughly 14,900 since the site's launch. Online visitors stem from all over the United States, as well as 12 other countries. (Applause)

A new call to action button titled, "Veterans Assistance," has been included on the website. Now, with the click of a button, visitors are taken to the "Veterans" landing page of the DAV website where they can find their nearest national service office and learn more about what DAV has to offer and get connected with employment resources, just to name a few.

Once again, our outstanding volunteers from DAV Chapter 10 in Arlington-Fairfax, Virginia, continued to meet to clean the Memorial. By offering their most precious resource, their time, particularly during Saturday mornings, they will ensure the memorial will reflect the respect it deserves.

Let's take a look at see how it went.

(Whereupon, a video on cleaning the memorial was viewed, followed by a round of applause.)

DVLMF PRESIDENT AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JOYNER: Great job to all of the volunteers and a heartfelt thank you to Chapter 10 for your continued dedication to the memorial and your fellow veterans. Thank you so much, Chapter 10. (Applause)

Just as it took the extraordinary generosity of many people and organizations to build the memorial, it will take the same commitment to keep it pristine and in front of American's minds.

It is now on all of us to continue our mission of education and outreach. It falls on the very people in this room to promote the memorial and do what we can to make the public aware of its existence, its significance, and all that it represents and honors.

In order to help spread the word we have included a brochure about the memorial in your convention bags. It is my sincere hope that you will take just a few seconds out of your day to review the materials and share it with others back home.

To every member of the Board of Directors, past and present, to the entire DAV, including state departments, chapters, and, of course, the Auxiliary, thank you for your unwavering support.

I hope that you will walk away from this with a newfound sense of pride for everything that you have done to make this noble project a reality. Please give yourselves and one another a resounding round of applause. (Applause)

But our work is not done. We will continue to stand alongside the National Park Service staff, volunteers, and supporters in improving the site as needed and providing a means for both veterans and their loved ones to access its meaningful message throughout the country.

To take the virtual tour or learn more about the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, please visit A-V-D-L-M-dot-org. You can also follow us on Facebook.

Thank you, Commander. This concludes my report. (Applause)

(Whereupon, DVLMF President and Past National Commander Joyner withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Denny. May I have a motion to accept that report?

MS. MANN: Mic 3.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MS. MANN: I'd like to do a motion to accept the report, Chapter 5, Florida.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Name. (Laughter)

MS. MANN: I was trying to get this right. I'm sorry, Commander, sir. I'm Debbie Mann, Chapter 5, Florida.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: May I have a second, please. This side of the room, you can participate. (Laughter)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Mic 4.

MR. LEROY ACOSTA: Mic 1.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 1.

MR. ACOSTA: DAV Department of California Past State Commander Leroy Acosta seconds.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, DVLMF President and Past National Commander Joyner withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Now, will you please welcome Burl Jimmerson, newly-elected president of the Commander and Adjutants Association for 2022 and 2023.

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

MR. BURL JIMMERSON: National Commander Marshall, National Adjutant Burgess, national officers, delegates and guests, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. JIMMERSON: I am proud to have been elected as president of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association for 2022 to 2023.

We pledge to continue our support of the national organization through our sponsorship of the State Commanders and Adjutants Orientation, the Mid-Winter Conference, the Winter Sports Clinic. We look forward to another very productive year in the DAV.

I would like to read into record our officers and committees for the coming year: president, Burl Jimmerson; vice-president, William Robinson.

Executive committee, Pamela Beal, Kirk Johnson, Michael Elmore, Lisa Gregory, Betty Minus, Debra Olsen. Past president, Brian Wilner; secretary-treasurer, Rita Alberegg; assistant treasurer, Dave Tannenbaum; judge advocate, Floyd Watson; chaplain, Jerome Washington; assistant chaplain, Jeanette Taylor or Juliet Taylor; sergeant-at-arms, Jerry Estes, Hugo Perez.

Audit: Paul Artizone, Nancy Espinosa, Thomas Ayala; Constitution and Bylaws Committee: Gregory Dunham, Jamie Jakob, J. Hafford Pandose, Bill Dolan.

Resolutions: Donald Peake Jr., Mary Ann Keckler. Special Projects: Danny Oliver, Richard (Indistinguishable) Vicki Brown.

At this time would the National Commander Marshall and National Adjutant Burgess please join me to receive a presentation?

(Whereupon, the commander and adjutant joined Mr. Jimmerson at the podium.)

MR. JIMMERSON: On behalf of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association I would like to present you to with two donations for the National Service Foundation. It is with a great deal of pleasure that I present our donation of \$3,000 to the DAV Service Foundation. (Applause) In addition, an additional check in honor of Past President Brian Wilner's honor. (Applause)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Burl. Would you like to get a picture?

(Whereupon, Mr. Jimmerson presented Commander Marshall and Adjutant Burgess with the checks, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which Mr. Jimmerson withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Now, ladies and gentlemen, I would like anyone who wants to support the National Service Foundation but hasn't done so at the booth, to please make your way to the back of the room. I'd ask that you do it as quietly as possible. 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 MARSHALL: 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 the veterans of today and tomorrow.

Although one of the Foundation's core missions is to support DAV's daily work to meet the most significant and immediate needs of veterans, increasing public awareness about the Foundation's mission is an extremely important component of what the Foundation does.

When they are able to open the hearts and minds of the American people, they better understand the needs of ill and injured veterans and their families which, in return, enables all of us to do our part to ensure veterans are properly cared for in the long term.

This includes providing free professional assistance with disability claims and benefits; no-cost transportation to and from medical appointments; and other vital services imperative to the quality of life of veterans and their families.

With "service before self" in mind, it is only fitting and an honor to introduce the president of the DAV National Service Foundation and past national adjutant of DAV, my friend, Arthur H. Wilson. (Applause) (Whereupon, National Service Foundation President Wilson advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: A native of Massachusetts, Art Wilson enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in September 1962. He served as a runway construction specialist in Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand, and Taiwan from 1964 to 1966.

Immediately after his discharge, Mr. Wilson became the first of his era to join DAV's professional staff as a national service officer apprentice in Atlanta. He was appointed as DAV's National Adjutant and CEO in 1994, a position he held until his retirement in June 2013. Following his retirement, he

was elected president of DAV National Service Foundation and serves as an ex-officio member of the Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Foundation Board. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT ARTHUR H. WILSON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Commander, Adjutant Burgess, national officers, and all of our members, friends, and guests.

I want to thank you for your very long support of the National Service Foundation. This year has been a banner year for the Foundation and its mission to stand up and support our DAV.

In 2021, DAV service officers submitted more than 151,000 claims for more than 422,000 injuries and illnesses on behalf of veterans, their families and their survivors.

Our NSOs, in spite of the ongoing uncertainty related to COVID, retained vital capabilities to our toll-free hotline to ensure that we were available to advocate for benefits at all times.

The Columbia Trust awarded grants of nearly \$1.2 million to help chapters and departments provide medical transportation, coordinate volunteerism in hospitals, enable department and chapter service programs and support and assist other initiatives, like those that combat veteran homelessness.

The Trust helped chapters and departments purchase 61 new vehicles which contributed to the almost 164,000 rides that we provided at no cost.

Now, to put that in perspective, the 7.9 million miles DAV volunteers drove are the equivalent of traveling to and from the moon 16 times. Put that one down. (Applause)

We are grateful to have supported many of the 161 hospital service coordinators nationwide who oversaw transportation and ensured our veterans received the care that they earned.

We're also grateful to have aided many of the 235 state-level, and 1,992 chapter-level service officers who were on the front lines ensuring veterans' claims for benefits were protected.

In 2021, we disbursed more than \$4.8 million to support DAV's mission. The majority of those funds went to the national service program. We've helped to ensure that they received essential tools and resources to help veterans achieve justice based on the sacrifices that they have made.

In 2022, we marked 91 years since the establishment of the Foundation. For nearly as long as the VA has existed and DAV has been pushing for care and benefits for veterans, the Foundation has ensured that our ability to advocate, to serve, continues, no matter what happens.

As surely as DAV fights to guarantee the promises are kept, the Foundation exists to safeguard that sacred mission and protect and augment the many programs and services that provide hope to our wounded heroes, their families and survivors.

For the last 41 years, it has been my sincere honor and privilege to be intimately involved in the Foundation's mission.

And though my hair was certainly darker then – and a bit more of it – I'm extremely proud of the impact that we've witnessed with your support. In 1981, the revenue for the Foundation totaled just over \$282,000, which is around \$920,000 in today's dollars.

We can and should be very proud that the Foundation's total support and revenue today topped \$12 million at year's end. Back then, the net assets were just about \$5.3 million in today's dollars. Today, they top \$151.1 million. (Applause)

For nearly as long as DAV has been serving veterans, the Foundation has been a close partner and ally that has provided ongoing support and stability. It's been my pleasure to see some of the very innovative ways that we've contributed to that mission.

Since its establishment, grants exceeding nearly \$35 million have empowered our leaders at every level to purchase vehicles and conduct essential programs and services in spite of limitations that they may have in terms of available funds.

And we've supported DAV's nationwide efforts in many key areas. Here are just some of the many highlights that I've had the pleasure to see with your incredible support.

In 1990, as our nation ramped up for war in the Persian Gulf, the Fund established an Expert Medical and Vocational Opinions Program. This groundbreaking initiative allowed our professional national service officer corps to procure expert medical opinions so we could enhance our ability to get justice for the veterans that we represent.

In 1996, we developed the Colorado Trust, later renamed the Columbia Trust, allowing our leaders at every level to "spread the wealth." Through your contributions, financially disadvantaged chapters with important and creative service initiatives have been able to tap into a pool of funds to support veterans in the ways that could otherwise have been possible.

In 2000, the Foundation funded a pre-discharge outreach program by purchasing computers and materials needed to train and equip DAV's transition service officer program.

Over the course of the last four decades, the Foundation has funded numerous DAV outreach initiatives, documentaries, and special campaigns. Those include the Toxic Poisoning Project; SERVICE: When Women Come Marching Home; The National World War II Memorial – A Testament to Freedom; The March of the Bonus Army; and Korean War Stories.

By the way, not to go all “Hollywood” on you, but the Korean War Stories won an Emmy award. (Applause) Yes.

The Foundation provided the seed money that DAV needed to expand our representation at the U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals for Veterans Claims.

More recently, the Foundation partnered with DAV and funded the training and resource program iTRAK, which is a vital platform that ensures DAV’s continued primacy as the leader in benefits advocacy.

Forgive the history lesson here, if you will, but as I reflect on this time it makes me think of many veterans who contributed to this aspect of our mission and many whose lives have been enhanced because of the National Service Foundation.

I think of Dick Cosgriff, a good friend, who served as the Foundation’s president for 25 years. Dick’s life was changed dramatically in World War II as he was medically discharged in 1945. He joined DAV Chapter 2 in San Diego, was an active member who dedicated most of his life to our mission. You may know him better as the namesake for our Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards.

In fact, at this time I would like to call upon National Service Director Jim Marszalek to the stage as we present this important honor. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Marszalek joined President Wilson on the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: The Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards recognize the national service office in each division that has the largest combined total of contributions made in its name. The 2021 winners:

Division 1, the National Service Office in Sacramento, California, with a total of \$17,300. And accepting on their behalf is NSO Supervisor Dianna Camac. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 1 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 2, the National Service Office in Providence, Rhode Island, with a total of more than \$9,700. Welcome NSO Supervisor Michael Zambreed to accept the award on their behalf. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 2 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 3, the National Service Office in Chicago, Illinois, with a total of more than \$18,000. Supervisor Robert Nobertowicz is here today to accept on their behalf. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 3 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 4, the National Service Office in Saint Louis, Missouri with a whopping total exceeding \$75,000. And representing our Division 4 winners from Saint Louis is National Area Supervisor Andrew Edwards. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 4 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 5 is the National Service Office in Seattle, Washington, with a total of over \$11,000. And accepting on their behalf is NSO Supervisor Jacob Holland. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 5 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Division 6, the National Service Office in Cleveland, Ohio, with a total of nearly \$21,000. And here today to accept the Division 6 award is NSO Supervisor Jacob Drost. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 6 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Award was presented, at which time an official photograph was taken, after which the NSO withdrew from the stage.)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Please join me again in thanking our nationwide corps of incredible national service officers. (Applause)

From the gallows, the last recorded words of Revolutionary War Patriot Nathan Hale were, “I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country.” As remarkable as that is, I think in many ways the people who have supported the Foundation and the people it supports have gone further.

Today, I think, also, of my dear friends who suffered blindness, brain injuries, amputations, and other catastrophic wounds that, in effect, resulted in them contributing an entire way of life to our national defense.

And after they continued to serve and give what life they had to save one another – and I regret, too, that I have only one life to give in service to DAV. But I'll tell you this. It's been one hell of a ride for me and my family. (Applause)

When I returned from Vietnam, it was a great honor to be the first in my era to join DAV's professional NSO staff. But greater still has been the honor of meeting and serving alongside so many great people. All of you.

Thanks so much for your support. Your support has placed the Foundation in such a stable position to continue its mission.

All of that said, friends, I want to tell you that I am going to be stepping down as Foundation president after this convention. It's time. It's been a tremendous blessing to serve alongside each of you. And I'm confident that the future of this great institution is in very good hands.

And although I appreciate any good will that you may have to share, today it is my hope that you do so in the form of the support to the DAV National Service Foundation.

Every cent you donate will not only support the many service initiatives the Foundation backs, it will put DAV in an even better position to safeguard our great charity for many years to come. You can also donate online or by mail at the addresses noted on the screen.

This is a way to donate in honor of or to commemorate our friends, brothers and sisters, and show our commitment to America's finest.

To kick off this time of giving, I'm pleased to acknowledge contributions from the Moral Rearmament League of \$2,100; Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, and Gunner, \$50,000.

So now it's your turn to speak and to show the nation what you and your chapter or department are willing to do to support the cause that brought us here today.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Can I start this off, Mr. Wilson?

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Yes, sir. You have the floor.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: A personal donation, \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation, and a personal donation of \$1,000 to the Columbia Trust. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Chairman Wilson, National Commander Marshall, Adjutant Burgess, on behalf of Arthur A. (Indistinguishable) Chapter 1, Sioux Falls, Department of South Dakota, we'd like to donate \$500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: From the State of South Dakota, I'd like to give \$500 to the National Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you.

MR. SCOTT STEVENSON: My name is Scott Stevenson, representing Chapter 158 from the Great State of New York. I have three donations. The first one is from our Chapter 158, for \$1,000 for the Just B Kids program. The second one is for the National Service Foundation from the Department of New York as Department Commander, for \$30,000. And the third one is a donation to the Just B Kids program for \$20,000 for a total of \$51,000 from New York. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. ALAN PRICHARD: I'm Alan Prichard, DAV Chapter 2, Huntington, West Virginia. We donate \$2,000 to the National Service Foundation in memory of Hershall "Woody" (Indistinguishable), U.S.M.C. (Applause)

MR. JOHN MISELLI: Good morning. My name is John Miselli. I'm the commander for New York Chapter 144. I'm proud to say we'd like to make a \$2,000 donation to Just B Kids. (Applause)

MR. MIC AGARY: I'm Mic Agary, state commander for Minnesota. I'd like to present the Columbia Trust with a donation of \$15,000 from the Department of Minnesota. (Applause)

MR. RON HALGAN: From the Great State of Minnesota, past Commander Ron Halgan, the Minnesota DAV Foundation donates \$15,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Good morning. On behalf of District 14, the states of Minnesota, Montana, and North Dakota and South Dakota, we'd like to donate \$250 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. BACON: A.J. Bacon, Sr., from the great Sunshine State of Florida. On behalf of the Department of Florida, it is my honor and privilege to donate \$5,000 to the National Service Foundation, as well as \$5,000 to the Columbia Trust. Again, the Department of Florida. (Applause)

MR. JOHN RAYBURN: I'm John Rayburn from DAV Chapter 18 in (Indistinguishable), Florida. Our members will donate again \$12,500 to Just B Kids. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. BILL DOLAN: Bill Dolan, Department of Nevada, commander, Chapter 15, (Indistinguishable), Nevada, \$500 donation to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you, Bill.

MR. JEROME WASHINGTON: Chapter 1, out of Reno, Department of Nevada, Jerome Washington, on behalf of our department and our members, we have several donations here. We have \$2,000 to the National Service Foundation; \$1,000 to the Charitable Service.

And we have a \$500 donation to each of the following: Disabled Veterans Life Memorial Fund, the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship, the Transportation Vehicle Grant Program, and Just B Kids. Totalling a donation of \$5,000 from the Department of Nevada. (Applause)

MS. SADIE HILL: From the Great State of Georgia, I am Sadie Hill, the department commander. We would like to donate \$2,500 to the National Service Foundation, \$2,500 to the Columbia Trust. (Applause)

MR. KEN COUTURE: Ken Couture, commander of the State of Illinois. We have \$10,000 going to the clinic and six going to the service. (Applause)

MR. AL REYNOLDS: I'm Al Reynolds, commander of Chapter 17, Macon County, Illinois. I've got three donations. I've got \$10,000 to the National Service Foundation; \$10,000 to the Sports Clinic; and \$10,000 to the National Disaster Relief. (Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ALAN BOWERS: Thank you guys. I'm Al Bowers. And Terri and I have donated each year. At the end of my financial – because I'm the secretary-treasurer of the Foundation, at the end of my report I always say, "And we are giving a thousand dollars." Today I just gave \$2,500. Thank you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: St. Louis, Missouri, Chapter 1 donates \$10,000 to the National Service Foundation in memory of the NSO office in St. Louis.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Thank you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Department of Maine would like to donate \$750 to the Columbia Trust and \$750 to the National Service Foundation. John F. McPherson Chapter 1, Maine, is also donating \$750 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. GREG PALAU: Greg Palau, senior vice commander for the Department of Wisconsin, we donate \$2,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. RICHARD CONNOR: My name is Richard Connor from the State of Massachusetts. I am the commander. We'd like to give a thousand dollars to the National Service Foundation and a thousand dollars to the Columbia Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. TOM McCOY: Tom McCoy, Department of Arizona, donates \$2,500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of the Department of Ohio and its members, please accept our gift to the National Service Foundation in the amount of \$100,000. (Applause)

MR. MICHAEL STITH: I can't follow that one up too well. (Laughter) I'm Mike Stith, Chapter 35 of Ohio with a thousand dollars for the National Service Foundation in honor of our NSOs, that's Jake and Matt and Richard and Steve and all the NSOs and staff at the Cleveland office. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. GEORGIA EAST: Good morning, Georgia East, commander, Columbia department, we pledge \$500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MS. JOAN SABRIS: Good morning, my name is Joan Sabris, second junior vice commander from the awesome Department of Maryland. We would like to donate \$5,000 to DAV National Emergency Relief Fund. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of Commander Terry Lynn and State Adjutant Samuel Petrovich, I would like to make a donation to the National Service Foundation from the Department of Pennsylvania and a personal check for \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation in memory of my brothers Kenneth, a veteran of the Korean War and a Navy corpsman who died from what I believe to be service-connected condition in August of 1995; and my brother Elman who was a U.S. Army Air Force pilot who was killed in action in January of 1944. (Applause)

MR. HANK BAKER: I'm Hank Baker, commander, Department of Tennessee, we donated \$2,500 to the Winter Sports Clinic, \$2,500 to the Columbia Trust Fund. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. W. LEE GIBBEN: My name is Lee Gibben, Chapter 35 located in Akron, Ohio. Our chapter proudly donates \$5,000 to the NSO, \$5,000 to the Jesse Brown Foundation, and \$1,000 to the Veterans Services. (Applause)

MR. JOE MOSLEY: I'm Commander Joe Mosley. And on behalf of the Golden State of California we proudly contribute \$10,000 to the National Service Foundation and \$1,000 to the Charitable Service Trust. Thank you. (Applause)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER NANCY ESPINOSA: Nancy Espinosa, Davis County Chapter 14, Department of Utah, we donate \$2,000 to the National Service Foundation and \$5,000 to Just B Kids. (Applause)

MR. KEN MESTERS: I'm Ken Mesters from the State of Colorado and we would like to donate \$2,500 to the National Foundation. (Applause)

MR. MICHAEL (INDISTINGUISHABLE): Michael (Indistinguishable), Colorado Chapter 7 would like to donate \$1,500 to the Columbia Trust and \$1,500 in honor of our awesome service officers out of Colorado. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. WILL KING: Good morning, comrades. My name is Will King. I am out of General Washington Chapter 7 out of the most awesome State of Virginia. And I'm proud to announce that we are donating \$20,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. DWAYNE RAYMOND: I'm Dwayne Raymond from the most awesome State of Virginia and we donate \$20,000 to the National Golf Tournament. (Applause)

MS. CYNTHIA BAILEY: Good morning. I'm the immediate past department commander, Cynthia Bailey, from the most awesome State of Virginia. We are donating \$25,000 to Disaster Relief. (Applause)

MR. FRANCIS MITCHELL: I'm Francis Mitchell, department commander for the awesome, awesome, awesome State of Virginia. (Laughter) We are donating \$40,000 to the Winter Sports Clinic for a total of \$105,000 from Virginia. (Applause)

MR. BOB PLUNK: I'm Bob Plunk from the State of Arkansas. We are donating \$1,500 to the Columbia Trust. (Applause)

MS. ANN SCHERMER: Good morning. Ann Schermer from the great State of Oklahoma, past department commander. We are donating a thousand dollars to the National Service Foundation in honor of our great NSOs out of Muskogee. And I'd like to thank all of the Oklahoma chapters and units for donating, helping our youth, our juniors raise \$5,001 for the Golf Clinic. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. KIM TATHEM: I'm Kim Tatham from the Show-Me State and I have two personal donations, one for the National Service Foundation of \$2,000 and \$2,000 for the Charitable Service Trust in honor of our outstanding NSOs in our St. Louis office. (Applause)

MR. DAVID GERKE: David Gerke, commander, Missouri, \$25,000 to the National Service Foundation in honor of the St. Louis service office. (Applause)

MR. DEAN TRAVERS: Dean Travers, past department commander for Missouri, we're donating \$25,000 for the Winter Sports Clinic. (Applause)

MS. ANNA MacDONALD: Anna MacDonald from Chapter 2, senior vice, I have two donations. First one is to the Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic for \$5,000; the second one is to the Winter Sports Clinic for \$20,000. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. LAWRENCE DIXON: Good morning. My name is Lawrence Dixon, commander of Chapter 2 in Kansas City, Missouri. I'm proud to donate, not me but our chapter, \$20,000 to the Disabled Veterans National Service Foundation in honor of the NSO of St. Louis. (Applause)

MR. BILL MUFFLEY: Good morning. I'm Bill Muffley, senior vice commander, department of Delaware, and we'd like to make a contribution to the National Service Foundation of \$200 in memory of a PDC Arthur Chick. (Applause)

MR. RAY AURELA: Good morning. My name is Ray Aurela from the great State of Texas. I represent Chapter 20, Bluebonnet Chapter. And we're donating \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation and \$500 to the Charitable Service Fund. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Maxine Nixon advanced with a group of Junior Auxiliary members from Texas.)

MS. MAXINE NIXON: Hi, Maxine Nixon, Auxiliary, Texas, we have juniors here. (Cheers) Thank you. They do a fundraiser every year and they're excited to be here. Thanks to our chapters, our units and our leaders our juniors can do this. We have their support. We have Atticus and Joshua. We have a donation for the National Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic for \$5,000. (Applause) And they like the big checks.

(Whereupon, the juniors presented a ceremonial check, at which time an official photograph was taken.)

MS. ROXANNE JAMES: Good morning. I'm Roxanne James, the senior vice commander from the Department of South Carolina.

MS. ANDI MILLER: And I'm Andi Miller, the department adjutant for the great State of South Carolina.

MS. JAMES: And we're here this morning to give three checks, one is for the Sports Clinic, one is for the National Service –

MS. MILLER: Trust.

MS. JAMES: – Trust and the other one is for the Columbia Trust.

MS. MILLER: And they're all a thousand dollars. (Applause)

MR. LEON BOOKER: Good morning. I'm Leon Booker, commander of William E. Tate Chapter Number 1 from the great State of Georgia. We would like to make a donation for \$1,000 to the Charitable Service Trust and \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. (INDISTINGUISHABLE) HUMPHREY: (Indistinguishable) Humphrey, commander from the great State of North Carolina, home of Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg. We donate a thousand dollars to the National Service Foundation and a thousand dollars to the Charitable Service. (Applause)

MR. ERIC OOHMS: Good morning. My name is Eric Oohms. I'm department adjutant for Kansas. We donate \$5,000 to the DAV National Service Fund. (Applause)

MR. JOE HALL: I am Joe Hall from your favorite vacation destination, North Dakota, adjutant. (Laughter) We are donating \$5,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

MR. EDDIE BOISVERT: My name is Eddie Boisvert. I'm with Chapter 12 in Rhode Island. And we donated \$500 to the National Service Foundation and \$500 to the Columbia Trust. I challenge all of you, next convention to come up here and make you donations. (Applause)

MR. AL LABELLE: I'm Al Labelle, Department of Wisconsin, Chapter 57. I would like to make three personal donations. First of all, a donation of \$500 to the Charitable Service Trust in the name of Joy Ilem who is outstanding, inspiring leadership of the legislative department as director.

The second one would be to \$250 to the National Service Foundation in the name of Shane Liermann who as deputy national legislative director was instrumental in the passage of the PACT Act.

And the third one would be kind of an unsung hero, in the name of Peter Dickenson who was instrumental in making sure the provisions in the PACT Act were done as we desired.

And, finally, I have a personal message to THE National Commander, for the first time in over 100 years, on Saturday, I rode in a Model-T around the city of Tampa (sic) and I just want you to know that it was a much smoother ride than the ride to the 1922 DAV National Convention in San Francisco. (Laughter) With that. (Applause)

NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT WILSON: Wow. The quick math tells me that was about \$800,000. (Applause)

I would like to just take a moment for final thanks to all of you. In particular, I want to thank Gary Burns, past Foundation president; Marc Burgess, Bridgette Sorrell and her staff who administers the Foundation; and Nancy O'Brien who administered the Foundation many years prior. And if I don't want to spend the rest of my life on the couch, my best friend and partner, Mary Wilson. (Applause)

At the end of the day, it is you, the folks who have supported our great charity for these many years who deserve the great credit.

Although I'm stepping down, I won't be far. I'm going to look forward to continuing my 56 years of service as an active DAV member and thank you for making the Foundation and the DAV an organization deserving of a humble servant's life's work.

God bless you all and thank you. (Standing Ovation)

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2021, and
Independent Auditor's Report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation:

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of DAV (Disabled American Veterans) National Service Foundation (the "Foundation"), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2021, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cashflows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Foundation as of December 31, 2021, 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.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Foundation and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for 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.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date that the financial statements are issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Deloitte + Touche LLP

April 7, 2022

**DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021**

ASSETS

CASH	\$ 1,880,984
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	3,756
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	139,410
INVENTORIES	932
PREPAID EXPENSES	21,511
INVESTMENTS	179,941,570
OTHER ASSETS	<u>9,511</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 181,997,674</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES:

Due to Disabled American Veterans	\$ 133,909
Other liabilities	<u>34,785</u>
Total liabilities	<u>168,694</u>

NET ASSETS:

Without donor restrictions:	
Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund	93,641,491
The Columbia Trust	<u>865,077</u>
Total net assets without donor restrictions	<u>94,506,568</u>
With donor restrictions:	
Purpose restricted for mission	87,090,718
Purpose restricted for DAV Legislative Fund	<u>231,694</u>
Total net assets with donor restrictions	<u>87,322,412</u>
Total net assets	<u>181,828,980</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 181,997,674</u>

See notes to financial statements.

**DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION**

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

		With Donor Restrictions			
	Without Donor Restrictions	Purpose Restricted Columbia	Purpose Restricted DAV Legislative	Total	
SUPPORT AND REVENUES:					
Contributions and bequests	\$ 942,856	\$ 1,500	\$ -	\$ 1,082,756	
Net investment return	12,310,040	11,592,779	1,287	23,904,106	
Net assets released from restrictions	2,475,687	(2,336,000)	(139,687)		
Total support and revenues	<u>15,728,583</u>	<u>9,258,279</u>	<u></u>	<u>24,986,862</u>	
EXPENSES:					
Program expenses:					
Grants and expenses in accordance with The Columbia Trust	1,187,030			1,187,030	
Appropriations to DAV National Headquarters and other organizations	4,831,903			4,831,903	
Total program expenses	<u>6,018,933</u>			<u>6,018,933</u>	
Management and general expenses	125,385			125,385	
Fundraising expenses	90,696			90,696	
Total expenses	<u>6,235,014</u>			<u>6,235,014</u>	
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	<u>9,493,569</u>	<u>9,258,279</u>		<u>18,751,848</u>	
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	<u>85,012,999</u>	<u>77,832,499</u>	<u>231,694</u>	<u>163,077,132</u>	
NET ASSETS—End of year	<u>\$94,506,568</u>	<u>\$87,090,718</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$181,828,980</u>	

See notes to financial statements.

**DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION**

**STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

	Program	Management and General	Fundraising	Total
EXPENSES:				
Allocations to charitable programs	\$ 5,957,447	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,957,447
Administrative charges		59,143	8,280	67,423
Grant proposal processing	59,143			59,143
Printing, stationery, and supplies	80	2,138	36,446	38,664
Postage and shipping		2,024	32,646	34,670
Professional fees		28,588		28,588
Banking and credit card fees	2,263	13,362		15,625
Registration fees		3,825	6,483	10,308
Legal fees			6,841	6,841
Awards		4,368		4,368
Travel		4,136		4,136
Insurance		3,839		3,839
Maintenance		2,904		2,904
Depreciation		1,057		1,057
TOTAL	\$ 6,018,933	\$ 125,385	\$ 90,696	\$ 6,235,014

See notes to financial statements.

**DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS)
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	\$ 18,751,848
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:	
Net change in appreciation of investments	(12,984,397)
Net gain on sale of investments	(6,687,096)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:	
Interest and dividends receivable	13,950
Accounts receivable	(112,950)
Inventories	(139)
Prepaid expenses	(9,723)
Due to Disabled American Veterans	(6,591)
Other liabilities	<u>(1,478)</u>
Net cash used in operating activities	<u>(1,036,576)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Purchases of investment securities	(21,263,891)
Proceeds from sale of investment securities	21,774,433
Other	<u>(1,096)</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities	<u>509,446</u>
NET DECREASE IN CASH	(527,130)
CASH—Beginning of year	<u>2,408,114</u>
CASH—End of year	<u>\$ 1,880,984</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DAV (DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS) NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

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 June 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (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, 2023. A modified retrospective approach is to be used for certain parts of this standard, while other parts are to be applied using a prospective approach. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In September 2020, the FASB issued ASU No. 2020-07, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation and Disclosures by Not-for-Profit Entities for Contributed Nonfinancial Assets*. The amendments require not-for-profit entities to present contributed nonfinancial assets as a separate line item in the statement of activities, apart from contributions of cash and other financial contributions. The standard also requires additional disclosure related to contributed nonfinancial assets. The amendment, which requires retrospective application, is effective for annual periods beginning after June 15, 2021. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2020-07 on the financial statements.

Cash—The Foundation considers all liquid instruments purchased with a maturity date of three months or less to be cash equivalents that are stated at cost, which approximates fair value. The earnings credit received on the Foundation’s checking accounts were \$3,602 in 2021. 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—Inventory consists of solicitation materials and other items.

Investments—Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of the Foundation’s investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar or model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments of the Foundation. The Foundation’s policy is to report cash and cash equivalents related to investment accounts, which include money market funds, with its trust accounts.

Contributions—The Foundation recognizes contributions when cash, securities or other assets; an unconditional promise to give; or a notification of a beneficial interest is received. Conditional promises to give—that is, those with a measurable performance or other barrier and a right of return—are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend have been met.

Contributions received are recorded as support with or without donor restrictions, depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the donation.

Net Assets without Donor Restrictions—All contributions and bequests without donor restrictions to the Foundation are designated by the board of directors (the “Board”) for investment in a Board-designated endowment fund, known as the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, as a reserve for future needs.

Investment income derived from these invested amounts is included in net assets without donor restrictions and used for current operations of the Foundation or appropriated by the Foundation for use by DAV.

For 2021, appropriations to the Columbia Trust of \$700,000, is excluded from the statement of activities due to the transactions being an internal appropriation. The Columbia Trust is a fund established by the Foundation to provide financial assistance for DAV state department and local chapter service programs.

For 2021, the Board has designated \$865,077, as total unrestricted net assets for The Columbia Trust and are not included in the Board-designated endowment fund. The Columbia Trust recorded a decrease in unrestricted net assets of \$288,200 in 2021. Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of investments is designated to The Columbia Trust’s net assets from the unrestricted general fund.

Net Assets with Donor Restrictions—Funds considered with donor restriction for mission are restricted by their purpose to being invested prudently and used in fulfilling the Foundation’s mission. As of December 31, 2021, the net assets with donor restrictions of \$87,090,718 are included within the investments balance in the statement of financial position.

Funds contributed to The Columbia Trust are matched 100% by DAV, up to a maximum of \$3,000,000 per year. In 2021, The Columbia Trust received \$69,200 in contributions, which were matched by DAV.

Contributions for the DAV Legislative Program are considered contributions with donor restriction. Investment income of \$8,503 in 2021 from the DAV Legislative Fund was transferred to DAV for use by DAV's Legislative Program. The net assets with donor restrictions of \$231,694 as of December 31, 2021, are included within the investments balance in the statement of financial position.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more program or supporting services of the organization. Those expenses include grant proposal processing, administrative charges, postage and shipping, printing, stationery and supplies, legal fees and registration fees. All expenses are allocated based on estimates of time and effort toward each program or supporting service. Allocation estimates are reviewed annually based on the specific expense and adjusted accordingly.

Income Taxes—As a not-for-profit service organization, the Foundation has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income taxes as a Section 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to the Foundation are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Use of Estimates—The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Risks and Uncertainties—In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic. As a result, economic uncertainties have arisen which are likely to negatively impact the Foundation's financial position, cash flows, or results of operations. Other financial impact could occur though such potential impact is unknown at this time.

3. ENDOWMENT FUNDS

The following table represents the composition of the Foundation's endowment net assets by type of fund for the year ended December 31, 2021:

	Without Donor Restrictions
Board designated Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund	<u>\$ 93,641,491</u>

The Foundation's Board-designated endowment fund included in net assets without donor restrictions, also known as the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, for the year ended December 31, 2021, had the following activity:

Net assets—beginning of year	<u>\$ 83,859,721</u>
Public support—contributions and bequests	942,856
Revenues—net investment return	<u>12,310,040</u>
Total public support and revenue	<u>13,252,896</u>
Expenses:	
Program:	
Appropriations to DAV National Headquarters and other organizations	2,495,902
Internal appropriation to the Columbia Trust	700,000
Grant proposal processing	<u>59,143</u>
Total program expenses	3,255,045
Management and general	125,385
Fundraising	<u>90,696</u>
Total expenses	<u>3,471,126</u>
Total change in Board-designated endowment fund	<u>9,781,770</u>
Net assets—end of year	<u>\$ 93,641,491</u>

4. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The Foundation's working capital and cash flows are attributable to the contributions received throughout the year. As of December 31, 2021, the Foundation's financial assets (total assets, less inventory, prepaid expenses and other assets) totaled \$181,965,720. The financial assets, with the exception of the donor-restricted by purpose for DAV Legislative Fund investment of \$231,694 as of December 31, 2021, are available to fund general expenditures within one year following the statement of financial position date. Donor restricted funds of \$87,090,718 for 2021 have been included because they are restricted for programs considered general expenditures by the organization. The Foundation has an investment spending policy that would allow for withdrawals from the long-term investment portfolio, from both general assets without donor restrictions and with donor restriction purpose restricted for its mission.

The Foundation has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its program, fundraising, management, and general expenses become due. In addition, as part of its liquidity management, the Foundation invests cash in excess of daily requirements in various short-term and long-term investments. The short-term investments are invested for capital preservation and liquidity for cash flow requirements in money market funds. The Foundation's long-term investments, such as marketable fixed-income and equity securities, index and actively managed mutual funds, and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), are invested with the intent of providing a safe return on investments for future use.

5. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

ASC Topic 820 provides a framework for measuring fair value. The framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market, but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The Foundation did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant (Level 3) to the overall fair value measurement during 2021.

The Foundation's policy is to recognize transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers during 2021.

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, 2021.

Cash equivalents, composed of money market funds, are categorized as Level 1, and are valued at cost, which approximates fair value. The money market funds represent the Foundation's shares in a registered investment company's fund.

Common stock securities and ETFs held are categorized as Level 1. They are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

Corporate bonds are categorized as Level 2, and are valued using third-party pricing services. These services may use, for example, model-based pricing methods that utilize observable market data as inputs. Broker-dealer bids or quotes of securities with similar characteristics may also be used.

Shares of registered investment companies (mutual funds) are categorized as Level 1. They are valued at quoted market prices that represent the net asset value of shares held at year-end.

The major categories of financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of December 31, 2021, are as follows:

	Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Asset category:			
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>\$ 1,693,156</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,693,156</u>
Common stocks	<u>22,511,815</u>	<u> </u>	<u>22,511,815</u>
Corporate bonds	<u> </u>	<u>18,800,769</u>	<u>18,800,769</u>
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	34,451,870		34,451,870
Domestic equity funds	70,140,387		70,140,387
International equity funds	27,553,337		27,553,337
Real estate equity funds	<u>4,790,236</u>	<u> </u>	<u>4,790,236</u>
Total mutual funds/ETFs	<u>136,935,830</u>	<u> </u>	<u>136,935,830</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 161,140,801</u>	<u>\$ 18,800,769</u>	<u>\$ 179,941,570</u>

The Foundation has adopted an investment policy for the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund and investments with donor restrictions. The primary goals of the investment portfolio are safeguarding of the assets; maximizing return on the interest, dividends, and appreciation of capital; and avoiding undue interest rate risk in the fixed-income portion of the portfolio. The portfolio performance objective is to exceed a custom benchmark of 60% Russell 3000/40% Barclays Intermediate Government Credit over a five-year period and a full market cycle.

The Foundation relies on a total return strategy in which investment returns are achieved through both capital appreciation and current yield (interest and dividends). The Foundation targets a diversified asset allocation that places a greater emphasis on equity-based investment to achieve its long-term return objective within prudent risk constraints.

6. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets are released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions are as follows:

Purpose restrictions accomplished:	
Purpose restriction—mission	\$ 2,336,000
The Columbia Trust	<u>139,687</u>
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>\$ 2,475,687</u>

7. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During 2021, DAV personnel assisted the Foundation on a limited basis in administering its business operations and fundraising program. For these services, the Foundation reimbursed DAV \$126,566. At

December 31, 2021, the Foundation owed DAV \$133,909. DAV provides the Foundation with the use of facilities, equipment and occasional magazine space at no charge.

As discussed in Note 2, DAV contributed \$69,200 to the Columbia Trust in 2021.

In 2021, the DAV Charitable Service Trust made contributions of \$4,000 to the Foundation to be used in assisting disabled veterans and their dependents.

In 2021, the Foundation appropriated \$4,823,400 in support of DAV programs and services.

In performing the duties of their positions, DAV's National Commander and National Adjutant serve on the Foundation's Board. In performing the duties of their positions as a Foundation Director, some members also serve on the DAV Charitable Service Trust's Board and the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation's Board.

8. GRANTS AND EXPENSES OF THE COLUMBIA TRUST

At December 31, 2021, grants and expenses of the Columbia Trust are as follows:

Grants to DAV chapters and departments in accordance with	
The Columbia Trust:	
Hospital Service Coordinator Program	\$ 491,994
Transportation Network Vehicle Grant Program	506,650
Other grants to service programs	126,900
Grant proposal processing	59,143
Miscellaneous expenses	<u>2,343</u>
Total	<u>\$ 1,187,030</u>

In 2021, temporarily restricted net assets of \$139,687 and net assets without donor restrictions of \$1,047,343 were used.

9. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No other events have occurred after December 31, 2021, but before April 7, 2022, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, that require consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the financial statements.

* * * * *

(Whereupon, National Service Foundation President Wilson withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Art, for your outstanding report and continued leadership. May I have a motion to accept the report from President Wilson for the National Service Foundation?

MR. MICHAEL KERR: Mic 2.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 2.

MR. KERR: Michael Kerr, past state commander of California Chapter 1, so moves.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: May I have a second.

MR. THOMAS AYALA: Mic 3.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MR. AYALA: Thomas Ayala, Chapter 1, Florida, seconds.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All those in favor, aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, National Service Foundation President Wilson withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I would like to call on Chairman Rob Reynolds for the final report on the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chair advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERT REYNOLDS: Comrade Commander and delegates, good morning, still.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: I will now proceed with the second reading of the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws which are recommended for adoption. In the interest of time, again, I will read only the number and purpose of the resolutions.

Resolution Number 1, allow DAV chapters to conduct routine meetings of governing body using virtual platforms but continue to require in-person participation of delegates and alternates for department and national conventions;

Resolution Number 421, add the following as Article VII, Section 7.8, Paragraph 5 of the National Bylaws: "No person shall succeed himself or herself as national commander." This is already ratified in DAV's constitution.

Resolution Number 422, delete Article XIV, Section 14.5, Paragraph 3 of the Bylaws. This is a housekeeping matter, given the issue is dated and specifically covered in Article XIII, Section 13.1 of the National Bylaws and the Board of Director policy aid.

Comrade Commander, on behalf of the Committee I move that the Committee recommendations be accepted, that the resolutions be adopted and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Rob. You have heard the motion. May I have a second?

MS. MANN: Mic 3.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MS. MANN: Debbie Mann, Chapter 5, Florida, I second it.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: 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 carried. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws chair withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All right, in the ladies restroom someone left a wedding band.

(Laughter) Right. So if you want to claim it come up to the podium after we're done, shortly. And it had better fit your hand. (Laughter) All right? Or finger. All right. Marc, do you have any announcements?

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. Immediately following this morning's business session, the final meeting of the Nominating Committee will be held in Florida Ballroom C.

This afternoon's final business session will promptly begin at 1:30. We will start off with the important business of nominations and elections of officers. And please be on time.

Pick up your Line Officer Dinner tickets between sessions right outside the exit to this ballroom. This new method is designed to alleviate waiting in line. Tickets will be available until just before doors open at 6:00 p.m.

We are, again, giving away three \$50 gift certificates that can be redeemed in the DAV store right here in front of the stage as soon as we adjourn. And the lucky winners are: Jeffrey Blonder,

Massachusetts, E.F. Gilmore Chapter Number 64; Chad Riggs, Missouri, East Schumann Heink Chapter Number 2; and Jose Romero, New Mexico, Luchetti-Castner Chapter Number 15.

Commander.

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Marc. Chaplain Varner, will you lead us in prayer.

(Whereupon, the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN VARNER: May we pray. Almighty Creator, we once again want to give you thanks for the gift of unity. We thank you, Father, that this gift has inspired us to establish great relationships in this place as we continue to work together.

And now because of this gift, we compliment one another's strength that cancels out all weaknesses. As a team we look forward to being united in one body of this great organization that we stand for reasons, purpose, visions and determination. And we give you thanks once again. And the people said Amen. Thank you.

(Response of "Amen." Whereupon, the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Remember, wedding band up front. The Convention stands in recess until 1:30.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 11:24 o'clock, a.m. on Tuesday, August 9, 2022.)

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FINAL BUSINESS SESSION

August 9, 2022

- - -

The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 100th National Convention convened in the Regency Ballroom O-S on the Convention Level of the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida, Tuesday afternoon, August 9, 2022, and was called to order at 1:30 o'clock, p.m., by National Commander Andrew "Andy" Marshall.

COMMANDER ANDREW "ANDY" MARSHALL: This Convention will please come to order. Again, as a reminder, I would like to ask everyone to please silence your cell phone and other portable devices.

Please rise. Join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to our nation's flag. Members, hand salute. (Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Please remain standing. Chaplain Varner. (Whereupon, the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN DEBRA VARNER: Good afternoon. (Response of "Good afternoon.")

CHAPLAIN VARNER: May we pray. Heavenly Creator, we thank you once again for allowing us to gather in this place today. We ask now that you inspire us with our word and deeds and sound decisions. Help us to attain our goals that are set before us.

We pray that you continue to bless and protect all of our people. Keep us, we pray, in unity and peace as we move toward our mission with dignity and honor. And we ask these things. And the people said amen. Thank you.

(Response of "Amen;" whereupon, the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Please be seated. (One rap of the gavel.) As a reminder, in order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention you must be recognized by the chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. Upon being so recognized, delegates must state their name, chapter number, and the state that they represent.

I would like to remind everyone now that the registration of delegates is now closed. And. The. Slower. I. Talk. The. Longer. I'm. National. Commander. (Laughter)

I will call upon Brenda Reed, chairman of the Credentials Committee, for the final report. (Whereupon, the Credentials Committee chair advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIR BRENDA REED: Kind of hard to follow that. (Laughter) Commander Andy, National Adjutant Marc, officers, members, guests and friends, again, I'd like to thank the Committee for their indulgence in having to get up so early to come to meetings to verify delegates.

I really appreciate everything you did, especially Warren Tobin who was my legs, my runner, my secretary, and everything else and got reports for me when I was in a meeting somewhere else. Thank you very much.

This is the final report of the Credentials Committee. And it reflects the total registration as of close of registration this morning at 10:00 a.m.

There are 989 delegates and 63 alternates registered, which includes 45 departments and 349 chapters. There are 9 national officers, 21 National Executive Committee men, and 6 past national commanders, for a total of 36 national officers. The vote total is 7,811.

Comrade Commander, that completes the final report of the Credentials Committee. On behalf of the committee, I move for its adoption.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Brenda. You have heard the motion. May I have a second, please?

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Mic 3.

MS. MARY ANN KECKLER: Mic 2.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 2.

MS. KECKLER: Mary Ann Keckler.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mary Ann Keckler.

MS. KECKLER: Chapter 67, from the Department of Florida, home of Andy Marshall, and I hope you keep talking slow. (Laughter) So moved, seconded.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All those in favor signify by aye; opposed. So ordered.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee chair withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Now I will call on Stephen "Butch" Whitehead, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, for his report. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee chair advanced to the podium.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STEPHEN "BUTCH" WHITEHEAD: Thank you, Commander. The commander handed me a bunch of blank pieces of paper. I'm not sure I got the right paper here, commander. (Laughter)

Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Nominations of National Officers was called to order for its first business session on August 6, 2022, by Committee advisors Joseph Johnston and Al Church.

The first order of business was the election of a convention committee chairperson and secretary. Stephen Whitehead was elected as chairperson and Joseph Kaufman was elected as secretary.

The Committee on Nominations of National Officers met on Saturday, August 6th at 4:15 p.m. and again Sunday, August 7th, at 1:00 p.m. The Committee met again today at 11:35 a.m. The Nominating Committee recommends and nominates the following individuals for national office:

For the office of National Commander, Joseph Parsetich from Montana; (Standing Ovation) for the office of National Senior Vice-Commander Nancy Espinosa from Utah; (Applause) for the office of National First Junior Vice-Commander, Daniel Contreras from California; (Applause)

for the office of National Second Junior Vice-Commander, Coleman Nee from Massachusetts; (Applause) for the office of National Third Junior Vice-Commander, John Donovan from Arkansas; (Applause)

and for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander, Cynthia Madison from Virginia; (Applause) for the office of National Chaplain, Debra Varner from Virginia (sic); (Applause) and, for the office of National Judge Advocate, Michael Dobmeier from North Dakota. (Applause)

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee of Nominations of National Officers. On behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of this report. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: No. (Laughter) I could have found someone that would have recommended me.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WHITEHEAD: Well, you didn't come before us. (Laughter)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Butch, for your report. I will now call for a second that the report of the Committee on Nominations of National Officers be adopted and the Committee be discharged.

MR. MICHAEL DUNN: Mic 2.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MR. DUNN: Michael Dunn, treasurer/adjutant for Chapter 109, Titusville, Florida, so moves and seconds.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All those in favor, aye; opposed. So ordered. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee chair withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: You have heard the report of the Committee on Nominations of National Officers and they have nominated (Laughter) Joe Parsetich for National Commander. (Applause) Here to second the nomination is Danny Oliver. (Applause)

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

MR. DANIEL OLIVER: Thank. You. Commander. (Laughter) It. Is. My. Privilege – to second the nomination of a fellow veteran, a dedicated volunteer, and a respected voice of veterans.

Joe Parsetich lives in Great Falls, Montana with his child bride, Meg. (Laughter) He is a life member of Chapter 2 in Montana and he joined the DAV in 2009.

Joe joined the Air Force in 1968, and requested assignment to Vietnam. In theater, he was with the 377th Security Police Squadron at Tan Son Noot Air Force Base where he was detailed to the guard towers from 1968 through '96.

Although he didn't know it at the time, his service in Vietnam would live with him long after he returned home. While he didn't experience any physical injuries, he couldn't shake the sounds of the rockets whistling past his post and brought back with him the memories of all those who lost their lives.

Joe was honorable discharged in 1972. He quietly carried the burden of surviving Vietnam for many years, until he sought counseling at a Vet Center in 2009. And that's where he learned of the DAV. And the more he found out, the more he wanted to be a part of it.

At his first meeting – this might sound familiar to some folks – he said he was joining to help and not be a member on paper. He was ready to serve anywhere they needed him. And that night, his first meeting, he was elected chapter adjutant. (Laughter)

Since then, Joe has held many leadership roles. He is a chapter service officer. He is now a department service officer. He is a volunteer drive in the transportation network. He was a volunteer, VA Volunteer of the Quarter. He was on the NEC in 2014 through '16 for the 14th District. (Applause) Fourteenth District, yes, there you go. And he is also the past department commander for Montana.

In 2017, Joe was appointed to the VA's Veterans Rural Health Advisory Committee where he still continues to serve. He is a board member on the Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness in Great Falls. He is also on the board for the Cascade County Suicide Prevention Team and a member of the Veterans Advisory Council for the Great Falls Vet Center.

In addition to the DAV and other volunteer pursuits, Joe hosts a veteran-focused radio show on Great Falls public radio. His conversations focus on telling the stories of his fellow veterans and about pending legislation that will affect the veteran's community.

Joe is a true servant leader, a dedicated voice of veteran's needs, and an enthusiastic advocate for the DAV. His passion for the organization, coupled with his vision and leadership, will allow us to continue to serve and be the voice of all ill and injured veterans across the nation.

It is with great honor that I second the nomination of Joe Parsetich for DAV National Commander for 2022 to 2023. Thank you, Commander. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Oliver withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Danny. The chair will now call for any further nominations for the office of national commander. Are there any further nominations for national commander? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations?

If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Joe Parsetich elected as national commander and instruct the national adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for his election. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: I, Marc Burgess, National Adjutant of DAV, hereby cast one unanimous ballot for Joe Parsetich, for the office of DAV National Commander. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: The Nominating Committee has nominated Nancy Espinosa for the office of national senior vice-commander. Are there further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Nancy Espinosa elected as national senior vice-commander. (Applause)

Boy, I really hate to do this next one. (Laughter) The Nominating Committee has nominated Daniel Contreras for the office of national first junior vice-commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Come on, are there any further nominations? (Laughter)

If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Daniel Contreras elected as national first junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Coleman Nee for the office of national second junior vice-commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Coleman Nee elected national second junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated John Donovan 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 John Donovan elected national third junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has recommended Cynthia Madison 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 Cynthia Madison elected as national fourth junior vice-commander. (Applause)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: The Nominating Committee has nominated – who? (Laughter) – Michael 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 Dobmeier elected as national judge advocate. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Debra Varner for the office of national chaplain. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Debra Varner elected as national chaplain. (Applause) All right, Debra, that's enough. (Laughter)

And I will now instruct the National Adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for these offices. (Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: I, Marc Burgess, National Adjutant of DAV, cast one unanimous ballot for Nancy Espinosa of Utah for national senior vice-commander; Dan Contreras of California for national first junior vice-commander; Coleman Nee of Massachusetts for national second junior vice-commander;

John Donovan of Arkansas for national third junior vice-commander; Cynthia Madison of Virginia for national fourth junior vice-commander; Mike Dobmeier of North Dakota for national judge advocate; and Debra Varner of Alabama for national chaplain. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I would like to ask that the newly-elected officers and their spouses be escorted to the stage, please.

(Whereupon, the newly-elected officers and their spouses advanced to the stage to be seated.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: It is now my great pleasure to call on National Commander – pay attention to this word – Elect (Laughter) Parsetich for remarks. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Commander-Elect Parsetich advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER-ELECT JOSEPH PARSETICH: You know, all the comedians aren't out of work; some of them are still employed here. Thank you, Commander Marshall. But, before I get started, let me ask my wife, Meg, to please step up to my side. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Parsetich stepped up beside the commander.)

COMMANDER-ELECT PARSETICH: As I accept the responsibility that you're placing in my hands today, the love of my life and my closest, dearest friend, Meg, has been with me every step of the way. (Applause) She's a sometimes quiet yet determined leader in the Auxiliary. And Meg has been a tremendous advocate in our shared mission of service.

In a way, our bond is similar to the partnership between the DAV and the Auxiliary. And I wouldn't be here right now without her. Thank you, sweetheart. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the commander kissed his wife, after which she returned to her seat.)

COMMANDER-ELECT PARSETICH: That was tough. (Laughter) Before I continue, I would be remiss if I didn't thank our Heavenly Father for making all of this possible by blessing me with a Godly and supportive wife, (Applause) my good health, many awesome children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and, most of all of my extended DAV family. Thank you.

I've also been blessed with a strong team of national line officers and NECs. I know they will help me as we continue to serve and represent you and your families.

And that starts at the top. Thank you, Andy, for your special leadership over the past year. You set a great example of all of your fellow veterans. And you dedicated a lifetime to ensuring the promises that we've made to veterans are kept. You've left some big shoes to fill and I'm truly humbled to follow in your footsteps after all you've accomplished as our national commander. Thank you. (Applause)

Any leader's success is directly attributed to the support team of advisors. And I'm here to tell you that we here at the DAV have the best in the nation. I'm going to try to name a few. And I always hate to do that because I know I'm going to leave somebody out, but here goes.

My right-hand man, and our national adjutant, Marc Burgess, has been incredibly generous in teaching me, through his example, about how to be an effective leader. Marc's knowledge and stewardship of DAV's mission, operations, and culture, are unsurpassed. The job that he's done over the many years has been remarkable. And it accounts for DAV's continued growth and prominence. (Applause)

Barry Jesinoski, our CFO and COO, and his team at national headquarters make every aspect of DAV's mission possible. Your programs and the momentum that you generate are a testament to your thoughtful leadership.

Our headquarters team care tremendously about our folks in the field. And you provide critical support for our leaders and volunteers who carry out our mission “where the rubber meets the road.” Thank you for your support. (Applause)

And Randy Reese, executive director of DAV’s National Service and Legislative Headquarters and his team, his leadership team in D.C., and around the country, are truly remarkable. Their contributions ensure promises are kept in an impactful and substantial way that touches the lives of everyone that we represent.

Thank you, Randy, and please extend my gratitude to your team members for their tremendous work. You do a great job on Capitol Hill and in our service offices nationwide representing all of our fellow veterans’ interests. (Applause)

You know, I’ve had many friends help me on this journey. But before I even knew this was something I wanted to do, Danny Oliver, the stand-up comic of the Department of Oklahoma, was my sounding board. He has been a tremendous advocate and counselor. And with Danny’s guidance and his mentorship he has made this opportunity possible.

But I also need to thank the Department of Montana and the NEC District 14 for their steadfast support. Will my fellow Big Sky veterans and district members please stand up and be recognized?

(Whereupon, the members of the delegation from District 14 was recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT PARSETICH: You know, folks, this is as much your achievement as it is mine. And I thank all of you for the support you have given me over the years.

And though there are many people who are a part of this moment, I want to thank Senator John Tester of my home State of Montana for his friendship and the productive way that he’s helped veterans in partnership with DAV.

We are a fiercely non-partisan organization. And I have tremendous appreciation for how Senator Tester has put veterans above the fray. He consistently works across the aisle to put the true interests of the heroes that we represent first; and I look forward to our collaboration in the coming year.

The bond that we share as individuals whose lives were forever changed through military service is unique and special. The profession of arms is one that is inherently dangerous.

Wearing our nation’s uniform is not a common job. It is highly uncommon. Just qualifying for military service requires a high level of character, integrity, fitness, and health. And when someone’s abilities are lessened when they’re sacrificing for our national defense and freedoms, the obligation that we have to them is sacred.

When we consider the highest honors that recognize military service, we see the commitment and selflessness that we value most of all.

You know, nearly one in five recipients of the Medal of Honor are recognized posthumously.

And I want to talk briefly about some fellow Montanans who, among these honored few, sacrificed everything for their brothers and sisters on the battlefield.

Donald J. Ruhl, he was a native of Columbus, Montana and a combat veteran of Bougainville. He was transported part of the way to Iwo Jima on the U.S.S. Missoula. And after distinguishing himself in combat and saving the life of a wounded brother on Iwo’s D-Day, he participated in the attack on Mount Suribachi.

When an enemy’s grenade landed between Ruhl and his sergeant he called out a warning and then dove on it. By absorbing its full charge with his body, he saved the lives of many fellow Marines.

William Wylie Galt was a native of Geyser, Montana. And by the time he arrived in Italy in 1944, he’d already been wounded in North Africa and at Monte Casino. On May 29th, the 24-year old Army captain was commanding operations against entrenched German positions.

When a second attack stalled the patrol, he charged to the front of his battalion, manned the turret of a tank destroyer and personally led an assault.

Fully exposed to snipers and machine guns, he fired at the enemy and lobbed grenades into their trenches. He was killed by an enemy’s bullet, but not before he managed to even the odds for his troops. He personally took out 40 determined enemy soldiers and helped end a very dangerous stalemate.

And then Travis Atkins, a Bozeman native, grew up camping, fishing and snowmobiling. He hadn’t been in the Army a full year when terrorists attacked the Twin Towers in New York.

He served in the invasion of Iraq as an infantry fire team leader. And after being discharged in late 2003 he took a break in service to go back to school. But he felt called, again, and reenlisted in December 2005 into his old battalion.

On June 1st of 2007, his squad was pulling route security in Abu Samak, in Iraq when they saw two suspected insurgents. The men were acting suspicious so Atkins dismounted to do a search. He soon found himself in hand-to-hand combat and realized that one of the men he was fighting was wearing explosives.

As the enemy went to detonate his suicide vest, Atkins wrapped him up and threw him away from his fellow soldiers. Aware of the price he would pay, Atkins placed himself on top of the terrorist and pinned him to the ground, shielding the troops and bearing the brunt of the blast that followed. In giving his own life, he saved three of his fellow soldiers.

You know, these are just some of the actions of the hallowed brave who symbolize the highest standards of military service.

Few are ever called that will ever come close to encountering the tests that these men faced. And many, many fewer would react with the selflessness and courage that they displayed in their final moments.

But all of us can be inspired through their selflessness to give more of ourselves.

This sense of teamwork is the very DNA that veterans possess. It's also in the DNA of every member of the DAV going back to Judge Robert Marx. After all, our founder, himself, received the Distinguished Service Cross by putting himself in danger. In doing so, he sacrificed tremendously to deliver his soldiers from harm's way in the final moments of World War I.

We honor the sacrifices of our bravest when we give of our time and talents to improve the lives of our brothers and sisters, and their survivors.

Yet again this year, we will be given the chance to answer the call of duty through DAV. Whether that is through our legislative efforts, volunteerism, or benefits advocacy, our organization will always give us the opportunity to forever change the lives of the people that we represent and their families.

We must continue to seize the moments where we can make a difference. We must be a source of hope when all else seems lost. And that's what DAV has meant to me and I know means to so many of you who have been disregarded when your time in uniform had ended.

I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve alongside of you in the important mission that we all share.

But, foremost, I want to thank you and I want you to understand just how humbled I am by this opportunity and how hard I will work to honor your service as we contribute to the good fight that we wage for justice.

May God bless all of you, God bless our DAV and God bless our United States of America. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, the commander-elect returned to his seat and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: I would now like to call on National Senior Vice-Elect Nancy Espinosa. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the senior vice-commander-elect advanced to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT NANCY ESPINOSA: Good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT ESPINOSA: Thank you so much for this honor. I look forward to working with you. I want to introduce my son, Eric. He's a DAV member and an Air Force veteran.

(Whereupon, Eric Espinosa stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT ESPINOSA: I want to thank my family, Chapter 14 from Utah, Department of Utah, the 17th District, and the DAV national leadership and organization.

Commander Marshall, it has been an honor to work with you. I thank you for your guidance and mentorship. And I know you will do great going forward. You will stay with DAV for a long time, as you have been here – hopefully another 41 years. (Laughter) So thank you very much.

Commander Parsetich, I look forward to working with you on your line and your excellent line that you have here. Thank you for all you do. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the senior vice-commander-elect withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Nancy. Your National First Junior Vice-Elect Dan Contreras. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the first junior vice-commander-elect advanced to the podium.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT DANIEL CONTRERAS: Well, all that love I get from Commander Marshall, I mean, who couldn't be honored, and then all the love that you give the Marines (Hooah) is just inspirational to me, as well. (Laughter)

Thank you so much for the honor to continue to serve on the national line and also to be a voice for you. I know I have been inspired by the contact that I've had with so many of you.

And I just challenge you that in the days that we have been here we have been filled with information. And I hope that it has inspired you to go back to your departments and chapters and community and spread the word of DAV. And I challenge you.

To my department of California, District 16, thank you. (Applause) Thank you so much for all of your support that you give me each and every day and, also, all the great work that you do every single day to help the veterans in California. We are truly blessed by your presence and your hard work.

And I am so happy that my wife, Theresa, is here to share in this moment. (Applause) Her support and encouragement inspires me every single day and so I'm really honored to have her here with me.

And to my fellow line officers, who I am so privileged to continue to work alongside with them each and every day as we continue to carry the torch for this great organization.

And thank you, Commander Marshall, Adjutant Burgess, for all your leadership, inspiration, all the tools that you provide all of us to be the greatest DAV that we can be.

Commander-Elect Parsetich, I look forward to working with you and all the great visions that you have for us to have your back. Thank you very much, everyone. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the first junior vice-commander-elect withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: National Second Junior Vice-Commander-elect Coleman Nee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the second junior vice-commander-elect advanced to the podium.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT COLEMAN NEE: Commander, I don't care what anyone says, you're okay for an Army guy. (Laughter) Thank you very much. I'm incredibly humbled and honored to be here today and to assume this position.

I want to congratulate all of my fellow line officers. Commander, thank you, commander-elect, and look forward to working with you. And congratulations to Nancy and Dan and John and Cynthia and Mike and Debra. And thank you, Skipper, for everything you've done over the past year.

You have been an amazing example of leadership. And I've learned quite a bit just from watching you. And I will take that with me as I move forward so thank you.

Thank you very much, National Adjutant Burgess, as well.

And just in closing, again, it's an incredible honor but I know I don't represent myself; I represent all of you. And I look forward to meeting that responsibility and hopefully not only meeting but exceeding your expectations.

And none of this would have been possible without the greatest department, District 1, for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, (Applause) and my chapter, Chapter 3, Boston. (Applause) And, really, they are an incredible group of heroes who I have, I am fortunate to have the privilege to learn from and work with every day. So thank you very much to all of you.

And if you will indulge me, I'm just going to speak Boston-ese just for a second, "We're going to have a wicked good party at the bar tonight, guys. All right?" (Laughter) All right. Thank you. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the second junior vice-commander-elect withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: National Third Junior Vice-Commander-elect, John Donovan. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the third junior vice-commander-elect advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT JOHN DONOVAN: Hello, everybody. Thank you. I am extremely humbled by your election and thought to elect me back into the line again. I've had an incredible journey with Andy at the helm here. Our ship didn't go aground so we're lucky there.

Joe, I know you weren't in the Navy but, hey, we'll show you how to do things right here. (Laughter)

I've had the opportunity to travel around and visit with some of you, either at your conventions or here on the floor. And what I see and hear is talent coming from all of you.

We have been given the reputation as the premier veterans' service organization. And I'm honored to be up here to assist with the leadership in that. But it all goes to you out there. You're the ones that make us shine. You're the ones that give us the ideas in how to move forward.

I want to thank, first, my wife of 35 years and my Navy veteran; District 21, Arkansas and Oklahoma, thank you very much for your support; (Applause) and Danny, we'll get together later. And I'm humbled, sir. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the third junior vice-commander-elect withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: All right, now the newbie, National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander-Elect, Cynthia Madison. (Applause) Congratulations.

(Whereupon, the fourth junior vice-commander-elect advanced to the podium.)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT CYNTHIA MADISON: As he said, I am a trainee and I consider myself to be an apprentice. And I want to be humble and thank each and every one of you because the thing about it is, commander-elect, line officers, I'm here to support you in whatever you do. We will make magic happen.

I have to thank my district, District 6. (Applause) I have to thank my department, the Department of Virginia, if you could please stand to be recognized.

(Whereupon, the Department of Virginia stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT MADISON: And I have to give a special shout-out to my chapter, and one special member of my chapter is my commander, Kim Barkley. If you could please stand to be recognized.

(Whereupon, the Commander Barkley stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT MADISON: Then there was someone else that helped me on this team. And her name was Marcia. And if you saw Marcia, she had a traveling DAV (Indistinguishable).

And with the DAV (Indistinguishable) maybe one of you in this room, because what she did was she took a picture of someone from every state. And it has the DAV logo and when you came to my room she took your picture if you was from whatever state. So Marcia, I thank you for your help and your support.

And, last but not least, Oscar and Moses, they stood up. They worked with me. They took me around. It seems like these two days was – whoo. It was like we made magic happen. You know, whatever Moses or Oscar said, let's do it, I said, "Okay."

But, again, I am here to work with you. It's not about me. So together we can make magic happen. Who am I? I am Madison – making a difference in serving our nation's veterans. Thank each and every one of you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the fourth junior vice-commander-elect withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Congratulations, Cynthia. National Judge Advocate-Elect Michael Dobmeier. (Applause) You should have a path on the stage, as many times as you've been up here, every year. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, the judge advocate-elect advanced to the podium.)

JUDGE ADVOCATE-ELECT MICHAEL E. DOBMEIER: I don't have to introduce my wife. You already know her, Past National Auxiliary Commander Sandy. (Applause) She's been supporting me for 47 years, well, maybe I should say we've been supporting each other for 47 years.

The 14th District has supported me almost that long. (Applause)

And I thank you all for your continued trust. I can assure you that nobody up here takes that for granted.

Commander Andy, you exceeded everybody's expectations. (Laughter) Commander Joe, we've got your back. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the judge advocate-elect withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: And National Chaplain-Elect Debra Varner. (Applause) You throw your voice well.

(Whereupon, the chaplain-elect advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN-ELECT DEBRA VARNER: Well, good afternoon, again.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

CHAPLAIN-ELECT VARNER: Have a saying back in Alabama, "I just want to tell the Lord thank you." I want to thank Commander Marshall and Adjutant Burgess and the national staff for being such a great support.

Whenever I called they made it available, especially Adjutant Burgess' staff. They just made me feel no question was too dumb or no question unanswered was too silly. And that, to me, is an honor.

And I'm truly humbled to stand before you as your re-elected national chaplain.

To the great MALT, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Tennessee, (Applause) thank you for your support. They became the wind beneath my wings and encouraged me – go ahead; do it again. I said, well, I don't know. They said, go ahead and do it again. (Laughter)

So I'm here by your prayers and your support. I'm determined to make DAV the greatest organization – that's my personal opinion – in the whole wide world. There is none to compare.

We stand on what we say. We do what we say. And we beg anybody to do the difference, whether it's the chaplain or the commander. We are honored and I'm honored to stand before you, all these great men and women.

And I just want to give a shout-out to the Auxiliary since it is DAV and Auxiliary. Thank you for being the wind beneath our wings that pushes us and encourages us to do what we promise to our American veterans. We will not be left behind. And we will never leave any soldier behind because we are what makes this nation great.

And to the line officers, I'm looking forward, not only to pray and to do the opening and closing and all this other stuff chaplains are supposed to do, but I am a work in progress and I'm still wired for service. Thank you for your vote. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the chaplain-elect withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: At this time I will entertain a motion to discharge the Credentials Committee. Do I hear a motion? MS. MANN: Number 2.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 2.

MS. MANN: Debbie Mann, Chapter 5, Florida, second motion.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Make the motion?

MS. MANN: Make the motion.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Do I have a second.

MS. KATHRYN LAVELLE: Mic 3.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Mic 3.

MS. LAVELLE: Kathryn Lavelle, Chapter 113, Florida, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Two women veterans. Thank you. (Applause) All those in favor, aye; opposed. So ordered.

Before I call on the national adjutant for some announcements, I'd like to thank a couple people here. First and foremost, my wife, Susan. (Applause)

She supported me for all those years as a national service officer. And then I asked her, I says, "What do you think about me being department adjutant?" She says, "I can't stop you" (Laughter) "because it's in your blood." And on the national line, the same thing. She said, "I will support you." She's done that every year, especially this year.

And I hate to disagree with you, Coleman, I get the last word. The best department is setting right here. Department of Florida, thank you for your support. (Applause) Thank you.

And one last time, someone left a wedding band in the ladies restroom. (Laughter) Please, if it's yours please secretly come and see me (Laughter) in case your spouse is here. And to you, Marines, I will have no more Marine jokes today. (Laughter)

Adjutant Burgess, announcements, please. Would you please read the list of newly-elected National Executive Committee members?

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Thank you, Commander. The following members have been elected to the National Executive Committee for the two-year term 2022 to 2024: NEC Second District Israel Rivera, New York; (Applause) NEC Fourth District Johnny Walker of New Jersey; (Applause)

NEC Sixth District John Patterson of Maryland; (Applause) NEC Eighth District Dave Sensat of Louisiana; (Applause) NEC Tenth District Rolly Lee of Michigan; Come on, now – NEC Tenth District Rolly Lee of Michigan; (Applause)

NEC Twelfth District John Polk of Wisconsin; (Applause) NEC Fourteenth District Kevin Grantier from Montana; (Applause) NEC Sixteenth District J. R. Wilson of California; (Applause) NEC

Eighteenth District Bill Dolan of Nevada; (Applause) NEC Twentieth District Charles Edwards of Texas. (Applause) To the announcements?

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Yes.

ADJUTANT BURGESS: Okay. As a reminder to all of the National Executive Committee members, including those newly-elected, the Committee will meet immediately following adjournment of the convention, in just a few minutes, in Plaza International Ballroom H, which is 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. this evening, right here in this room. You cannot enter without a ticket so make sure you bring your tickets.

Come and enjoy an evening filled with ceremony, food, friends, music, entertainment, and get to know your newly-elected line officers. Commander. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Burgess withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, sir. Chaplain Varner, will you please lead us in a closing prayer. All rise.

(Whereupon, the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN VARNER: Let us pray. Almighty Creator, we want to thank you, first of all, for all of those who have led us and led us well, to walk in integrity, to walk with the promise that is upon our heart with our mission always before us.

Father, as we leave this place, we want to ask as we go forth into a world that needs our service, our dedication and our commitment, help us to lead with good and not with evil.

As we go forth and the batons are even passed now, we continue our service with dedication and commitment. These and all things we do believe and we receive and take it upon ourselves to be servants, one to another. And the people said amen.

(Response of "Amen;" whereupon, the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER MARSHALL: Thank you, Chaplain. Please be seated.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 100th National Convention, attended by Al Labelle and Al Linden, is now adjourned. We will see you next year in Atlantic City. (Applause)

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned on August 9, 2022, at 2:26 o'clock, p.m.)

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**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
99TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
HYATT REGENCY ORLANDO HOTEL
ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

August 6, 2022

First Business Session

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The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Plaza International Ballroom G on the Convention Level of the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Saturday afternoon, August 6, 2022, and was called to order at 2:01 o'clock, p.m., by National Adjutant Bunny Clos.

ADJUTANT BUNNY CLOS: I'd like to call this meeting to order. If we can keep our discussions down or out in the hall, I would appreciate it because, obviously, you guys can't hear me.

And cell phones, please silent your cell phones and keep everything out of the middle aisle and as close to the sides as you can on the sides.

National Sergeant-at-Arms, please present National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser to the platform – oh, I'm sorry. My bad. Scratch that. (Laughter) I'm still practicing from yesterday. (Laughter) Hold on.

National Sergeant-at-Arms, please present and post the state colors of Florida.
(Whereupon, the state colors for Florida were presented and posted.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please present the national colors.
(Whereupon, the national colors were presented.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, post the national colors.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LINDA JIMMERSON: Post the colors.

(Whereupon, the national colors were posted.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, dismiss the color bearers.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS JIMMERSON: Color bearers are dismissed.

(Whereupon, the color bearers and the sergeant-at-arms withdrew.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms please present National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the chaplain was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Judge Advocate and Past National Commander Paula Raymond is escorted to the platform, please. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the judge advocate was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Terry Grabowski is escorted forward. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the fourth junior vice-commander was escorted to her seat.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Third Junior Vice-Commander Melissa Pierce is escorted forward. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the third junior vice-commander was escorted to her seat.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Second Junior Vice-Commander Chris Easley is escorted forward. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the second junior vice-commander was escorted to his seat.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National First Junior Vice-Commander Ann Marie Hurley is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the first junior vice-commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that National Senior Vice-Commander Darlene Spence is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the senior vice-commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that Immediate Past National Commander Diane Franz escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the immediate past national commander was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: And National Sergeant-at-Arms, please see that June Sursely is escorted to the platform. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Convention Committee chair was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: We will now have prayer by National Chaplain Aura-Lee Nicodemus.

(Whereupon, the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks that each and every person of the DAV and Auxiliary made it safely to convention.

We ask a special blessing today on the Easley and Bergeron family, both for the health and as they grieve the loss of their loved ones.

We also ask a special blessing on Leonard Steinman. Be with him. We ask that you will give him comfort during this time. And we ask that you will give his family strength as they deal with the upcoming days.

We pray for Mike Sullivan. Be with him. We are so thankful that he was able to return to convention. We ask that you will continue to bless his health throughout convention so he can return home safely.

We ask a special blessing for Christine Alexander. We pray for her today.

We pray for Heather Lewis who took a fall here at Convention. We know that she had been to the emergency room today. We ask that you will provide healing to her.

We also ask a special blessing on the Santos triplets, the three little girls that were born very small at about two pounds. They will be our future Auxiliary members and we pray for each and every one of them as they recover.

We pray for our troops in harm's way today. We pray for our members who are not able to be with us. Be with each and every one of them. Care for them. And we pray for all of those in harm's way from the recent storms. We ask that you will give them the strength to rebuild their lives and their families.

We ask that you will guide this convention. We ask that you will guide our officers. Help us all to be kind to each other. Help us to listen carefully and to take down the information so that we can share it when we return home. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the chaplain withdrew from and Adjutant Clos returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: The Pledge of Allegiance will now be led by National Americanism Chairman Melissa Pierce.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the third junior vice-commander and Americanism chair advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN MELISSA PIERCE: Free your hands. Stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join me 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 returned to her seat and the adjutant returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: You can be seated. I will now do the Convention Call.

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 the representatives of the state departments and units.

In accordance with these directives I, Bunny Clos, National Auxiliary Adjutant, declare the 99th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary be convened in Orlando, Florida.

Consideration and disposition of business brought before this Convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force. To all present, take due notice thereof and govern yourselves accordingly.

I am honored to introduce this little southern beauty who always handles herself with style and grace. It is my please to introduce our National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER LYNN HELMS-PROSSER: Well, good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Has everybody lost a couple pounds walking this 10,000 steps a day? (Laughter) Anyway, it's good seeing all of you. And I want to thank everybody that helped with our opening ceremony.

So I want to thank LaFlavia. She's a little special girl I met, I think I actually met her in New Hampshire but she's from Maine. And she's precious so I chose her to be my little junior to escort me today along with Peter. So thank you Laflavia. Okay.

So, anyway, to get down to everything, I want to thank you all for being here. I hope you're having a good convention so far. And we're here for you if you have any problems or issues.

Most of you know our office is straight across the hall. And be, you know, just let us know if you need us to do anything special for you.

And I want to especially give thanks to Bunny. She's done a great job. She's kept me straight this year. So even when I had a hard time she was there for me. She didn't fuss at me too much, but, anyway.

But welcome here and have a great time. And hope you learn a lot while you're here. And if you think you can teach us something, we'd like to hear from you, too. So thank you and at this time I'll have our National Convention chairman come forward, Jean Sursely.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Convention chairman advanced to the podium.)

MRS. JEAN SURSELY: I'm loud so I'm going to try to get it out of my face. I want to welcome everybody here to Orlando. Do you like our heat?

(Response of "Yes.")

MRS. SURSELY: Do you like our mosquitoes. We've got more for you. Stick around. (Laughter) You all can get out of here before we get the next hurricane but at least we know they're coming. (Laughter)

It's really good to be here and it's good to see old friends. And I'm here to make new ones. Talk to me. I want to meet everybody.

We have a lot to offer in Florida. Don't believe everything you see on the Internet. We even have our own family members that come down and go, "Well, I thought it was going to be like wild-west show. I thought everybody was running around with no shirts on, tattoos and guns."

They might be somewhere, but there is more of us than there are of the Florida man or the Florida women. But we do have fun with that. There's like a thousand Florida pages just circling our memes and everything else.

But it's a great place to live. And I do love to go to other states. And we have Troutman over here. I just said your name wrong, the wrong name. You're in Florida, right? You're live in Florida? You. I'll be darned if I called your name wrong. Okay. Never mind.

What I want you to know is if there is anything you need in Florida, let me know. We can find it for you. If it's a place you want to go, we've got sloths; we've got alligators; we've got crocodiles down south.

We have 27 first magnitude springs here in Florida – absolutely big, beautiful springs. And they're all state parks now. We take really good care of them but we invite you to see the sights.

You don't have to go to Disney. You don't have to go to Universal. We have so many state parks and so many beaches. And, of course, it is all in the sun. But that's okay. That's okay.

We have 63 miles from Key West to Cuba. We have like 110 miles to the Bahamas, so that's why so many flights come in and out of this area.

We have cruise ships. We've got ports in Jacksonville. We have ports in – we have Miami, Jacksonville, and I think Pensacola has some. We're opening more ports to be able to get our groceries and get our goods. So we've opened ports that didn't receive ships before.

We've grown a lot. We used to be lots of cowboys. I grew up in Miami but there was a dairy farm at the end of my street and I played on dairy farm with my friends. I went to school with them. And it was a different world back then. It really was a different world.

You pulled off anywhere, you went to the beach. We're a little more crowded now. But it just brings a flavor to our state.

If you need a food, we've got it. You need a style of dress, we've got it. I mean a perfume, we've got it. We're a lucky state. We just don't get the cold winters. And that works for me, quite frankly. I've lived my whole life here and I'm not used to the cold.

But we're all actually gathered here for one reason and that reason is our veterans. We're all here plugging away at the same things day-after-day, tirelessly. We're driven because we have a mission and it's either our family member or a friend, your spouse.

You know, it could be you just like your freedom in the United States. And in order to keep people coming into the military, we have to take care of them when they're done. And that's what we do. We fill in the gaps that might be just kind of brushed under the rug.

We're in the VA hospitals. We're in any nursing home that will let us. We're in a hospital visiting. We really do a good job as Auxiliary members taking care of our veterans.

And our Auxiliary is full of veterans and spouse and family members. So we go everywhere, throughout this whole United States. We're so important – and we're the undercurrent.

You know, you hear "VA," "VA," "VA," but it's these people in this room and the people that couldn't come that drive these veterans to their appointments, that bring them the magazine, maybe just sit and talk, you know if we can get into some of the hospitals and we can do more.

But we supply the boot for the CLC resident that has a job and he's finally got a job and they're going to be able to move out of the CLC and be independent. It's those kind of things that the VA asks us for.

They don't – they want glasses, save our glasses. You know? They need all kinds of things to be donated. I guess reading glasses is what they're looking for again. And there will always be a need for that.

It's just, we're just kind of a force to be reckoned with. We have the numbers and we have the strength. We have the drive. You work tirelessly at home, in your own communities.

I mean we're like little bugs, we just go into – sorry, cockroaches a lot in Florida, too. Just kidding. We're just everywhere. And it's noticed and it's appreciated, especially by the families and the veterans that are trying to care for these people.

You need to continue doing what you're doing because it makes a difference to the people that don't have anybody. It makes a difference to the people that – a pair of socks would make them happy. You know?

We're talking to people that need us. They need us. And we need to continue to do what we're doing and remain strong and take whatever you've learned at this convention and go home and see if it applies to what you can do.

And I know Auxiliary is always thinking. If you're got an idea out there, give it to national. No idea, you know, not one person can see everything. But with everyone we can.

So if there is some need or something going on, you know, just email. They're busy but, you know, it's kind of hard to call but email and see if there is something we can all do about it.

So with that, because my speech is over there, I will say have a beautiful vacation. Enjoy the convention. And we're all happy to be here and we're all happy to be seen. So take care of yourselves. Welcome. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Convention chair withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Jean. And we know that you've worked hard to get all the preliminary things done before we got here and we certainly appreciate what you've done so thank you for doing that and thank you for being here.

Okay, at this time I would like to recognize our past national commanders. You can stand when I call your name: Paula Raymond, she's up here; keep standing. Keep standing. No, keep standing. Linda Trulio, Linda's in the back. (Applause)

Judy Steinhouse; (Applause) Sandy Dobmeier; (Applause) Susan Henry; (Applause) just stay standing, Sandy; stay standing; LeeAnn Karg; (Applause) Susan Miller; (Applause) and our immediate past commander, Diane Franz. (Applause) Give them a good hand.

(Whereupon, as their names were called each past national commander stood and acknowledged the audience.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: These are the ladies that got us here to where we are today. So they've done a good job and I appreciate all of their mentorship as I came along through them. Thank you so much.

Okay, at this time I would like to introduce a special person, Pat, our past national commander (sic) Pat Kemper. Would you stand, Pat?

(Whereupon, Past National Adjutant Pat Kemper stood and was acknowledged with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Bunny has done a great job and I know we will all agree to that but we want to say, Pat, we love you, we miss you and we're excited with your new journey that is going to keep you home a little bit more with your husband.

I know he's excited about that. But we keep you in our heart and our prayers. And we'll talk to you a little bit later, okay? Thank you.

Okay, I would now like to acknowledge the state delegates. Would you please stand, if you are able to, and be recognized. Please stand. Our state delegates are usually your state commanders, whoever your state voted on you to come here.

(Whereupon, the state representatives stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: There you go. There you go. Thank you so much for being here. I know that was a little confusing when I first said it because everybody thought, "Well, we're all delegates." But, anyway, it is your state delegates that you voted to come here to recognize your states.

Okay, now, I'd like to call on Past National Commander Diane Franz to bring her greetings.

(Whereupon, the past national commander advanced to the podium with a gift for the commander.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DIANE FRANZ: I guess I'm just going to say hello. Glad you're here. Glad we're all here. We all got up on "the right side of the grass" today.

I'd also like to bring greeting from all the past national commanders that are here. And we all wish Lynn a successful convention. I want to ask you, have you counted the hours down yet?

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I'm not doing that. I'm doing good. I'm doing good.

PAST COMMANDER FRANZ: Okay. After two years I counted the hours down. (Laughter) So, on behalf of the past national commanders, we'd like to present you with a little gift. Get up.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Thank you. Can I open it?

PAST COMMANDER FRANZ: You can open it. And if you ever get angry, don't throw it. (Laughter) It will do some damage.

(Whereupon, the commander opened the gift presented.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: That will kind of depend on who I get angry with. I'm just teasing. I never throw things. Oh, beautiful. It's got "DAV Auxiliary" on it.

PAST COMMANDER FRANZ: It's a heavy paperweight. So just don't throw it.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I will not throw this.

PAST COMMANDER FRANZ: It will leave a little bit of a bruise.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you from my heart to all you past national commanders. I'm sure I'll – hopefully I'll be invited to join you soon.

PAST COMMANDER FRANZ: Yes, you will. Have a good convention.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you so much. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I'm not ready to count my hours down now because I got through the opening ceremony on that tele-tron thing today. I don't think I made too many mistakes but that thing was eating in my mind before I got here because I knew I was just going to make a big blunder. But, anyway, I did get through it so thank you all for that.

So, anyway, at this time, let's see here, find out where I'm at, for the first time attendees, I would like to have all them to stand and remain standing. So if this is your first national convention, please stand up and stay standing because we're going to pass out ribbons for you.

(Whereupon, first-time attendees stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Wow. Wow. This is a lot, isn't it? It's almost half the room. I'm impressed. It's great to see so many new faces out there. Thank you for coming. And I hope you will have a good time while you're here and learn a lot of things.

(Whereupon, all first-time attendees were handed ribbons for their name badges, after which they sat down.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You can sit down if you want to once you get your ribbon so they can make sure everybody gets one. There are so many of you. It's so exciting to see so many people here. Wow, I wish we'd have counted those.

Okay, while they are finishing up, because I think they just have a few, I would like to, again, recognize our Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year recipient Patricia – known as Patti – Whitlow. Patti.

(Whereupon, Mrs. Whitlow was recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. I hope most of you were there this morning to see her get the award and listen to all the things that she's doing in Virginia.

And I would also like to remind each and every one of you, you all have probably got a "Patti Whitlow," too, somewhere in these other states. So I would like to invite you when it comes out for next year, please think about who you might want to put up for the award. Okay?

All right, at this time I would like to excuse the Nominating Committee.

(Whereupon, the members of the Nominating Committee withdrew.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, let's settle down just a little bit while they're getting out of here and we'll go ahead and finish the next section, okay? So if I can have everybody's attention while they're getting out.

Okay, so I'd like to give you a couple of rules so, you know, there won't be any misconception about how we're going to handle if you need to talk on the floor. Okay?

Anyone making or seconding a motion must go to the microphone and state their name, unit and state department or they might not be recognized since our reporter hears this information and needs

to put it through her headphones so she can get her records straight. Okay? So please talk into the microphone.

Will the Credentials Chairman Maria Holloway please come forward to give a preliminary report of the Credentials Committee?

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Convention Credentials Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARIA HOLLOWAY: Good afternoon. (Response of "Good afternoon.")

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HOLLOWAY: National commander, national officers, delegates and guests, the Credentials report is as follows or at the final business session this will be the final reading of the Credentials report.

Total units registered, 109; total departments registered, 35; national officers registered, 5; past national commanders registered, 7; total guests registered, 179; total delegates, 230; total alternates, 15; total vote count, 861.

Commander, I move that we accept the Credentials report. I'm sorry, commander, total registered, 471.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Maria. Okay, we have a motion from our Credentials chairman. May I have a second?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Susan Henry, past national commander, seconds.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay. We have a motion to accept the preliminary report of the Credentials Committee. We've got a second. Let's call for a vote. All in favor; any opposed. So carried. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, the first order of business is going to be the adoption of the National Convention Rules. You have those. They're printed copies of the Convention Rules.

And they have been furnished to you, to all registered delegates, so they're in your folders that you got when you registered. The chair will now entertain a motion for adoption of these rules.

(Whereupon, the motion was made from the floor, away from the microphone.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Do I have a second?

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT PATRICIA KEMPER: Patricia Kemper, Kentucky Unit 19, I second the motion to adopt the convention rules.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Okay, you have heard the motion and you have heard the second by Pat Kemper. We will call for a vote. All in favor; any opposed. So carried.

Okay, you also have a copy of the tentative agenda. May I have a motion to accept the agenda subject to changes?

MR. JEFF JUNGKANS: Jeff Jungkans, Tennessee Department, I make a motion to accept the changes.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. May I have a second?

MS. NANCY COFFEY: Nancy Coffey, Guthrie (Indistinguishable) Unit 2, I second.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: We have second by Nancy Coffey. All in favor say aye; any opposed. So carried.

Okay, I will now call on the Finance Committee Chairman Kathleen Wenthe for the National Finance Committee report and the budget review. You also have a copy of those – while she's coming up you have a copy of those in your bags, also.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Finance Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KATHLEEN WENTHE: National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser, national officers, past national commanders, delegates, family and friends, good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WENTHE: The National Finance Committee meeting was held April 12, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. via Go Meeting online platform.

The voting members of the Committee present were Lynn Helms-Prosser, national commander; Maria Holloway, District 7 NEC; Shirley Hill, District 9 NEC; Sharon Thornton, District 20 NEC; and myself, Kathleen Wenthe, District 8 NEC.

Those present without a vote were National Senior Vice-Commander Darlene Spence; and National Adjutant Bunny Clos.

The purpose of the meeting was to set up and adopt the budget for the 2023 year.

At this time I would like to thank the Committee and the staff for all of their help. The budget was included in your registration packets. And at this time I move for adoption of the budget.

(Whereupon, the Finance Committee chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

MRS. SHIRLEY HILL: I, Shirley Hill, Unit 37, North Carolina, second the motion.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, you have heard the motion by Kathleen Wenthe and I would like to call for a vote to accept. Could I have a motion to accept – we've got the motion. We need a second, please.

(Response of "Shirley seconded.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Oh, Shirley has already done that. Okay, all in favor say aye; any opposed. Okay, the ayes have it. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Finance Committee chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, at this time I will now present our national – well, I see I'm going to get the senior vice up here – would you like to come forward – to read my report. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the senior vice-commander advanced to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER DARLENE SPENCE: I would like to present our national commander to give her annual report, Lynn Helms-Prosser. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the senior vice-commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: See, we all have little glitches. I was trying to figure out up here who's supposed to do what. I got tiny print here so I'm going to have to put these glasses on.

Okay, August the 3rd, 2021, at our National Convention in Tampa, Florida, was not just an event in my life, it became an integral part of my journey that began in 1997 when I joined the DAV Auxiliary.

Little did I know I would have the honor to stand before all of you here today in Orlando, Florida, at our centennial convention as your national commander.

The DAV Auxiliary was founded in 1922 on the mission of making a difference in the lives of our disabled veterans and their families.

One hundred years later our mission has never wavered and it is dedicated members like you that continue to honor and fulfill that mission. I want to thank each and every one of you.

And, yes, I want to also say I want to thank you and talk about cherishing and honoring our four great principles that I talked about today: comradeship, loyalty, devotion, and service, of which has kept our organization strong and resilient and will continue to do so far into our future.

September the 27th I was privileged to attend the new National Headquarters dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony in Erlanger, Kentucky. Very few words can describe the ingenuity of the entire complex.

Not only is it modern, beautiful, and efficient, the entire history of the DAV and Auxiliary is revealed throughout the building.

September the 28th I was honored to attend the DAV Centennial celebration at the Cincinnati Music Hall featuring the Cincinnati Pop Orchestra with special guests like Melinda Doolittle and the West Point Glee Club, United States Military Academy.

The beauty of the music hall and reception was breathtaking. The patriotic salute to America of our freedom and honoring the DAV for 100 years of service and their support for America's injured and ill veterans and their families was amazing and unforgettable.

September the 29th through October the 2nd I left Cincinnati to go to the National Fall Conference in Lawrenceburg, Indiana. We had a remarkable, successful conference.

We had great attendance, interesting educational skits by our program chairmen, and, of course, a lot of singing and dancing and a fun-filled reception.

Special DAV guest and national DAV Commander Andy Marshall, DAV Executive Director Barry Jesinoski and DAV Membership Director Doug Wells were there, also.

November the 9th through the 12th I was honored to attend the 74th National Veterans Day Parade in Birmingham, Alabama.

On the 10th I was invited to attend the 2021 Veterans Awards Banquet hosted by the National Veterans Day Foundation. On the 11th we had a wonderful time riding in the parade and greeting the patriotic crowds along the route.

A special thank you to DAV State Adjutant Carolyn Harris and DAV Department Adjutant Hugo Perez and the Department of Alabama for their assistance and their hospitality during my visit.

December was spent with family and friends during Christmas. My DAV Unit 30, Myrtle Beach, delivered food and gifts to many of our elderly members that were house-bound because of COVID. We also sent out cards and made phone calls to check on our members and help any way we could.

February the 25th through March the 2nd I traveled to Mid-Winter Conference in Arlington, Virginia with the DAV and Auxiliary members and had a chance to visit elected officials to deliver our critical policy goals and ensure they support benefits, health care, and justice for all of our injured veterans exposed to toxins, enhanced survivors' benefits, long-term care for aging veterans, women veterans' health care, mental health, suicide prevention, and strengthen high-quality health care.

DAV national commander presented an excellent presentation to the Joint House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee requesting their full support of veterans that deserve their benefits.

Saturday, February the 26th, at 12:15 I had the unforgettable honor of a lifetime – and it was an honor of a lifetime for me – by laying a beautiful DAVA wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery.

Peter Rauh of New York escorted me and Adjutant Bunny Clos, Sergeant-at-Arms Linda Jimmerson from Georgia, and National First Junior Vice-Commander Ann Hurley of Massachusetts also experienced this event with me. And the experience will be etched into my heart and mind forever.

March the 19th, 2022 I was honored by the DAV, DAVA members, families and friends at my Commander's Testimonial in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. And I want to thank everyone that attended, sent cards and gifts.

And a special thank you to so many that served on the planning committee, helping with decorating the ballroom and assisting with greeting guests. They were Linda Jimmerson, Kathy Miller, Peter Rauh.

And thank you for being here and being there for me from the beginning to the end. Everything was beautiful, even the weather. I am so blessed to have all of you in my life.

April the 14th through the 17th I was honored to attend the National DAV Commander Andy Marshall's testimony in Safety Harbor, Florida. The resort was beautiful and tucked away in a unique area near Tampa.

Commander Marshall had a wonderful testimony. He is a true American hero and has dedicated his entire life to helping veterans and their families as a DAV national service officer and supervisor. He continues to honorably serve as our wonderful DAV National Commander.

April the 19th through the 24th I was DAVA national representative to Puerto Rico convention in San Juan. They had a highly successful convention and members are working hard to help veterans and their families.

DAV Commander Marshall also attended the convention. We were given a tour of the city of Old San Juan. It is a beautiful city and full of historical buildings and places of interest.

May the 19th through the 22nd I attended South Carolina, my home state, DAV convention in Columbia. It was their first convention in two years. They had a great convention, caught up on business and election of new officers. Members were extremely excited to get back together. The DAV and the Auxiliary worked together.

May the 29th through the 30th, Memorial Day parades, I was honored to ride in New York DAV van with Peter and other DAVA members in the Glendale and Ridgeview parades.

June the 2nd through the 5th I flew to Great Falls, Montana to the state convention. I had an enjoyable time with DAVA Commander Meg Parsetich and her Auxiliary members.

They worked extremely hard to complete convention business. And members were excited to help with the joint fundraiser with the DAV.

Commander Meg and several members surprised me with a fabulous tour of Helena – I think they call it Helena, I think, the capital of Montana, and a beautiful panoramic boating cruise at the gates of the mountain wilderness on the Missouri River. It was an exciting ending to my visit.

Getting back home was a bit hindered by electrical storms so I had the honor of spending a few hours being diverted to Denver, from Denver to Salt Lake City, back to Denver, missing my flight.

Next available flight was the next morning so I spent the night in Denver airport with a lot of company. And so you all could tell the same story, I am sure.

June the 9th through the 12th I attended New Hampshire's convention in Nashua. The DAV and Auxiliary worked great together and had a successful convention. Business and election of new officers went well.

The hospitality and comradeship of membership was so heartwarming. Peter drove me to New Hampshire and the scenic drive was amazing. I was ecstatic to have a break from airports.

June the 26th through the 30th I will be attending the New York DAV/DAVA convention in Callicoon, nestled in the edge of the Catskill Mountains. DAV officers are working diligently to hold a highly-successful convention. And I am looking forward to being there as their national rep.

July the 10th through 13th I attended the Commanders' and Adjutants' Association conference in Covington, Kentucky. And the DAV National Headquarters in Erlanger, Kentucky. It's always a pleasure to meet with the C-N-A Association and I am excited to visit our National Headquarters again and meet with our dedicated staff.

August the 3rd through the 10th – wow, here we are at the National DAV/DAVA Convention in Orlando, Florida. What an amazing year I had. I want to thank the South Carolina DAV/DAVA Department, members of the Carroll E. Prosser Chapter and Unit 30 in Myrtle Beach, and my family for their support.

In addition, I want to thank my officers and team members for their dedication.

I want to express my gratitude to Past National Commander (sic) Pat Kemper and National Adjutant Bunny Clos and the staff for their challenging work and dedication.

A special thank you to Linda and Burl Jimmerson for your years of support. To Peter Rauh, my fiancé, thank you so much for driving me all over the country, helping me without complaining, and always offering to help at the conventions. You've been my rock.

The DAV/DAV Auxiliary has become an important part of my life. I cannot begin to name each and every one of you that has mentored me along the way, lifting me up when I failed, gave me "that look" when I was fixing to mess up, (Laughter) and still loved me when I made the mistakes, anyway. I will always appreciate your love, your friendship and your support.

God bless each and every one of you. And may we always stay America strong. Thank you.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the senior vice-commander returned to the podium.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER SPENCE: Well, it sounds like you had a busy and successful year. Thank you very much.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: It's been absolutely wonderful. Thank you.

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER SPENCE: I will now entertain a motion to accept national commander's report as read.

MS. KATHY DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, Texas, I make a second – I second the motion.

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER SPENCE: You're going to make the motion.

MS. DUNHAM: I'm still Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, Texas, (Laughter) I make a motion to accept it.

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER SPENCE: Do I have a second?

MS. KAREN BOLTON: Karen Bolton, 14th District NEC, I second.

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER SPENCE: I have a motion by Kathy Dunham and a second by Karen Bolton – I'm sorry, Karen Bolton, got it. All in favor say aye; opposed. The motion carried.

(Whereupon, the senior vice-commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium while the membership began laughing.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Whatever we've done it must be funny. Did we do something funny up here? Have we messed up?

(Whereupon, delegates pointed out errors in the closed-captioning being displayed on the screens.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: What did you say?

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER SPENCE: It's not perfect and that's why I don't like those things. (Laughter) Yes.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You can only appreciate making mistakes when you're standing up here in front of everybody and then you do it. And then you have to admit to it so it's okay, right? Yes, it's okay. It's okay to make mistakes.

Okay, so at this time we want to move on and I would like to ask my National Adjutant Bunny to come forward with her announcements so get out your pencils and paper.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and Adjutant Clos advanced to the microphone.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Maybe next year we'll get this perfect but we're trying it this year, so. (Laughter) Now you're going to give us a complex. (Laughter)

So the Memorial Service is going to be at 7:30 a.m. Sunday. That was 7:30 because I know that I do speak fast so 7:30 tomorrow will be the Memorial Service. Business attire appropriate.

For those involved in the practice, remember to check in with either me or Ann at 6:45 a.m. outside the Regency Ballroom. I will also have programs.

For those who volunteered to hand out the programs, we will have those so if you could be there between 6:30 and 6:45 that would be great because you know you have early-birds.

National chairmen are to pick up their respective committee folders in the morning in our Atlantic office.

Convention Committee meetings convene tomorrow morning. If serving on a committee make sure you do have your folders, if not, we will have to bring it to you. Check your programs to see what time and which room you will be in.

There will be no Auxiliary business sessions tomorrow so that you can participate in the convention committee meetings and take advantage of the opportunity to attend the DAV seminars.

As you know, this year we are celebrating our 100 years so we're going to call on Pat Kemper to come up and give a little history presentation. As you know, she has been here for almost half of that century so she is going to – (Laughter) she has just got a lot of knowledge. That's what I'm saying. Come on. I love her.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and Mrs. Kemper advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: Well, if I'd been here for all 100, that would have really be something to talk about. (Laughter) National Commander Lynn, National Adjutant Bunny, national officers, delegates and guests, each of us in this room are part of something special.

(Whereupon, the membership broke out in laughter again at the closed-captioning: members and "gas.")

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: I don't know how many of you saw the "hell in cell" a little while ago, but that was funny, too. (Laughter)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Now listen – all right. All right. All right. I'm going to give you the gavel. Listen, I know one thing, there is not one person out there that has not sent a text, didn't read it first. (Laughter) and then after you sent it said, "Holy crap, can I get this back?" (Laughter)

So I know you've done it because I've done it so we're going to skip what comes up on this thing so just kind of – just keep your eyes on the guest talker here. (Laughter) Here you go, Pat, try it again.

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: Take two. (Laughter) Each of us in this room are part of something special, including and, especially, these young and very special junior members. One hundred years. One hundred years.

We are carrying the torch of those who came before us and built this great organization. We have turned many challenges into achievements over the past century, all in service and in our mission to support DAV in their quest to serve ill and injured veterans and their families.

Throughout our history we have a strong tradition of standing by the side of our nation's veterans. We have a strong tradition of standing by – I just said that. (Laughter)

We offer a special understanding of the toll military service takes on families because many of us see and live with that toll every single day.

I will point out just a few of our accomplishments and goals and a few changes along the way.

Throughout this time we have contacted legislators on a host of needed changes to ensure our veterans receive the benefits and care they are so deserving of.

While DAV relies on our members to continue our legislative contact efforts, there was a time they basically, solely relied on Auxiliary members to do the old-fashioned letter-writing because we were the ones that wanted to do the writing and had to do the writing for our spouses.

And we knocked on the doors of legislators for those face-to-face meetings. And we continue to do that.

We have played a huge role in the wins for veterans.

We joined the ranks of volunteers to help veterans hospitalized at VA facilities. Jean, when she was speaking about what the Auxiliary has done, that was very impressive and a good summary of everything we do, or even a fraction of what we do because we have 100 years.

There are many reasons to celebrate what we do and to celebrate each other.

The Outstanding Member of the Year Award, created in the 1980s, was made to highlight the hard work being put in by many and to select the outstanding recipient while celebrating those who were submitted for award consideration, and to also place value on all of us who work tirelessly for the mission of our organization. So take a moment to give yourselves a pat on the back. You have earned it.

The first Auxiliary National Headquarters was in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The headquarters was moved to Cincinnati, Ohio in the early 1960s, and that's when Kit Seal took over as national adjutant and volunteered in this position for a while with no salary.

That is a sample of the heart of our dedicated members. And I was fortunate to have known this amazing lady and thankful she saw something in me and hired me on her staff.

The headquarters moved to Cold Spring, Kentucky around 1964. And last year we were pleased to support DAV's centennial celebration and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new DAV and Auxiliary Headquarters in Erlanger, Kentucky. That's where the Auxiliary office is today.

Perhaps the biggest change over the years has been who makes up the Auxiliary. In the beginning wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, Gold Star mothers and relatives were the ones who made up this Auxiliary for decades.

But all of that changed when membership eligibility expanded in 2005. We now count husbands, fathers, sons, grandsons and many other family members among us.

So go talk to someone you know who isn't already a member. Tell them about our organization and that we have 100 years of service in fulfilling our mission. That's really something to boast about.

We, in the Auxiliary, have endeavored to foster Americanism and patriotism in our youth all this time. We strongly encourage youth involvement. They are the future of our organization. And nothing makes us prouder than to see the junior members in action.

The Auxiliary Education Loan program started in 1937 and later because a scholarship. The Auxiliary service program was revamped in 2019. And the vocational training program was launched that same year.

The Auxiliary Procedure and Program Manual was revised last year and printed in booklet format. Some of you may remember the older versions of the manual. Yes, we have come a long way together.

Remember the bylaw books printed in the small blue binders after convention each year? I know someone has to remember that. We printed the changes and mailed them so they could switch out the changes after the convention. Now, like most everything else, you can find the bylaws online.

Proposed bylaw amendments used to be hand cranked through an inkwell stencil and mimeograph machine during national conventions, not so long ago. We worked hours into the night, sometimes ten-eleven and midnight. Those were long days, long nights, but we came through and we did it.

Now, national convention and fall conference are live-streamed online with the special thanks to Chris Easley for doing that for us.

There were typewriters in the Auxiliary headquarters office until the early '90s when we began the transition directly to computer use. I was pretty impressed in 1982 when I joined the staff and I had an electric typewriter.

For a long time membership records were kept on paper. And when I joined the staff in 1982 – not '22 – membership was housed on a mainframe computer system. I had a conversation last week with former National Adjutant Judy Hezlep and she gave me an interesting bit of information that I'd like to share.

She was hired in 1965 at the Cincinnati headquarters, said her first job was typing membership cards – typing. Can you imagine the membership cards being hand-typed? They had books with separate pages for each state and each unit within that state.

When a new member application came in, the member was added to a particular unit that they – and they would go to that page and write in the member's name and information manually and then they would assign a number, then they would type the card.

Today, our membership system is an online process. Mass mailings are basically gone now in favor of email and a social media and online presence. All of those paper records have been converted to digital format.

The Auxiliary National Headquarters staff has always been a small but efficient team, working for the Auxiliary. And we kept operating through the pandemic as a team.

I had the honor to serve under three national adjutants since 1982, before becoming national adjutant, myself. National Adjutant Bunny Clos manages the operations now with our national commander leading the way.

(Whereupon, the membership broke out in laughter again at the closed-captioning.)

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: I ask that you make a pledge to continue to do all you can for ill and injured veterans and their families every single day in the name of DAV Auxiliary.

I know that when we pass that torch to the next –

(Whereupon, the membership broke out in laughter again at the closed-captioning.)

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: I've got to stop looking. When we pass that torch to the next generation of members, we will do so with the satisfaction of knowing we were part of the first 100 years. And I guarantee you the next 100 years will be even greater. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Ms. Kemper withdrew from and Adjutant Clos advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Excuse me, Pat, can you please come back?

(Whereupon, Ms. Kemper returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: This is why we kept this a secret. She's not going to do anything in front of 300 people. So, her exact words to me when she was going to retire was, "Let's keep this a secret." So we did.

She started to tell people at the end of fall conference. And so we moved forward and we talked, Ann and I talked, "What are we going to do?" "What are we going to do?"

(Whereupon, and cakes on a cart were brought to the front of the room.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: And she keeps saying we're not going to do anything. So Ann and I like, let's do this. We bring it up, she's like, no. Can we do this? No. So then we're like, let's do this. And she's like, "Bunny, I don't want anything and don't be a hypocrite." (Laughter)

So she didn't get anything. She okayed Ann and I taking her to dinner. That's what we did. So, after a lot of phone calls and emails, "Are we going to do anything for Pat?" "Is anything going on for Pat?"

"Unfortunately, no, she won't let me." I did what she wanted. I didn't do anything. She never said I couldn't do anything later, so. (Laughter)

It could have been a matter of 25/50 but now it's a matter, we're doing this in front of you guys. So she deserves to be recognized. She has put in so much heart and time and emotion in this job and she loves this organization. She loves all of you.

And we wouldn't be where we are today without Pat. So, secretly you all have little buck slips in your bags and we made sure Pat didn't have one in her bag or Lynn, just because you never know. And it said, "Shhh, be quiet, this is a secret."

And we had everybody sign cards for you so these are all filled. If anybody still needs to sign it, wants to, that's fine. We can keep one out. We can sign backs. But these are for you.

We love you. We do have a cake. We actually have two cakes for Pat, for her retirement. And then we have two celebrating our 100 years. And if anybody has anything, you know, you want to grab her aside, feel free. But we just wanted to do this. She deserves it and we love her. (Standing Ovation)

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: Well, thank you.

JUDGE ADVOCATE AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER PAULA RAYMOND: Don't look so happy.

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: Don't look so happy. Is that what you're saying? Okay, I always said from the day I announced my retirement I wanted to go out as quietly as I came in.

That was pretty much my motto: no fanfare because that's not me. And I knew Bunny was going to keep that promise. But, she didn't. (Laughter)

She waited until I left and then she – yes. So it's been a wonderful ride. I have met so many amazing heroes – heroes in this room – heroes in the DAV rooms. You are heroes. You are champions for veterans and their families. And I'm so proud and I will always attend conventions and conferences.

I mean when I did attend conventions and conferences in the past I would walk around – and even state conventions – I walked around with a smile on my face because I loved watching the camaraderie. I loved this partnership and the relationships that have been forged as a result of this organization.

So I'm really proud to be a part of it. I have made some wonderful friendships through the years. It was time for me to pass that torch. I will always love this organization and the people who have made it up in the first 100 years and those coming in the second 100 years.

So thank you. And now I know – I talked to my husband this morning and I said, "I thought that my retirement would be a blip on the radar but so many people have commented about my retirement."

And I guess maybe whatever you put in those bags is why, for the most part. But, anyway, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you, Lynn. Thank you, national officers, past national commanders. Thank you, Bunny. And thank you all. And I will depart now.

ADJUTANT CLOS: Actually, hold on. Ann Wilner has something to give her, too.

MS. ANN WILNER: Pat – yes, that's funny. Pat, so we decided, Brian and myself, to get you a little gift for everything that you've done. See, when I first met Pat, this is a little funny story, she came to our 9th NEC for being a national guest.

And my adopted mom at the time, Barbara Williams, volunteered me to help her. She says, "Oh, I've got somebody for you, Ann will do it." So I get there and she tells me, "By the way, you're going to help Pat." I said, "Who's Pat?" She goes, "The assistant national adjutant." I said, "Okay."

So I get there; I introduce myself. She goes, "Well, I'm going to put you to work." I said, "Okay." Ever since then she's put me to work. (Laughter) So, without further ado –

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: And you wore heels this high.

MS. WILNER: Yes, I did. And I stood for four hours on those heels. (Laughter) But, anyway, Brian and I love you to death and we wanted to do something special for you and Ernie. And we decided to, with a little help from Bunny, get you two dinner on us.

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT KEMPER: Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Past National Adjutant Kemper withdrew from and Adjutant Clos returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: She's done. She did say she's going to smack me, which I did expect. (Laughter) So I do have a few more quick announcements.

If you, anybody wants to take pictures of the cakes or whatever, feel free to go ahead and just do it quietly so I can finish these few remarks.

The Forget-Me-Not Luncheon will be at 12:30 on Monday. Tickets must be shown on entering the lunch room. And if you haven't picked up your tickets, please do so in our Atlantic Room office.

The registration badges will need to be – sorry, they will need to be shown entering the Commander's Reception tonight, Fun Night on Monday and the intro of officers and the dinner on Tuesday night.

Those without a badge will have to go through a verification process before being admitted. All attendees must be registered in order to attend the events, even junior members. You don't have to pay for juniors but you do have to register them.

Once you've registered, please stop by the Regency Registration Counter Number 2 for the table reservations for the intro of national officers and dinner.

You will pick those tickets up at the end of our meeting on Tuesday. If you do not put your reservation in and make the arrangements, then they will just assign you to any table and you will pick that up before the dinner on Tuesday.

Most of you have probably met her but I do want to introduce our new staff member, Alex Sweasy. She is in the back. She's our baby of our office. So Alex, please wave.

(Whereupon, Alex Sweasy waved to the membership and was greeted with a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: If you haven't done so yet, there is a convention app that you can download on your smart phone. And if you need help, please see Ann, myself or Alex. We'd be more than willing to help you out.

It's pretty amazing. It's got the agenda on there. It's got the members who have registered on there. It's got maps on there. It's got presentations on there. It just has a lot of valuable information. So it's pretty nice to have. So if you need help downloading it, please let us know. We'd be more than happy to help.

Following this meeting we're going to have all of the juniors go to the back of the room on the right side so they can be given a little gift.

And then, speaking of juniors, I would like to say – and maybe we could do a quick little sing "Happy Birthday" to Atticus. Atticus' birthday is today. And he is a precious junior. And he is – Atticus, how old are you today?

(Whereupon, Atticus answered the question.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: He is eleven today. So, we'll sing "Happy Birthday" but I'm stepping back a little bit because you don't want to hear this sing. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, the membership sung "Happy Birthday" to Atticus, followed by a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: And happy birthday to anybody else in the room. I know Carol Lee's was yesterday so happy belated birthday. And anybody else, happy birthday.

And then just our last remark, at 5:00 we're going to do a CMR, which is the new membership system, presentation in this room so if you want to come back for that, feel free.

And I believe that's it. We're going to be serving the cake in the back in just a few minutes so if you want to get a piece of cake and relax and it's about 3:30 so you still have a little ways to go before the meeting. That should be it. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Thank you, Bunny. We appreciate all those announcements. And I know they really are going to help people out.

And still remember, before we adjourn, that the juniors go to the back of the room. Okay? Just don't forget that.

So at this time we will have our closing prayer. Aura-Lee.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me for prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the 100 years of dedicated and selfless service of our members and for all of the success that each and every one of them have had.

We give thanks for the past national commanders who served our organization. We give thanks for all of our past adjutants.

And we give a special thanks for the many years of dedicated service of Pat Kemper. We ask that you will bless her retirement. May it be long and healthy. And may she enjoy the special memories she makes with her family.

We pray for our members, wherever they may be. Be with each and every one.

As we go forward, help us to enjoy the special gifts, the loyalty, the camaraderie, the friendships, and the special times that we will share this evening.

Help us to treasure those times, make new friends, and help us to always be kind to each other.

In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Okay, the Convention stands in recess and will reconvene 9:00 o'clock a.m. sharp Monday morning. Don't forget to grab you some cake on the way out.

And I want to know about door prizes. Are we doing door prizes? Does everybody have a ticket for the door prizes? We are going to do some door prizes. Just keep your tickets out and you can also take your time to get back to the back to get you some cake. Okay?

Enjoy everything until Monday. Thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 3:20 o'clock, p.m., on Saturday, August 6, 2022.)

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**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
99TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
HYATT REGENCY ORLANDO HOTEL
ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

August 8, 2022

Second Business Session

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The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Plaza International Ballroom G on the Convention Level of the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Monday morning, August 8, 2022, and was called to order at 9:07 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser.

COMMANDER LYNN HELMS-PROSSER: Would everybody please take their seats. And would the sergeant-at-arms please close the door out there. And while we're getting ready, please –

You all can't hear this? Okay. So it's probably as loud as it can go. I don't know. I'm not really sure so maybe we can get it fixed a little bit later if it's an issue.

But please make sure that your cell phones are silenced. And, please, let's hold down any personal comments and stuff with each other, you know, while we're giving our reports and things because it's real important for everybody to be able to hear. And sometimes it blocks somebody near you from hearing what's going on. Okay?

So thank you all. I hope you all had a wonderful time last night. I hope you're enjoying the convention so far. And tonight, of course, you know, we've got a lot going on.

I know a lot of people are excited to see Lieutenant Dan again. Right, everybody? (Applause) So that's going to be exciting. So, anyway, so just have a good time. Enjoy. And please make an effort to meet some new friends. Okay?

So we're going to get started right now so at this time I would like to have our prayer by our chaplain, Aura-Lee Nicodemus.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we come together after some special times sharing with old friends and meeting new friends.

We give thanks for the camaraderie we share and the great mission that we have to serve others.

I am so thankful for the many acts of kindness that we've seen here already in this convention and over the past year from our members.

Today, we ask a special blessing on the Santos triplets. We know that last time when we prayed they were all three, two of the three had gone into distress. And during our prayer, our prayers were answered and they have all survived and are now stable so we give thanks for that.

We give thanks for, that Heather Lewis is back with us and that she's doing well. It's so great to see her.

We ask a special blessing upon Barbara Gentry from Arizona. She had an injury from a fall and we know that it's going to be a long healing and she'll require the support of her Auxiliary members as she lives alone.

We ask a special blessing upon Leonard who ended up in the hospital. Be with him and be with his family to give them strength as they carry on their mission here.

We pray for Christina Alexander and also for Regina's unit member who was also sent to the hospital.

Be with each of our members at home. Those that need healing, provide them healing and comfort. And we ask a special blessing upon every member here. Care for each and every one.

And we pray for our troops in harm's way. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen" after which the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: We will have the Pledge of Allegiance now by Melissa Pierce.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the third junior vice-commander and Americanism chair advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN MELISSA PIERCE: Free your hands. Stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join me 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 and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Will the Credentials chairman please come forward to give an updated report of the Credentials Committee. Everyone can be seated. Thank you. (One rap of the gavel)

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Convention Credentials Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARIA HOLLOWAY: Good morning.
(Response of "Good morning.")

CONVENTION CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HOLLOWAY: National commander, national officers, delegates and guests. The Credentials report is as follows:

Total units registered, 109, total departments registered, 35; national officers registered, 5; past national commanders registered, 7; total guests registered, 189; total delegates, 236; total alternates, 15; total registered, 452; and total vote count, 861.

Commander, I move that we accept the Credentials report.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Committee chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: We have a motion on the floor to accept the Credentials report. Can I have a second, please?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN MILLER: Susan Miller, Unit 6, Colorado, I second it.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay. All in favor to accept the Credentials report this morning say aye; any opposed. The ayes carry it. Thank you. Appreciate it.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials Committee chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: The Constitution and Bylaw Committee chairman will come forward for the first reading of the proposed constitution and bylaw amendments. Please hold all questions and comments for the second reading. Judy Steinhouse.

(Whereupon, commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JUDITH STEINHOUSE: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Everyone has received a copy of the proposed constitution and bylaw amendments.

For the purpose of saving time, I will read only the amendment number and purpose or rationale.

For the second reading I will read the entire proposed amendment.

Number 1. Amend Article I, National Convention, Section 5, Official Rules of the National Convention, Rule 21, B.

The rationale: change name to conform with the purpose of the DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award.

Number 2. Amend Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 2, National Vice Commanders, first paragraph.

Rationale: change name to conform with the purpose of the Outstanding Unit Award.

Number 3. Amend Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 1, State Commander, Paragraph 3.

Rationale: change name to conform with the purpose of the DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award.

Number 4. Amend Article VII, Membership, Section 3.

Rationale: a measure to protect the organization and its members should it be determined that an applicant's interest in joining may not ascribe to the purpose/mission of the organization.

Number 5. Amend Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 2, Senior Vice Commander and Junior Vice Commander, Fourth Paragraph.

Rationale: to clarify unit check issuance duties in the absence of the adjutant.

Number 6. Amend Article XVI, Conventions, Section 3, Line 2.

Rationale: clarity purposes.

Number 7. Amend Article XIII, Policy, new Section 5.

Rationale: necessary non-discrimination policy to protect the organization and its members.

Number 8. Amend Article I, National Convention, Section 2, Supreme Power, Paragraph 1.

Rationale: to clarify that members must be in attendance at the National Convention to conduct the business of that convention.

Number 9. Amend Article II, State Conventions, Section 2, Composition.

Rationale: to clarify that these members need to be in attendance at the state convention to conduct the business of that convention.

Number 10. Article XIII, Unit Meetings, Section 1, Regular Business Meetings.

Rationale: allowing for units to hold virtual meetings, except for officer elections.

Number 11. Amend Article VI, State Committees and Chairmen, Section 1.

Rationale: allows for state executive committees to hold virtual meetings.

Thank you, Madam Commander.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, at this time I would now like to ask National Caregiver Initiative Program Chairman Melissa Pierce to give her report.

(Whereupon, commander withdrew from and the Caregiver Initiative Program chairman advanced to the podium.)

CAREGIVER INITIATIVE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN AND THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER MELISSA PIERCE: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CAREGIVER INITIATIVE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN AND THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER PIERCE: Sorry. National Commander Lynn, National Adjutant Bunny, line officers, delegates, and guests, welcome.

Although things were opening back up in 2021 we were still tentative about too much activity within the Caregiver Initiative Program this past year. As in 2020, the 2021 National Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic, formerly known as the National Disabled Veterans TEE Tournament was cancelled due to COVID concerns.

Although the 2022 event is being held in September, they have decided to discontinue the Caregiver Program at the Golf Clinic.

At the 2021 National Convention in Tampa we voted to expand the Caregiver Initiative Program beyond the support of caregiver activities at VA adaptive events to other caregiver activities.

This included but was not limited to sponsorship of caregivers of disabled veterans at retreats specifically designed for veteran caregivers.

In 2021 we began researching these retreats. We feel these retreats would be beneficial to our caregivers and with our support we could ease the financial burdens of the caregivers.

We also explored other opportunities for our caregivers and we will continue to research this in 2022 and hope to have more information in the near future.

As an Auxiliary, one of our foremost missions to help veterans and their families, to help our caregivers. What can we do? We can support the caregivers in our local units. We can support the caregivers we encounter at our local VAs.

All around us there are husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, sons and daughters caring for our disabled veterans that need our support.

We must continue the fight at the legislative level to pass bills that support caregiver program funding. Over the past few years progress has been made, but we have a long way to go.

We must fight until all caregivers are given the support they need, deserve, and have earned. Our veterans fought for our country and we must fight for their caregivers.

When the Commander's Action Network sends out requests for support, please make sure you, your members, your family, your friends are contacting your Senate and House members and urging them to support these acts and bills.

As the DAV Auxiliary, we must continue to work together to seek opportunities to make an impact with our caregivers.

If you have an idea, let National know so that we can look into it further. If you hear of a caregiver event, share it with national so that we can explore it.

If we are going to make a difference in the lives of caregivers, we need to explore every opportunity we find.

We have taken the initial step to support our caregivers through the VA at adaptive events. We now need to take the next steps and move more into our communities. We need to make a concerted effort to be part of the solution.

(Whereupon, the Caregiver Initiative Program chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I now call on Education and Program Chairman, Diane Franz, for a report. For those wishing to make donations for our national programs, they will be accepted upon completion of the Education report. Diane.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Education Scholarship Convention chairman and past national commander advanced to the podium.)

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DIANE FRANZ: Thank you. Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER FRANZ: National commander, national officers, delegates, guests, and friends.

This past membership year we received 58 applications and that one was received after the deadline for submission, so 57 applications were judged.

Of those, three applicants received \$2,500; two received \$2,000; three received \$1,500; nine were awarded \$1,000; eight received \$750; and fourteen received \$550; and one received \$550 for a part-time student. This is a total of 40 scholarships awarded for a total of \$40,000.

The Committee's recommendations for future submissions: please have them follow the instructions provided with the application. And list the past two years of volunteer work for veterans and their families. The essay should include the future goals and plans in obtaining their degree.

I thank all of the students that applied. And, like I said, we have 57 that we judged and more than half were awarded scholarships. So thanks for the response this year. (Applause)

The Education Committee consisted of: Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser; Senior Vice-Commander Darlene Spence; and Diane Franz.

(Whereupon, the Education Scholarship Convention chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Thank you, Diane. For those planning to present donations, make sure that your checks are signed and that the state and unit checks have at least two signatures.

Form a line in the center, please, and then state your name and, please, your state or unit and you can present your donations at that time.

Just stand at the microphone and then I'll be standing down here. Okay? So thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew to the floor in front of the dais and the adjutant returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: At this time while I'm down here I would like to say thank you for all that you've done this year. And we appreciate all the generous donations that we're about to receive to help us for these programs. So God bless and thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Susan Henry, past national commander and previous recipient of the loan, personal donation for the scholarship.

MS. ERIN O'BRIEN: Erin O'Brien from the State of Maine, a hundred dollars for the scholarship fund. (Applause)

MS. VELMA STEINMAN: Velma Steinman, past department commander for the State of Missouri. On behalf of the Missouri – excuse me – state department I'd like to present our check for \$100 for the scholarship fund. (Applause)

MS. DIANA POLLOCK: Diana Pollock, state commander of Ohio. We present \$300 for the scholarship program. (Applause)

MS. LORETTA NOSKO: Loretta Nosko, state department commander of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I have a check for \$300: \$100 to Camp for Kids, \$100 to winter sports and \$100 to the national service fund. (Applause)

INDISTINGUISHABLE: (Indistinguishable) commander of the Massachusetts (and we have \$225 for the service program and \$100 for the education scholarship program. (Applause)

MS. EDYTH BRADFORD: Edyth Bradford, commander, DAVA Manatee County, I have a check for \$191 for national caregivers. (Applause)

MS. TERRI YOUNG: Terri Young, state commander for Indiana, \$200 for caregivers and \$200 for educational. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Texas juniors raised \$2,000 for the caregivers program. (Applause)

MS. JANE CASHER: Jane Casher, senior vice-commander for the Department of Kentucky. I have two checks, \$50 for the scholarship fund, \$50 for the service fund. (Applause)

MS. SUE PARHAM: Sue Parham, state commander of Oklahoma, I have a thousand dollar check for the caregivers. (Applause)

MS. MARY LOU CALDWELL: Mary Lou Caldwell, past state commander for the Department of California. I have a check for \$300 for, in honor of the line officers and the NECs that have worked so hard this last year. (Applause)

MS. VICKIE PARTRIDGE: Vickie Partridge, State of Oregon commander and I have a check for \$50 for the caregiver program and \$800 for the winter sports clinic. (Applause)

MS. RICHARD AGUINAGA: Richard Aguinaga, state commander of Texas. I have two checks here for general fund, \$750; caregivers, \$750; total \$1,500. (Applause)

MS. ROSE MCGINNIS: Rose McGinnis, state Department of Florida commander. I have a check for \$750 for national education scholarship fund and \$100 for national vocational training assistance. (Applause)

MR. SKIP PIERSOL: Skip Piersol from Venice, Florida, from Unit 101, the commander of the DAVA. We have a check for the scholarship fund of \$500. (Applause)

MS. ELAINE PHILLIPS: Good morning. Elaine Phillips, senior vice-commander of the State of Texas, adjutant/treasurer of Unit 169, Victoria, Texas. We have a check for \$200: \$100 goes to the scholarship fund and \$100 go to caregivers. (Applause)

MS. STEINMAN: Velma Steinman, on behalf of the State Department of Missouri I have a check for \$100 for the winter sports clinic and \$100 for the service support fund. (Applause)

MS. TAMMY SIGMAN: Hello. I'm Tammy Sigman, senior vice-commander for the State of Ohio. We have a \$300 check for the service support fund. (Applause)

MS. KAREN REDIKER: Karen Rediker, senior vice from Vermont, I have a check for \$125 for national education loan and \$125 for national service program. (Applause)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER TERRY GRABOWSKI: Hi, Terry Grabowski, national fourth junior vice. I have a check for Camp Corral in memory of our past state commander for New York, Janice Bailey. (Applause)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Sorry, I had to put your money up. When called upon, the Convention Committee chairmen will approach the podium and announce the winners.

I ask that the committee advisors step up 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 award.

If needed, please form a line. Chairmen will not read committee members names individually but, rather, will have members stand to be recognized.

And for those who want to take pictures, please feel free; I just ask that you stay out of the gentleman's way here in front with the big camera. (Laughter)

We will start with Americanism. Will the chairman please come forward?

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the Americanism Convention Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CAROL RUNDELL: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: The Americanism Committee met at the International Room F at 9:00 a.m. August the 7th. Our advisor was Melissa Pierce. I was the chairman, Carol Rundell. And Karen Stephenson was the secretary.

The following units were judged to be the best in their category. Group 1, 10 to 50, Kenneth Cox, Number 17, Richmond, Virginia. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Jack Redell Number 20, Leesville, Louisiana. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: Group 3, 101 to 200, Randolph Area Number 17, Universal City, Texas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: Group Number 4, 201 members or over, Braintree Number 29, Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: Special Americanism awards: Group 1, 10 to 200 Millington 116, Munford, Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: And Group 2, 201 members or over, is E. Schumann Heink – H-e-i-n-k – Number 2, Kansas City, Missouri. (Applause)
(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: The Committee submitted the following recommendations.

Do not write first place or winner on a report.

More details on the activities, i.e., Memorial Day, what actually happened and what they did; Veterans Day, et cetera.

Now I'd like to recognize the members who were on the Americanism Committee. Could you please stand up?

(The members of the committee were: District 1, Donna Horton; District 2, Jill Riehl; District 3, Jeanne Gideon; District 6, Diane Garofolo; District 7, Terri Conklin; District 8, Scott Helms;

District 9, Karen Stephenson; District 10, Carol Lee; District 11, Judith Uetterling; District 12, Sandra Resner; District 13, Linda Bratcher; District 14, Linda Engesether;

District 15, Icilda Marley; District 17, Jack Coffey; District 18, Carol Rundell; District 20, Elaine Phillips, and District 21, Tessa Whitney.)

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

AMERICANISM CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUNDELL: They did an outstanding job in concentrating on getting the best winners. And thank you and congratulations to the winners. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Americanism Convention Committee chairman withdrew from and Adjutant Clos returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Will the chairman for Community Service please come up?

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the Community Service Convention Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CARRIE HARMON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HARMON: National commander, national adjutant, officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests.

The National Community Service Convention Committee met at 9:10 a.m. on the 7th of August, 2022.

Our advisor was Terry Grabowski. I, Carrie Harmon, served as Committee chairman (indistinguishable) appointed/elected as secretary.

The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Community Service awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, was Murray Rhea Peninsula Unit 6, Hampton, Virginia. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HARMON: Group Number 2, 51 to 100 members, was Edward Gallion Memorial Unit 212, Goshen, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HARMON: Group 3, 101 to 201 members, was Millington Unit 116, Munford, Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HARMON: And Group 4, 201 members or over was Glendale Unit 20, Glendale, Arizona. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HARMON: The Committee does have recommendations for the Community Service.

Please do not donate to non-profit organizations. No church donations are allowed. No non-related veteran expenses. The DAV Auxiliary cannot donate to the DAV.

Please break down all expenses, hours, and services in detail.

Make sure the amounts add up correctly.

Mileage and hours should be itemized to verify veteran statuses.

Please break down of the report needs to be typed. It was very difficult to read a lot of the writing.

If naming a facility, please be veteran-specific. Every line should say "veteran."

And I would also like to thank all the Committee members that were on for Community Service, if you could please stand.

(The Committee Service Committee members were: District 1, Cheryl Picard; District 2, Raymond Grabowski; District 3, Paula Borrazas; District 6, Theresa James; District 7, Sue Hamilton; District 8, Sheila Stephens; District 9, Jacqueline Robinson; District 10, John Olinger; District 11, Darlene Hanneman; District 12, Carla Reynolds; District 13, Barbara Fisher; District 14, Helen Parsetich; District 15, Carrie Harmon; District 16, Linda Duste; District 17, Karen Roybal; District 18, Hope Mulnix; District 20, Kathelee Staley; District 21, Marilyn Parham.)

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

COMMUNITY SERVICE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HARMON: Thank you to everyone. They worked really hard on this.

(Whereupon, the Community Service Convention Committee chairman withdrew from and Adjutant Clos returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Would the Junior Activities chairman please come forward.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the Junior Activities Convention Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CAROL PARKER-PARK: National commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 99th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Junior Activities Convention Committee met at Florida A at 9:00 a.m. on 7th August 2022.

Our advisor was Erin O'Brien. And I, Carol Parker-Park from Ohio, served as Committee chairman; and Hattie Lambert was elected/appointed secretary. Hattie is a first-timer, too, so I was very proud of her. (Applause)

The following units were judged to be best in their category for the National Junior Activities Awards.

Group 1 was 1 to 25 members, Lafayette Unit 2, Louisiana. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: Group 2, 26 to 50 members, Braintree 29, Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: Group 3, 51 to 100 members, Westcott Houghton Unit 56, Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: We had none for Group 4, 101 and over or the Junior Activities books we didn't have.

National Junior Award, 15 to 17, Madeline K. Bonneau, Westcott Houghton, 56, Massachusetts.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: National Junior Award, 11 to 14, Eric Escobar, Petersburg Unit 47, Virginia. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: National Junior Award, 7 to 10, Ellenora M. Truelson, Braintree 29, Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: The Committee submitted the following recommendations. Details of activities instead of just putting "Helped veterans." We'd like to know how they helped them.

And then write legibly on all forms.

I'd like to offer my support and thanks for our Committee members. Would you please rise and be recognized.

(The Committee members were: District 1, Allison Devine; District 2, Marie Sternecker; District 3, Elena Florey; District 6, Hattie Lambert; District 7, Ivy Bacon; District 8, Carolyn Harris;

District 9, Willard Cunningham; District 10, Kimberly Olinger; District 11, Carol Parker-Park; District 12, Karen Eccles; District 13, Jane Casher; District 14, Nathan Thomason;

District 15, Ashley Temps; District 17, June Schow; District 18, Dori Carpentier; District 20, Magdalena Aguinaga; District 21, Kimberly Vickers-Dunning.)

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

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PARKER-PARK: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the Junior Activities chairman withdrew from and the adjutant returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Will the Legislative chairman please come forward?

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the Legislative Convention Committee chairman advanced to a microphone.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LINDA OLIVER: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OLIVER: National commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 99th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National Legislative Convention Committee met at the Blue Spring at 9:06 o'clock on August 7th, 2022.

Our advisor was Christopher Easley. I, Linda Oliver, served as Committee chair. And Sandy Dobmeier was appointed our secretary.

The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Legislative Awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Scott Vetterling Unit, Greenfield, Massachusetts.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OLIVER: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Betsy Layne Unit 169, Betsy Lane, Kentucky. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OLIVER: Group 3, 100 to 200 members, Marshville Memorial Unit 35, Marshville, Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OLIVER: And Group 4, 201 members and over, Westcott-Haughton Unit 156 of North Attleboro, Massachusetts. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OLIVER: The Committee submits the following recommendations. All reports sent to national are first-place winners, therefore, states submitting the reports should not have to write "first place" written on them. The rules from the national should be adjusted.

Will the following members stand to be recognized as those that were on the judging.

(The Committee members were District 1, Frances Devine; District 4, Bennie Isaac; District 6, Sue Schofield; District 7, Regina Prudhomme; District 8, Willie Mae Looney; District 9, Mary Ann Jensen; District 10, Linda Walters; District 11, Diana Pollock; District 12, Cindy Wallace; District 14, Sandra Dobmeier; District 16, Caroline Morris; District 17, Kathy Phelps; District 18, Lisa Thomas; District 20, Gwendolyn Sewell; District 21, Linda Oliver.)

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

LEGISLATIVE CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OLIVER: Thank you, Committee members. Well done. Thank you everyone that had a winning report. Very well done. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Legislative Convention Committee chairman withdrew from and the adjutant returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Mae Holmes chairman, please come forward.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the Mae Holmes Convention Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JENNIFER HAMMONS: The National Mae Holmes Convention Committee met in the Florida Room B. Our advisor was Darlene Spence. My name is Jennifer Hammons. I served as the Committee chairman. And Rose Williams was our secretary.

The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Mae Holmes Awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Unit 40, Craven County, North Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HAMMONS: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Unit 11, Northern Hills, South Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HAMMONS: Group 3, Unit 16, Millington, Indiana. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HAMMONS: And then Group 4, 201 members and over was Unit 29, Braintree, Massachusetts. (Applause) I apologize. It was Millington, Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HAMMONS: The Committee submitted the following recommendations. Make sure reports are attached if over \$1,000.

Don't put same items on both reports, only on one report.

Put total members. Make sure amounts match.

If possible, also please try to type; some writing is a little hard to read.

Will the following members that participated in the Committee please stand for the Mae Holmes report, to be recognized.

(The Committee members were District 1, Diane Sullivan; District 2, Anita Ingram; District 3, Aura-Lee Nicodemus; District 6, Carol Simmons; District 7, Mary Lee Kolter; District 8, Janice Felder-Chapman; District 9, Daphne Herndon; District 11, Shirley Plahovinsak;

District 12, Rose Williams; District 13, Terri Young; District 15, Claudia Silva; District 16, Rosemarie Watts; District 17, Heidemarie Green; District 18, Jonnie Moore; District 19, Vickie Partridge; District 20, Elaine Moreland; District 21, Jennifer Hammons.)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HAMMONS: And thank you all to everyone that participated. And thank you to all the units. You all did amazing work. Keep it up.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, the Mae Holmes Convention Committee chair withdrew from and the adjutant returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: The VAVS chairman, please come forward.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the VAVS Convention Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LAURIE PEKARIK: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PEKARIK: National Commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests to this 99th National Auxiliary Convention.

The National VAVS Convention Committee met in the Plaza International Ballroom, Room E, on August 7th, 2022. Our advisor was Patty Davis. And I, Laurie Pekarik, served as the Committee chair. And Edyth Bradford was our secretary.

The following units were judged as the best in their category for the National VAVS Awards.

Group Number 1, 10 to 50 members – I'm not going to pronounce this correctly so please bear with me, Ouachita Unit Number 46 from Arkansas. I'm sorry if I didn't pronounce your city correctly.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PEKARIK: Group Number 2, 51 to 100 members, Simpson-Turner Unit 27, from Arkansas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PEKARIK: Group Number 3, 101 to 200 members, Millington Unit Number 116 from Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PEKARIK: Group Number 4, 201 members and over, William Alden Smith Jr., Unit Number 2, Michigan. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PEKARIK: The Committee presented the following recommendations. Please don't use abbreviations. It's hard for us to determine what they mean.

And write clearly. Some typing would be appropriate.

Identify your projects on Lines 2, 3 and 4. And, please, no extra writing on the forms.

Do away with the point system. It's hard to use points.

State department have workshops on how to fill out your annual reports. We just found that several reports just were not that clear.

Remove dollar amounts from Lines 2 and 3 and explain all of your amounts.

I would like to have our Committee members stand and be recognized for VAVS.

(The VAVS Committee members were District 1, Debra Mehle-Connor; District 3, Donna Folcarelli; District 6, Grace James; District 7, Edyth Bradford; District 8, Shirley Mercer; District 9, Yvonne Cunningham;

District 11, Elizabeth Hamel; District 14, Laurie Pekarik; District 15, Danny Pierce; District 16, Mary Lou Caldwell; District 17, Nancy Coffey; District 18, Katherine McCoy; District 20, Charlene Parker; District 21, Joyce Komprod.)

(Whereupon, the Committee members stood as their names were called and were recognized with a round of applause.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PEKARIK: Thank you. I want to congratulate all the winners. And to all of the units that did submit their reports, everybody is doing a wonderful job. Keep it up. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the VAVS Convention Committee chairman withdrew from and the adjutant returned to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: And last but not least, the Membership chairman please come forward.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the First Junior Vice-Commander and National Membership Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ANN MARIE HURLEY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: Group 1, 0 to 50 members, largest member increase, 22, Texas Upshur County Unit 204. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: Group 2, 51 to 100, largest member increase, 40, New Mexico, Joe C. Montoya, 24.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: Group 3, 101 to 200, largest member increase, 18, Texas Harry L. Axline Jr., 22. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: Group 4, 201 or greater, largest member increase, 119, Florida, Manatee County Number 18. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: Group 5, the department, largest percentage increase, 104.93 percent, New Mexico.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: Group 6, department, largest numerical increase, 245, Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: And the last is the newest unit with the most paid members, Cedar Hill Number 240, Texas. (Applause) They had 21 new paid members.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HURLEY: Thank you for your work on membership. It's the lifeblood of the organization and we need all the help we can get with it. Thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the first junior vice-commander and National Membership Committee chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, at this time we're going to do the second reading of our constitution and bylaws so will the Committee chairman please come forward, Judy Steinhouse.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Madam Commander. Madam Commander. Susan Henry, past national commander. May we have district caucuses?

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: We're going to do it after the reading because she really hadn't read the entire line-by-line. She only did like, you know, the important parts to begin with. But we're going to have to read the whole, entire thing this time and then we'll go to caucus.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: We're going to have to an extra – okay. I'm confused. So we're going to have an extra reading? Okay.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: We changed it up a little bit this year. And we did it like the DAV does it. So to save some time instead of reading every amendment the whole time once and then –

Hold on a second. Oh, I'm sorry. My book was a little off. So we will caucus. Thank you. Then we will come back and then we're going to read it.

So this year we did change it up a little bit. We only read the amendment, not the whole thing twice. So now we'll caucus and then we will go into the full reading.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you.

ADJUTANT CLOS: So what I will want to do is go ahead and call all of the NECs up front and line them up 1 through 21 and then you can just raise your hand, take your district wherever we want since we didn't do district signs to try to keep everybody comfortable with still COVID protocol.

So you can lead your district wherever you want to go. And we will take about 15-20 minutes. So just be back at 10:20.

Could everybody just be quiet for just a minute? So Diane Sullivan – Diane Sullivan, so for District 1, Diane, can you hold your hand up? And then you can lead your district wherever you want it to go. Okay?

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 2, Linda Trulio. Linda Trulio, where are you at? Linda, can you raise your hand? And then, District 2, can you see Linda Trulio with her hand raised? And follow her.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 3, Karen Rediker, over here. Linda Applegate. Linda Applegate, can you please raise your hand? District 4

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 5, Laurie Stopyra, right here in the middle. Raise your hand so your district sees you.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Amy Bowser, District 7; she's towards the middle of the room with her hand up. Sorry, that was District 6.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 7, Maria Holloway. Can you all be quiet, please? Quiet please.

(Whereupon, someone called out loudly from the membership which quieted the delegation.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Thank you. District 7, Maria Holloway is right here.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 8, Kathy Wenthe.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 9, Shirley Hill.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 10 is going to be Linda Walters.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 12 is going to be Evelyn Couture; so if everybody can see Evelyn who is in her district.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 13, Tawnya Kingsley.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 14, Karen Bolton, so all District 14 members, Karen is up here in front.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 15, Robin Ballhagen. She's way in the back and she's tall. You should be able to see her.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 17, Nancy Coffee; she's up here towards the front, over to the left.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 18, Sharon Linton; she's back towards the right.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Kathy Clampitt, District 19, she's up here towards the left.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: District 20, Sharon Thornton, she's way up here in the front.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: And Jennifer Hammons, 21, over by the right, waiving both hands.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: So just be back by 10:20.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: If anybody lost their readers I've got them up here at the front so you can come up and pick them up. Okay?

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Oh, I'm sorry. I did forget District 11, Judy Davis and Carol Parker-Park. She's right here.

(Whereupon, the NEC raised her hand as requested.)

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed to caucus at 10:00 o'clock, a.m.; and the meeting reconvened at 10:26 o'clock, a.m. on August 8, 2022.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Will everybody please take their seats. At this time I would like to call Chairman Judy Steinhouse back up for the second reading of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

We still have these readers up here if anybody lost their readers. And I'm going to pass them down to the end and they'll be over here with Ann.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws chairman and past national commander advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Still morning, so good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: I will read each one of these in its entirety. I will move for the adoption of this and then we will need a second before we can have discussion.

Number 1. Page N-13, Article I, National Convention, Section V, Official Rules of the National Convention, Rule 21, B, remove the words "Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award" and replace with the following: "DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award."

Rationale: change name to conform with the purpose of the DAV auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award.

Madam Commander, I move for the passage of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You have a motion, do I have a second?

(Whereupon, someone called out a second to the motion away from a microphone.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, you've heard from the – oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know they'd turned it off. Sorry about that.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN MILLER: Susan Miller, Unit Number 6, Colorado, I second it.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, you have heard the motion. You have heard the second.

(Whereupon, there was some commotion in the delegation.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Everything okay out there? Okay. All in favor aye – is there any discussion? Excuse me. Is there any discussion?

MS. SHIRLEY MERCER: I disagree. I think we –

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Name. Name, please.

MS. MERCER: Shirley Mercer, Department of Louisiana. I disagree with removing Mae Holmes. I think this is very disrespectful to our past national commander. She's the one that initiated this program.

And I think we need to remember her now and in the future. Our young people will not know who started this and why we are doing this.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you.

MS. KATHY DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, Texas, the great State of Texas, I might add. And I wholeheartedly agree with her that we are wiping away too much history. None of our juniors know who she is. Half of the members don't know who she is. She was huge in membership.

And now that we're giving out so many membership awards I think that she needs to be congratulated and talked about more often and people need to know who she is.

I think it's an abomination to get rid of our history. (Applause) I think everybody needs to know who Mae Holmes is and what she stood for and that she was a national commander back in the '50s. And she needs to be hailed and congratulated for our membership. Thank you.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Kathy. Thank you. Is there any other discussion? Hearing none, we will go for the vote. You have heard everything so all in favor say aye; any opposed. Okay, then you've spoken and it is not passing. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Number 2. Page N-15, Article III, Duties of National Officers, Section 2, National Vice-Commanders, first paragraph, remove that "R" that's sitting there, typographical error. Remove the words "Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award" and replace with the following, "DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award."

Rationale: change name to conform with the purpose of the outstanding unit award.

Madam Commander, I move for the passage of this.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You have heard a motion to pass. Is there a second?

MS. DELORES ROUSSEY: Delores, Roussey, District 7, yes, I can't think –

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You second the motion?

MS. ROUSSEY: Thank you. Second.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, so is there any discussion?

MS. DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, Texas, the great State of Texas, I think that we institutionalize things whenever we take away any of the names that honor people. That's all I have to say.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Any other discussion? Thank you, Kathy. Hearing none, discussion closed; we'll go to vote. All in favor say aye; all opposed. Okay, so you have spoken and it did not pass. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: We'll do it a third time just because it's an amendment.

Number 3, Page S-5, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 1, State Commander, Paragraph 3, remove the words "Mae Holmes Outstanding Unit Award" and replace with the following, "DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award."

The paragraph would then read:

"The state commander shall appoint the state chairmen of the following committees: Americanism, Community Service, DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award, Junior Activities, Legislation, Membership, VAVS, and may also appoint such other chairmen as deemed necessary."

Rationale: change name to conform with purpose of the DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Unit Award.

Madam Commander, I move for the passage of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

MS. KATHY CLAMPITT: Kathy Clampitt, Unit 4, Oregon.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Wait a minute. You've head the move. Do I have a second?

MS. CLAMPITT: Kathy Clampitt, Unit 4, Oregon, I second.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Is there any discussion?

MS. MERCER: Shirley Mercer, Department of Louisiana, again, we are disrespecting a past state commander –

(Response of "National.")

MS. MERCER: – national. I'm sorry. How would any of you up there, if you all had a program and it had your name, how would y'all feel about it if we would remove it instantly at one meeting? (Applause) I think we need to keep Mae Holmes.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Just a little note to let you all know that this is not coming from our past national commanders; this is coming out of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, so we won't throw nothing at our past national commanders. Okay? (Applause) Thank you.

Okay, so you've heard the discussion. All in favor say aye; any opposed. Okay, so the nays have it and it has failed. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Number 4. Page N-27, Article VII, Membership, Section 3, add new paragraph as follows:

"This organization reserves the right to refuse membership eligibility of any applicant with national adjutant approval."

Rationale: a measure to protect the organization and its members should it be determined that an applicant's interest in joining may not ascribe to the purpose/mission of the organization.
Madam Commander, I move for the acceptance of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Do I have a second for this amendment?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: Madam Commander, Susan Henry, past national commander, seconds.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay. I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion on the floor?

MS. KAREN REDIKER: Karen Rediker, District 3, my district doesn't like the wording. We would like to see instead of "refuse" keeping in mind that people who apply online become automatic members, we would like to see it say "revoke" instead of "refuse."

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Well, "revoke" means you've took them off after you've let them join so that doesn't make sense – just a clarification for everybody.

Revoke means you're taking it away after they got it so that's kind of like putting the cart before the horse, in a way, so just to let you know that. So "revoke" would not be the right word to put in there for that particular word.

MS. REDIKER: Could it be amended to refuse/revoke?

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Can I pause you for just a second?

MS. REDIKER: Yes.

ADJUTANT CLOS: So, automatic payments come in to us it's not kind of automatic. It goes through, on online, we still actually physically put the applications in the system. So it comes in, we see it.

So we do know if there is a potential problem and we know that name. We know that. So we watch for that. And so it's not just an online "you're a member." It's we actually still put it in. So if there is a problem we definitely react to that.

So it's not really a "revoke," it's literally something where the national adjutant and the national commander would talk and be like, "there is this issue with this person."

Pat Kemper had one years ago that she was protecting that the guy wanted to come in – it was an abuse situation, to give her a hard time. And so it's just a matter of protecting you all and our organization.

That's literally the only reason why we need to have this clause. So it's not an automatic member; it is, we still approve it. We still actually put it in.

MS. REDIKER: So they're pending.

ADJUTANT CLOS: They're pending, yes.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Kind of.

ADJUTANT CLOS: They are. You can look at it like that, yes.

MS. REDIKER: Okay, we came up with this because our member that was on that Committee was told that it was not actually for new members; it's for members that are already existing.

ADJUTANT CLOS: No, this would be for new members.

MS. REDIKER: So that's confusing.

ADJUTANT CLOS: New members only. There's a different situation and bylaw rule already in place for people who are already members.

MS. REDIKER: Okay. I thought so. All right.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

MS. DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, the great State of Texas, does this pertain only to Auxiliary memberships or does this pertain to DAV memberships, also?

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Only Auxiliary.

MS. DUNHAM: Okay.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Only Auxiliary. Yes. I do want to clarify something. Maybe we need to re-read this because we are not talking about members that's already here.

Everybody knows that there is ways sometimes we have to without wanting to, we have to remove a member because of issues. So this is – it's totally different.

These are new applications that's coming in that show possibility of being a threat or a hazard to our organization. And that has happened in the past. So just to let you all know that. So I'm going to let Bunny have it.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: Kathy, this is already in the DAV Bylaws, as well.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

MS. CAROLYN HARRIS: Carolyn Harris, Alabama Unit 70. I may be going a step further past this. If an application comes in and it is deemed to be refused or denied, will you have to justify to that person why their membership is being denied? Is that a yes?

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Yes, it is. I'm sorry. Yes.

ADJUTANT CLOS: We definitely would.

MS. DUNHAM: My question pertained to we've had myself and members sign up DAV members. And it was then found out that it was stolen valor. So I'm assuming, then, that DAV has a DoD contact or something that they go through to find out if this was an actual DD-214 member.

ADJUTANT CLOS: That's DAV. You'd have to talk to them.

MS. DUNHAM: Okay.

MS. JERILYN MAYNARD: Jerilyn Maynard, Unit 1, Manchester, out of the State of New Hampshire, I'm a little confused on how you would be able to determine that someone might be a problem when they're registering online. How would you do that?

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Well, it's like Bunny just said, they vet all applications, whether they are online, through the mail or whatever. They're automatically vetted through our membership.

So we're only looking for issues that maybe have happened in the past and someone gets, maybe, or becomes a problem in one state so they just go to another state and try to join another state, try to join another unit. You know, we don't know. We don't know. It's just a way to vet possibilities of somebody not being, you know –

MS. MAYNARD: I still don't understand how you can do it.

PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT PATRICIA KEMPER: I'm Pat Kemper, Kentucky Unit 19, and a former national adjutant. I know that there is concern that the National Headquarters may pick and choose who they let into the organization.

This is being added for a particular reason and it is to protect our members and our organization. Now, in my 40 years-affiliation with DAV Auxiliary, I can recall two instances where this bylaw would have definitely come in handy.

On the national level there isn't a lot of time to just weed through and pick and choose applicants. This is really a measure for the national organization to fend off any potential issues regarding an incoming member.

So we can't go into details about another issue that has been going on, but this is needed for that. And I can guarantee that any sitting national adjutant of the DAV Auxiliary would take this matter very seriously and would not vicariously reject membership applications, and would not do it without discussing it with the national commander and the national judge advocate. Thank you.

MS. TERRI CONKLIN: Terri Conklin, Florida, Unit 109, Florida junior vice, I understand that the applications that are online but how does the unit know? We don't get notification until after you have approved them. And what if we know something about that person that you would not?

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: If you have a member or a potential member in your unit and they're giving you issues, then you're going to know about those issues. So, like Pat said, without going into this situation that we're wanting this in for, it's a matter of, again, protecting the organization.

So we necessarily, if we would get an application, we're not going to tell a unit, hey, we got this application. But we're probably already going to be made aware that there has been an issue with an individual that we need to be made aware of.

So, I mean, yes, it might be an issue with you. You might have somebody in your unit that just does not care for somebody else. We're not looking for personality conflict issues. We're looking for a problem, period.

MS. CONKLIN: Yes, I understand that. But sometimes people go online and make applications without going necessarily to the unit.

ADJUTANT CLOS: Then I would suggest if there is somebody like that and you're having an issue, make it aware to us so we already know that, you know, somebody is stealing or, you know, this person is coming in and doing this or that.

If it's a major issue for you all and this person is coming into your unit meetings, let us know, I mean or coming into a facility that you all congregate together.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER J. EASLEY: Madam commander, madam chairman, I would like to propose an amendment to the motion to add the word "new" between "any" and "applicant" so that way the rule would read:

"This organization reserves the right to refuse membership eligibility of any new applicant with the national adjutant's approval."

Rationale: that way if a new, it's stated that it's a new applicant that's applying. That's all I have.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE:
So you're reading would then be:

"This organization reserves the right to refuse membership eligibility for any new applicant with the national adjutant's approval."

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER EASELY: Correct, because it's a new application – because if they're already a member, we already have the Article XII process.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE:
And you're making that into a motion?

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER EASELY: I would like to make that into the motion. Yes.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE:
Okay.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, so you all have heard Chris' proposal so we have a new one on the floor so add "new" to the applicant. Do we have a second to that?

MS. MICHELE GOINGS: Michele Goings, past state commander of Virginia, Unit 47, I second the motion. Thank you.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Thank you. Is there any discussion?

MS. CLAMPITT: Kathy Clampitt, Oregon, Unit 4, isn't that redundant? If they're an applicant they are new.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Well, that's true. They can already be, you know, a member but it could be in jeopardy so, like we said before, you can be a member of multiple states but you can only actually be active with one. So I think that's probably where that's coming in, if I'm correct. Is that right?

Does that kindly answer that question? So is there any other discussion? Okay, so we're going to vote on the amendment as it is changed. We have another discussion.

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: Madam Commander, I do have an area – Aura-Lee Nicodemus, Byron Morris Unit 3, I have an area of concern with this and it's – I understand the national's position. I hear that clearly.

However, my concern is, unfortunately, not all information or situations that are provided to people are based on authenticity. And we have a clause that we don't discriminate.

Until something has gone before the legal system and someone is proven guilty, sometimes in domestic situations, perhaps because of children issues, perhaps because of other issues, some people are not necessarily as honest or forthright because they have a mission that they want to accomplish.

And my concern is if we have this right and I go to Bunny at national and I say, "Joe Smith is this really bad person; I don't want him in my unit. He's done X, Y, Z and W, that he might even have legal action pending against him."

But we in the United States are based on until it's proven they're not guilty of anything. And my concern is this does allow for discrimination that we're saying we can't do.

And I hear national's point. But I think that there is plenty of ways within the community that this could be handled by the person that's involved, such as a domestic where they can file for legal action where that person couldn't be a part of or be close to them.

But my concern is that it would be a chance for discrimination and it might be founded just on supposition or someone's personalities or someone's domestic situation that's unproven and un-thought.

I just, I'm concerned that it allows a discrimination that, you know, just because I've seen it happen to a lot of people that until someone's, until it's legally founded I'm concerned that it does provide a chance for based on what truly is to the national is rumor because you weren't there; you didn't see it.

It could allow for someone's rumors to come to you. You could believe them wholeheartedly, because you like that nice person and you don't really know what's in the dark secret behind them. And I think it could put us in a place for truly being caught in a discrimination lawsuit instead. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: So, again, this isn't going to be a situation where an application is going to be rejected for that reason. It would have to be much – like we're not going to do it for that reason.

We have a particular reason – and I was just, honestly, when I said that about Pat, when Pat come up and said that, that was one incident that happened years ago.

The instance that we're really worried about right now is something that actually, the Auxiliary – let's see. I'm trying to word this to understand – they were given the opportunity and the choice and then they didn't want it any longer; then they got it back and they sabotaged themselves.

So, again, this is something we know that happened. And then it's kind of like – I'm just trying to word – I'm trying to be careful with my words. It's something that we know.

We're just trying to protect our members and our organization on a situation that might occur that's much bigger than what you all might know. And that's all this clause is for.

We're not going to be picky and choosy. You know if Minnie Mouse don't like Donald Duck, I'm sorry. We're not going to not put them in because you don't like each other.

We want everybody to get along and do what's right for the organization. That's all this clause is about is doing what is right for our organization and for our members.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Is there any more discussion?

MS. SHIRLEY HILL: Shirley Hill, Unit 37, in North Carolina, I think this is a good clause for one reason, is because in North Carolina we had a horrible time one year.

We had a member that caused us nothing but problems. It was a big mess. And, finally, she stepped away when we all got so tired of it but here is the thing: we let national know.

So if national knows that North Carolina, we're having this situation – and Pat, you may know who I'm talking about – we had the situation.

So if she leaves North Carolina and goes to Virginia, South Carolina, wherever, and tries to become a member, you know the situation now that this is a troublemaker and you're not going to allow her to be in South Carolina to stir up trouble and some problems for people that are there for the good, not just there for a title.

So I think this is a good clause for that purpose. Thank you.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Shirley. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we're going to vote. I want to remind you, though, the first vote is only going to be to add "new" applicant.

It's not for the entire statement because we've got to go back and vote on that. But there was an amendment so we're voting on the amendment. Okay?

All in favor say aye; any opposed. Okay, it is carried. Now I'm going to let – I'm going to let Judy come back and read it as it now stands.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: This organization reserves the right to refuse membership eligibility of any new applicant with national adjutant approval.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, so we have a motion to accept it with the change. I need a second, please. Can I have a second? Can someone go to the microphone, please, and second her motion.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: The motion has already been seconded.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, already been seconded once so I stand approved – corrected, not approved, corrected. Okay, so we don't have to discuss it again, either. We're going to go to the vote. Okay? All in favor; any opposed. So it is approved. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Number 5. Page U-6, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 2, Senior Vice-Commander and Junior Vice-Commander, Fourth Paragraph, add the word "initiative/" before the word "sign" in that sentence.

The sentence would then read: "The junior vice-commander shall, in the absence of the adjutant, initiate/sign all warrants/vouchers/check receipts."

Rationale: to clarify unit check issuance duties in the absence of the adjutant.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, do I have a second to this change?

MR. JEFF JUNGKANS: Jeff Jungkans, Tennessee department, seconds.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, we'll go to the vote. All in favor say aye –

MS. REGINA FORTNER: Regina Fortner, Michigan commander, this is just a clarification, when she read it she said "receipt," I believe instead of "requests."

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: I'm sorry.

MS. FORTNER: I don't know legally if we need to say it properly or just go with what's written.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: She's re-read it.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: I will re-read it just to make absolutely sure.

"The junior vice-commander shall, in the absence of the adjutant, initiate/sign all warrants/vouchers/check requests."

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, you asked for clarification. We've got a second. All in favor say aye; any opposed. So approved.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Item Number 6. Page U-17, Article XVI, Conventions, Section 3, Line 2, remove the word "the" before national and add the word "headquarters" after national. The sentence would then read:

"Local unit must be in good standing with National Headquarters and state departments – parenthesis – with dues paid for at least ten – ten in parenthesis – life members, with all national and state mandates paid in full and a copy of a financial report filed with both state and national – end parenthesis – for their delegates to vote at state and national conventions.

Rationale: clarity purposes.

I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Do we have a second?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN MILLER: Susan Miller, Unit 6, Colorado, I second.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Is there any discussion? Excuse me. Do we have any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor say aye; any opposed. So carried.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Number 7. Page N-48, Article XIII, Policy, add new Section 5 to read as follows:

"The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary has a non-discrimination policy whereby all individuals are given equal consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental disabilities, age, and any other legally-protected classification.

"Further, such non-discrimination policy applies to all applicants for employment, all candidates for line officer positions, and all activities in which the DAVA has engaged, is now engaged, or in any way may be engaged at any time in the future.

"No one will be subject to, and the DAVA prohibits, any form of discipline, reprisals, intimidation, or retaliation for good faith reporting of incidents of discrimination of any kind, pursuing any discrimination claim, or cooperating in related investigations."

Rationale: necessary non-discrimination policy to protect the organization and its members.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Do I have a second?

MR. JOHN OLINGER: John Olinger, Unit 2, State of Michigan, I second the motion wholeheartedly.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor say aye; any opposed. So carried.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Number 8. Page N-5, Article I, National Convention, Section 2, Supreme Power, Paragraph 1, add the following after the words "National Convention" in the second line, "to be attended in person by those members outlined in Section 1 of this article" and. The paragraph would then read:

"The Supreme Power of the organization is vested in a National Convention to be attended in person by those members outlined in Section 1 of this article, and to be held annually at a time and place selected in a manner provided by each National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans."

Rationale: to clarify that members must be in attendance at the National Convention to conduct the business of that convention.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Do I have a second?

MS. NANCY COFFEY: Nancy Coffey, District 17, NEC, I second the motion.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor say aye; any opposed. So carried.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Number 9. Page X-2, Article II, State Conventions, Section 2, Composition, add a second paragraph as follows:

"State Department officers, delegates, and alternates must participate in person for the purpose of discussion and voting and there shall be no form of" – excuse me – "there shall be no form of unit rule, voting by proxy, or voting by absentee ballot."

Rationale: to clarify that these members need to be in attendance at the state convention to conduct the business of that convention.

Madam Commander, I ask for the approval of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Do I have a second?

MS. AMY BOWSER: Amy Bowser, Sixth District NEC, I second it.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Do I have any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor – Amy, I'm sorry, you're not registered as an NEC are you? Are you registered? How are you actually registered, Amy?

MS. BOWSER: Virginia 48.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I'm sorry.

MS. BOWSER: Virginia 48.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: We just needed clarification on that to make sure.

MS. BOWSER: I'm sorry, Virginia 48, Unit 48.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: No problem. Okay, thank you. Okay, was there any discussion? Is everything okay?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER HENRY: The previous motion had the same issue. She made a second as NEC. She is actually from Wyoming 2.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. I'm sorry, just one second. Nancy, I'm sorry, how are you registered, actually?

MS. COFFEY: I'm registered as (Indistinguishable) Number 2.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. We're just wanting to correct our minutes. Okay. Okay, we're good now. All in favor say aye; any opposed. So carried. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Item Number 10. Page U-10, Article XIII, Unit Meetings, Section 1, Regular Business Meeting, and we're having a slight little change here. Take out, in the next thing where we say "add a new paragraph" it should be "add new paragraphs" because we have more than one. "Add new paragraphs after the first paragraph to read as follows:

"All general membership meetings of the unit may allow for virtual participation of its members, to include voting, as long as the unit membership of anyone participating virtually is validated at the beginning of each meeting and documented in the unit minutes." Units that wish to follow for – excuse me – "Units that wish to allow for virtual participation of members would be responsible for facilitating such participation.

"Members of the unit wishing to cast a vote during annual officers' elections must be in person and there shall be no voting by proxy or absentee ballots."

Rationale: allowing for units to hold virtual meetings except for officer elections.

Madam Commander, I move for the acception (sic) of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: May I have a second to the amendment?

MS. CHARLENE PARKER: Charlene Parker, Unit 3, Texas, the great State of Texas, I second that.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay. Do I have any discussion?

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER EASLEY: Madam commander, madam chairman, just for clarification – I'm sorry, Chris Easley, national second junior vice-commander, just for clarification, members that are attending virtually or via remote, do they count towards quorum if they are an eligible voting member?

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Yes, they would.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER EASLEY: Okay.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: They would count. Yes.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER EASLEY: Okay.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Is there any other clarification or statements, questions?

MS. LAURIE PEKARIK: Laurie Pekarik, (Indistinguishable) Unit 39, Minnesota, I believe when – just for clarification, when this was read on the second line it was read as "so long as the unit membership" and it actually reads "as long as the active membership".

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: So what are you saying?

MS. PEKARIK: I'd like to have Judy re-read it and say "so long as the active membership of anyone".

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I'll lead her read it again.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: I'll read it again.

"All general membership meetings of the unit may allow for virtual participation of its members, to include voting, as long as the active membership –

(Response of "No.")

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Let's start this over. (Laughter) As we said in our Committee meeting for this, we decided that after we got through all of this they should buy us all a drink. (Laughter)

After I get through with this I'm going to buy myself a drink. No. (Laughter) Thank you. One more time. Thank you for keeping me straight up here.

"All general membership meetings of the unit may allow for virtual participation of its members, to include voting, so long as the active membership of anyone participating virtually is validated at the beginning of each meeting and documented in the unit minutes.

"Units that wish to allow for virtual participation of members would be responsible for facilitating such participation.

"Members of the unit wishing to cast a vote during annual officer elections must be in person and there shall be no voting by proxy or absentee ballots."

Rationale: (Laughter) you all want this, anyway – allow for units to hold virtual meetings except for officer elections.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, so is everybody okay? Is there any more discussion?

Okay, hearing none, all in favor of the change; any opposed. It is carried. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander returned to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Number 11. Page S-11, Article VI, State Committees and Chairmen, Section 1, Fourth Paragraph, replace paragraph as follows:

"The State Executive Committee shall have full administrative power between state conventions. Business of the State Department requiring consideration of the State Executive Committee between designated or called meetings shall be transacted through the office of the state adjutant by vote during virtual meetings and/or written ballots.

"A majority of votes and/or replies to the written ballot received by the designated date shall constitute the decision of said committee."

Rationale: allows for state executive committees to hold virtual meetings.

Madam Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Can I have a second?

MS. ANN WILNER: Ann Wilner, Unit 44, South Carolina, seconds it.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Is there any discussion? All in favor say aye; any opposed. So carries.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the Constitution and Bylaws chairman and past national commander advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: I probably should have led with this to start with but we'll bring it up at the end, National commander, national adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 99th National Auxiliary Convention – that's what it says on the form – the National Constitution and Bylaws Convention Committee met in the Plaza International Ballroom I at 9:00 a.m. on August 7th, 2022.

Our advisor was Paula Raymond. I, Judy Steinhouse, served as Committee chair and Susan Henry and Pat Kemper were our elected and appointed and otherwise coerced into being secretaries.

Will the members who were on this Committee please stand to be recognized.

(The members of the Committee were District 1, Kayla Valila; District 3, Jerilyn Maynard; District 4, Linda Applegate; District 5, Loretta Nosko; District 6, Amy Bowser; District 7, Delores Roussey;

District 8, Susan Henry; District 9, Ann Wilner; District 10, Regina Fortner; District 11, Denise Proffitt; District 12, Julie Hert; District 13, Patricia Kemper; District 14, Judy Steinhouse;

District 15, Kathy Weatherly; District 16, Ellen Nathan; District 17, Susan Miller; District 18, Sharon Linton; District 19, Karen Winn; District 20, Fannie Lowe; and District 21, Vera Hendrickson.)

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

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Thank you for all your hard work. It was a great committee and thank you, Madam Commander.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: You're welcome.

(Whereupon, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee chairman and past national commander withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: That wasn't too painful, was it? Okay, so at this time I'm going to bring our National Adjutant Bunny for her announcements.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: I'm glad that's over.

The Forget-Me-Not Luncheon will be at 12:30 in the Regency Ballroom T-4. Be sure to show your ticket at the door.

Districts will caucus immediately following this meeting to discuss the report of the Nominating Committee.

National officers and NECs will not have reserved seating at the Forget-me-Not Luncheon and are welcome to sit with their states. PNCs will have a reserved table near the front of the room. No one will be escorted in.

Remember that your registration badges will be needed to enter Fun Night tonight and the Intro of National Officers and Dinner tomorrow night. Those without a badge will have to go through a verification process before being admitted.

And all attendees must be registered in order to attend the events. If you have not done so already, please stop by the Regency Registration Counter Number 2 for table reservations for the Intro of the National Officers and Dinner.

You must be registered before table assignments can be made. Table assignments will be available to pick up immediately following the final business sessions on Tuesday, August the 9th, by the Regency Registration Counter Number 2.

If you did not pre-reserve your seat, you will need to stop at the seating desk near the dinner room entrance to obtain your table number before entering the room. And this does include juniors.

And then just something, if you have not purchased a Program and Procedure Manual, I would maybe stop in the store. That book has so much amazing knowledge in it. I think it would really help you all out if you don't have one. So I would really highly suggest stopping and buying one.

And then, I would like to give two birthday shout-outs to Willie Mae Looney and Sandy Rezner. (Applause) If there are any other birthdays, happy birthday. Sorry we missed it. That's it.

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, it's that time. Is there anybody that would like to bring any new business to the Convention?

MS. ROSE MCGINNIS: Yes, we would. I'm Rose McGinnis with the State Department of Florida Auxiliary and we would like to present a new charter, an application for a charter.

MS. KAREN MULLEN: Hello. My name is Karen Mullen, and I'm from Fort Charlotte, Florida. And I'm very proud and honored to present to you a new unit application for the Robert L. Cochran Number 82 in Port Charlotte, Florida. (Applause)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Congratulations. Thank you. Thank you so much. That's wonderful. We appreciate it.

And that's one thing we do all need to do is work on – we've had some units that kind of fall behind the wayside, but let's go back and start looking at our state and seeing what you can do maybe to try to get those started back up.

And you might have some that's struggling so it's your responsibility, you know, as leaders, to help these to try to recover. I know there is a lot trying to recover after COVID.

But, like I said, we don't want COVID to take our joy away. And our joy would be to grow. So, therefore, it's up to y'all to go back, look at what you can do to help us keep on growing, maybe try to get some new units started up.

It may have been by the wayside for a long time or maybe create some new ones that's never existed. So check out all your chapters and check out all your extended, you know, your units right now and work on getting them all strengthened back up because you know we're only as strong as our weakest link. We've heard that our entire life.

So keep that in mind and let's see if we can't build the strength of our organization back up. Okay? (Applause) So thank you so much.

So, at this time, hearing no more business to come before the Convention, we're going to please stand for our closing prayer. And afterwards we will have door prizes so I hope everybody has a ticket.

And we will get that in and out as soon as possible. Thank you. Aura-Lee.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and Chaplain Nicodemus advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the privilege to allow us to be here to conduct the work of our organization.

We give thanks for the privilege to discuss the issues and come to clear understanding before we make our decisions.

We pray for our troops in harm's way today and all of our members, wherever they may be. Bless and keep each and every one of them.

We give thanks for our officers for this year who have served so well and under such a difficult year with the COVID and traveling issues.

We give thanks for our past national commanders who have also served our organization and continue to serve on all of our committees and guide us as we move forward.

We ask your blessing as we go forward to our luncheon. Let us enjoy the friendships. Help us to gain clearer understanding of each other. And help us to be kind, one to another. In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," after which the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: The Convention stands adjourned at this time for recess and we will reconvene tomorrow morning at 9:00 o'clock.

And, also, we remind you again, we are going to have door prizes and afterwards we ask you to at least caucus somewhere in the building so get with your department and caucus or your NECs and caucus afterwards. Okay, for our new officers' line. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the meeting was recessed at 11:20 o'clock, a.m., on Monday, August 8, 2022.)

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**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
99TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
HYATT REGENCY ORLANDO HOTEL
ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

August 9, 2022

Final Business Session

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The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Plaza International Ballroom G on the Convention Level of the Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida, on Tuesday morning, August 9, 2022, and was called to order at 9:04 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser.

COMMANDER LYNN HELMS-PROSSER: Will the sergeant-at-arms, close the door, please. Can you all hear me back there? Can you hear me back in the back?

(Response of "Yes.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Perfect. Okay, at this time I'm calling this meeting to order, third business session.

Would you please make sure that all your cell phones are turned off or at least silenced? And also, please make sure at all times that the center aisle is totally empty and free of any of your personal stuff, personal items.

At this time I would like to bring Aura-Lee Nicodemus to the podium for our opening prayer. Everybody please stand.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the chaplain advanced to the podium.)

CHAPLAIN AURA-LEE NICODEMUS: Please join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the privilege to once again come together.

As we make the monumental decisions that will shape our future for the next 100 years to come, we ask your blessing upon this meeting and all of those who have volunteered to serve for the upcoming year.

We ask a special blessing today on Carolyn Sensat as she recovers at home, on Sherry Jones from Michigan, Christine Alexander, Leonard Steinman, Barbara Gentry, and also on the triplets. We ask that you will continue to bless them and help them to thrive.

We pray for those affected by the extreme temperatures and also by the floods and also for the drought. We ask a special blessing upon those who are farmers today for we know many are really suffering at this time.

We pray for our troops in harm's way. We pray for all of our members, wherever they may be.

And we ask that you will guide us, direct us, and help us to be kind, one to another.

In your name. Amen.

(Response of "Amen," whereupon, the chaplain withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: At this time will Melissa Pierce come forward for the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and the third junior vice-commander and Americanism chairman advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER AND AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN MELISSA PIERCE: Free your hands. Stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join me 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 and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Everybody can be seated, please. (One rap of the gavel.) I hope everybody got a good night sleep and is ready for a great day today, right?

(Response of "Yes.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank all of you for coming back, too. I appreciate seeing almost all the faces here that we've had through this week.

(Whereupon, someone called out they could not hear the commander.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You cannot hear me. Okay. Is this better?

(Response of "Yes.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay. So right now I would like to go over all of our total donations that were received. And I want to thank each and every one of you that took a part in making this happen.

For Winter Sports Clinic we received \$200. For the Caregivers fund we received \$4,491. (Applause) Very good. Okay, the Education fund brought in \$2,850. The Service fund brought in \$1,000; the General fund, \$750; Camp Corral, \$100, for a total of \$9,391. (Applause) Thank you. Thank you.

At this time will the Credential Chairman Maria Holloway please come forward to the podium for your final Credentials report?

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and Convention Credentials Committee chairman advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARIA HOLLOWAY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HOLLOWAY: National commander, national officers, delegates and guests.

The Credentials report is as follows: total units registered, 109; total departments registered, 35; national officers registered, 5; past national commanders registered, 7; total guests registered, 189; total delegates, 236; total alternates, 15; total registered, 452; total vote count, 861.

Commander, I move that we accept the Credential report.

(Whereupon, the Convention Credentials chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: We've got a motion on the floor to accept the credentials report. Can I have a second?

MS. KATHY DUNHAM: Kathy Dunham, Unit 22, the great State of Texas.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: All right, we have a motion; we have a second. Do we have any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the credentials report say aye; any opposed. Okay, so carried. Thank you and we appreciate it, Maria. Thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee chairman withdrew from the stage.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, the National Adjutant will now call the roll of the newly-elected NEC Committee members and alternates. As your name is called please come forward for the purpose of installation and line up across here. Okay? Thank you.

(Whereupon, commander withdrew from and Adjutant Clos advanced to the podium. The newly-elected National Executive Committee members and alternates advanced to the front of the room as the adjutant called their names.)

ADJUTANT BUNNY CLOS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

ADJUTANT CLOS: All right, we will start with the NECs so we will do NEC Number 2, Linda Trulio – Linda; District 4, Linda Applegate; District 6, Amy Bowser; District 8, Jeff Jungkans; District 10, Linda Walters;

District 12, Rose Williams; District 14, Meg Parsetich; District 16, Caroline Morris; District 18, Hope Mulnix; District 20, Sharon Thornton. (Applause)

So now we will do the alternates and then you all can start lining up over this way. We will have District 2, Amy Jo Rizzo – absent, okay; District 4, Kate Walker, absent;

District 6, Carol Simmons; District 8, Dorothy Robinson; District 10, Barb McComb; District 12, Pat Kemper – you coming up – Oh, I'm sorry. You're right. Sorry, Patty, District 12;

District 13, Pat Kemper; District 14, Jennie Onsager; District 16, Linda Duste; District 18, Lisa Thomas; District 20, Evelyn Cupit Archer. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Clos withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Will the sergeant-at-arms come forward to the right of the podium.

(Whereupon, the sergeant-at-arms advanced as requested.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You are requested to remain silent during the ceremony of installation.

The fact that you have been selected by the members of this Auxiliary for your respective offices shows that they have confidence in your ability and that they feel assured you will strictly and impartially discharge all the duties incumbent upon you.

They confide the welfare of the Auxiliary to your keeping. And they are expected at all times to respect your position. Let their confidence, therefore, be fully justified by your fidelity.

Let us all remember gratefully the heroism of our veterans whose names we proudly bear.

Realizing fully these responsibilities, are you willing to assume the obligation of your office?

(Response of "I am.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. Members, if you can, please stand; those that can't just stay seated. Would you all place your right hand over your heart, and pronounce your name as I pronounce mine and repeat after me the obligation of your respective office.

"I, Lynn Prosser, having been selected as an officer of this Auxiliary, do most solemnly pledge myself to faithfully and impartially perform in letter and spirit all duties of the office I am about to enter.

"I promise to obey the lawful orders of my superior officers and exact the obedience of others thereto to the best of my ability and means.

"When my successor has been fully selected and installed I promise to surrender all properties of the organization in my possession, all of which I now affirm."

You may lower your hands. Turn around. Members of this Auxiliary, I now present to you the officers of your choice. (Applause) I trust that you will aid them in the performance of their duties.

With your help their term of office will be highly successful. At this time I will let the sergeant-at-arms escort you back to your respective stations and seats. Thank you. Congratulations. (Applause) (Whereupon, the newly-elected NEC members returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Everyone please be seated at your seats, please, for the next part of our program this morning.

At this time, while they're going to their seats, I would like to ask the Nominating Committee chairman to please come forward to give the names of the report. Laurie Stopyra will you come forward?

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and Nominating Committee chairman advanced to the podium to give the report.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LAURIE STOPYRA: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STOPYRA: The Nominating Committee of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary held their first meeting on August 6th, 2022, at 2:30. We are pleased to submit the following slate for your consideration to serve as the 2022-2023 officers.

Commander, Darlene Spence; (Applause) senior vice-commander, Ann Marie Hurley; (Applause) first junior vice-commander, Chris Easley; (Applause) second junior vice-commander Melissa Pierce; (Applause) third junior vice-commander, Terry Grabowski; (Applause) and our fourth junior vice-commander is Kathleen Wenthe; (Applause) our judge advocate is Paula Raymond. (Applause)

My secretary on the Committee was Karla Schwartz. (Applause) My advisor was Diane Franz. (Applause) And I was the chairman. And would everybody please rise that was on our Committee, please.

(The members of the Nominating Committee were District 1, Janet Pratt; District 2, Linda Trulio; District 3, Karen Rediker; District 4, Kathleen Walker; District 5, Laurie Stopyra; District 6, Michele Goings;

District 7, Rose McGinnis; District 8, Marlene Comeaux; District 9, Jacqueline Gray; District 10, Barbara McComb; District 11, Joyce Hutchinson; District 12, Evelyn Couture; District 13, Karla Schwartz; District 14, Leeann Karg; District 15, Velma Steinman; District 16, Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh; District 17, Leslie Mestas; District 18, Holly Mulnix; District 19, Kathy Clampitt; District 20, Evelyn Cupit Archer; and District 21, Ronda Bauer.)

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

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STOPYRA: Thank you so much for being on our Committee. We had a nice time. And congratulations to all the incoming. Thank you. (Applause)

Now, we had a couple of recommendations. We have a couple recommendations.

A hand-held mic for the candidate would maybe be a good idea so that we could hear.

A list of current officers put in our packets.

And a suggestion to have a picture of the applicants with their application so that everyone can go back after they've already interviewed and they can go back and they will remember more if they have a picture to look at, too.

And that was it. Thank you so much. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Nominating Committee chairman withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you so much. When two or more candidates are nominated for any one office roll call 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 of the other Convention committees.

I ask now that all officers please leave the podium and go to your respective Districts for the purpose of nomination and elections. NECs, will you please join your Districts, as well.

(Whereupon, the officers and NECs withdrew to their respective districts.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: At this time while you all are going to your respective seats I would like to nominate three tellers. And would you come forward.

So would you please go over here to the table with the gold cloth on it: Sandy Dobmeier; Ann Glende; and Carolyn Harris? Will you all come forward here to this table?

(Whereupon, the tellers advanced to the table, as requested.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Has everybody found their districts and sitting with their districts? This is very important for the nominations and elections so please make sure that you're with your NEC.

Will all the NECs please stand so if anybody is trying to find you they will know where you are?

(Whereupon, the NECs stood, as requested.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, so here is your NEC standing up so if you're not with them please move with them, with your group.

Will everybody please do it as quiet as possible? Okay?

(Whereupon, someone commented they couldn't hear the commander when everybody is talking.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Well, I know. That's why I just calmed them down. Thank you, Shirley. Okay, so I ask you to be totally quiet unless we have to go to discussion during the nominations and elections. And I appreciate that.

So, please, again, make sure if you've turned your phones on for any reason that you make sure they're off. Okay?

Please sit down as fast as possible so we can get started. Thank you. I need everyone sitting down, please. Thank you.

You have heard the report of the committee on nominations. Darlene Spence has been nominated by the Committee to the office of national commander. Do I have a second speech for Darlene?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN MILLER: Susan Miller, Unit Number 6, Colorado, I second it.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, apparently, there is no speech so thank you. Okay, we have a second on the floor.

Are there any other nominations for the position of national commander? Are there any other nominations for national commander? Hearing none, I declare the nomination closed for the office of national commander.

All those in favor of Darlene for the office of national commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes definitely have it. (Applause) Darlene Spence has been elected to the office of national commander. Congratulations, Darlene. (Applause)

Ann Marie Hurley has been nominated by the Committee to the office of national senior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the national senior vice-commander.

MS. JANET PRATT: Commander, I would like to second that, Janet Pratt, Massachusetts, Unit 29.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Janet. All those in favor of Ann Marie Hurley for the office of national senior vice-commander signify by saying aye; any opposed. The ayes have it and Ann Marie Hurley has been elected as your senior vice-commander. (Applause) Congratulations, Ann Marie.

Chris Easley has been nominated by the Committee to the office of national first junior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national first junior vice-commander.

All of those in favor of Chris Easley for the office of national first junior vice-commander signify by saying aye; those opposed.

(Whereupon, there was commotion among the delegates.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: All of those in favor of Chris Easley for the office of national first junior vice-commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it and Chris Easley has been elected to the office of national first junior vice-commander. (Applause) Thank you, Chris. Congratulations.

Melissa Spence (sic) has been nominated by the Committee to the office of national second junior vice-commander. Do we have a second? I'm confused now if we even need to do it.

(Response of "Pierce.")

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I've got Darlene on the brain. Okay, I'm sorry, Melissa. I know her name is Spence, (sic) I apologize for that. Are there any other nominations? 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 Melissa Pierce for the office of national second junior vice-commander –

MS. DUNHAM: I'll second it, Kathy Dunham, Unit –

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: – Melissa Spence – there I go again, I've got to do this right – Pierce, all in favor say aye; any opposed. Congratulations. The ayes have it and Melissa Pierce has been elected to the office of national second junior vice-commander. (Applause) Thank you.

Terry Grabowski has been nominated by the Committee to the office of national third junior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? 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 Terry Grabowski for the office of national third junior vice-commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. The ayes have it and Terry Grabowski, congratulations. You've been elected to the office of national third junior vice-commander. (Applause)

Kathleen Wenthe has been nominated by the Committee to the office of national fourth junior vice-commander. (Applause) Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national fourth junior vice-commander.

All those in favor of Kathleen Wenthe for the office of national fourth junior vice-commander signify by saying aye; those opposed. Congratulations, Kathleen Wenthe, you have been elected to the office of national fourth junior vice-commander. (Applause)

Paula Raymond has been nominated by the Committee for the office of national judge advocate. Are there any other nominations? 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; any opposed. The ayes have it and Paula Raymond has been elected to the office of national judge advocate. (Applause) Congratulations.

So at this time I will read the officers: National Commander Darlene Spence; (Applause) Senior Vice-Commander Ann Marie Hurley; (Applause) First Junior Vice-Commander Chris Easley; (Applause) Second Junior Vice-Commander Melissa Pierce; (Applause)

Third Junior Vice-Commander Terry Grabowski; (Applause) Fourth Junior Vice-Commander Kathleen Wenthe; (Applause) and National Judge Advocate Paula Raymond. (Applause) At this time I would like to dismiss the tellers. Thank you for serving.

(Whereupon, the tellers returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Will the current national officers please return to your seats at the head table.

(Whereupon, the national officers returned to their stations.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: The elections having been completed, I now ask for the national sergeant-at-arms to come forward for the purpose of acknowledging those members who have served as Convention pages.

Linda, you can come forward, please, up front. Will all the Convention pages please come forward toward the podium, up front?

(Whereupon, the national sergeant-at-arms and pages advanced, as requested.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You all can turn around and face the audience, okay? Linda, would you like to step to the mic and thank your pages?

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LINDA JIMMERSON: I appreciate everyone that has been a page this week. You followed the instructions beautifully. We've got two that are missing: Atticus and Joshua. They're next door presenting a check at the DAV so hopefully we will get them back in a few minutes.

But everybody has been good and has done everything I've asked so a hand. (Applause)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Linda. And, Linda, I want to thank you, too, but that comes – okay, you can go back to your seats, please and thank you so much for serving during this Convention. You've been a great help and we appreciate it. Yes, they can be dismissed.

(Whereupon, the sergeant-at-arms and pages withdrew.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Okay, at this time I would also like to acknowledge the national color bearers and the state color bearers. They were national: Karen Bolton and Kim Kraushar. Would you please stand, Karen and Kim?

(Whereupon, they stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: They are sisters. Thank you so much. And then for the state it was Gloria Bouters and Melody Hamilton. Would you please stand?

(Whereupon, they stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. And, also, I would like to come back and thank National Sergeant-at-Arms Linda Jimmeron for doing a commendable job and all the pages are now dismissed, as earlier. Thank you so much for everything that you've done. Thank you, Linda. Great job. (Applause)

I have to put in there that Linda has been with me all the way up the chairs. And she's been my personal page and I appreciate that, Linda. She's not only my personal page, she's my sister by choice. (Applause)

At this time I would like to call John and Kim Olinger up to the front, please, John and Kim Olinger.

(Whereupon, John and Kim advanced to the front.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: John and Kim are the parents of Onissa Rader. Most you know that Onissa unexpectedly had a baby come early at our convention last year. And she is doing really, really good.

But they are here to represent Onissa for the juniors and the fundraiser and, I mean, not fundraiser, excuse me, the incentives for getting new juniors.

So, Kim, would you like to speak or John, whichever one wants to speak. Okay, so they're going to announce the winners.

MS. KIM OLINGER: Okay, so our winners were, first place, receiving \$1,200, New Mexico Unit Number 29. They received 20 new paid junior members. (Applause)

Second place, \$1,000, Vermont Unit Number 3, 11 payments for new paid junior members. (Applause)

And third place, \$800, to Oklahoma Unit Number 88 with 10 paid junior members. (Applause)

MR. JOHN OLINGER: Just a quick note here, as you know, our juniors are our future. So if this will help to promote bringing more juniors to the organization, our unit has already voted to continue this another year with this amount of money. And we will bring the check at Fall Conference. (Applause)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you for bringing that report to us from Onissa. We appreciate it.

MR. OLINGER: Her fever broke.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Yes, Everly has been running a fever for about the past four or five days. Just in case you all don't know, Everly is our little baby. I guess she was our youngest junior that was born at convention last year.

MR. OLINGER: Yes.

(Whereupon, Mr. and Mrs. Olinger withdrew.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, John and Kim. And while they're going back to their seats, is Erin in here? Erin, where are you at? Erin O'Brien, would you stand up?

(Whereupon, Mrs. O'Brien stood to be recognized.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: I want to thank Erin. Erin stepped in to help take care of the juniors during the Convention and I just want to acknowledge you and say thank you for stepping in at the last minute and helping with that. You did a great job. (Applause)

Okay, at this time I would like for our juniors to come forward, any junior members in here right now? Will you come forward so we can acknowledge you? Some of them? Some of our juniors?

(Whereupon, the juniors present came forward and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Linda, do you remember how many juniors we've had, a total number? I know they're not in here right now but do you know the total number of juniors that we've had that assisted us during this Convention? Linda, did you hear me, honey?

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS JIMMERSON: I don't know.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: You don't know how many? Okay, we don't know how many but we know that they did a good job so thank you all for coming forward. Do you want to turn around? Turn around and go back to your seats. Thank you so much. We appreciate it. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the juniors returned to their seats.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you.

NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS JIMMERSON: Five.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: A total of five? Okay. And that was great and they did a good job. And we appreciate our juniors coming to National Convention. They help us.

At this time I would like to ask Bunny to come forward as national adjutant as she gives her announcements. You might want to get your pencils and papers ready just in case you want to jot something down. Okay? Thank you.

(Whereupon, the commander withdrew from and adjutant advanced to the podium.)

ADJUTANT CLOS: This one is actually pretty easy so I just wanted to remind everybody that after we get back next week we will be opening the external portal up to all members. So that's exciting. And I'm sure if you all have any questions feel free to contact our office.

I would like to thank a few people, for starters, Chris Easley for doing the Facebook livestream for everyone to see who cannot be here, and then also for running our closed captioning to assist anyone who may need it. I know we had a couple little bloopers in there but that's okay; it made it a little fun that way. (Applause)

Linda Jimmerson, thank you so much for doing a great job and always offering to help us out in the office.

Anyone who helped us in the office, we truly appreciate all your help.

I want to thank all the line officers, the members, the states, and the units for being patient with us as we've been working through some transitions so I really appreciate everyone's patience.

I would like to say thank you to Alex Sweasy for accepting the position to come work with us. And she's doing a great job. We appreciate you. (Applause)

Ann Glende, she always keeps me in my place, for her unwavering support and she keeps me in check. So any time I might doubt myself, I'm like, "Hey, Ann" so she is awesome. I love her and thank you for being there for me. (Applause)

And, of course, Pat Kemper, thank you for being there for me, keeping me and Ann in check, and anyone else who needs her. She is always there for me, for Ann, Alex, even, the line officers and all of you. So thank you for being there for us. (Applause) She's give me a heart. She's not going to smack me today. (Laughter)

And then, National Commander, you did a great job. You handled your term like a true professional. And we thank you very much.

And to all the line officers, thank you for being patient with me. And I just – we appreciate everybody. So that's it for now. I will talk to you guys in a little bit after the meeting. That's it. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the adjutant withdrew from and the commander returned to the podium.)

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you, Bunny. And I would also, at this time, like to thank the staff for doing such a great job. I think the Convention went really smooth. Haven't heard any complaints. And everybody said they've had a great time; laughed a lot, which is good; made a lot of friends.

And I, at this time I want to thank all of you for supporting me. I've had a great, great, great journey coming to this point in my life, made a lot of friends. I still want to make a lot of friends. We've got new people coming and I would like to meet each one of them, too.

But, I've been blessed by all of you. And I thank you for what you've done for this organization and what you continue to do. And I would just like to say that I will give Darlene my full support, along with the line officers. And if I can be of assistance, I will be here for them, too.

And so I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to still be around; I just won't be in this position. But it has been a blessing to me that I earned or you all thought that I earned this honor to serve you as your national commander. So thank you for that. (Applause)

Is there any other further business to come before this Convention? Okay.

MS. SHARON THORNTON: Hi, my name is Sharon Thornton. I'm from the great State of Texas. I would like to thank everybody for the kindness, the prayers, the love and support after the traumatic event with my daughter the other day.

As you said, Miss Lynn, we are family and everybody showed that. Thank you very much.

COMMANDER HELMS-PROSSER: Thank you. (Applause) Thank you. And we're still having her in our prayers, too. Is there any other business?

Hearing none, I declare the 99th 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 9:48 o'clock, a.m., on Tuesday, August 9, 2022.)

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Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2021, and
Independent Auditor's Report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the National Finance Committee of

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters:

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters (the "Auxiliary"), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2021, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cashflows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Auxiliary as of December 31, 2021, 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.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Auxiliary and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for 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.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Auxiliary's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date that the financial statements are issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Auxiliary's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Deloitte + Touche LLP

April 7, 2022

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021**

ASSETS				LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS
CASH	\$	112,324		LIABILITIES:
LOANS RECEIVABLE (less reserve of \$11,472)		7,304		Accounts payable and other liabilities
INVENTORY		714		Payable to Life Membership Fund
INVESTMENTS		13,169,699		Contributions distributable to state departments
ACCRUED INTEREST RECEIVABLE		20,552		Life Membership-reserve for future distribution of life membership dues
PREPAID EXPENSES		3,800		<u>Total liabilities</u>
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ASSETS:				NET ASSETS:
Investments		4,838,168		Without donor restrictions
Accrued interest receivable		9,260		With donor restrictions:
Receivable from general fund		<u>1,774,151</u>		Service program
				Disaster relief program
				Education loan/scholarship program
				<u>Total net assets</u>
TOTAL		<u>\$19,935,972</u>		TOTAL
				<u>\$19,935,972</u>

See notes to the financial statements.

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions			Total
		Service Program	Disaster Relief/Other Programs	Education Loan/Scholarship Program	
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:					
Membership fees and mandates	\$ -	\$ 449	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 449
Life membership distributions	377,864				377,864
Contributions	145,992	10,800	37,533	15,729	210,054
Contributed facilities	20,659				20,659
National convention/conference	45,556				45,556
Net investment return	1,462,959				1,462,959
Net assets released from restrictions	71,920		(32,000)	(39,920)	
Other	100				100
Total support and revenue	2,125,050	11,249	5,533	(24,191)	2,117,641
EXPENSES:					
Program services	586,179			40	586,219
Fundraising costs	45,650				45,650
General and administrative	237,120				237,120
Total expenses	868,949			40	868,989
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	1,256,101	11,249	5,533	(24,231)	1,248,652
NET ASSETS—Beginning of year	8,139,190	399,450	55,036	1,077,886	9,671,562
NET ASSETS—End of year	<u>\$ 9,395,291</u>	<u>\$ 410,699</u>	<u>\$ 60,569</u>	<u>\$ 1,053,655</u>	<u>\$ 10,920,214</u>

See notes to the financial statements.

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

	Program Services	Fund Raising Costs	General and Administrative	Total Expenses
Salaries and wages	\$179,274	\$19,974	\$103,837	\$303,085
Employee benefits	69,185	6,376	30,733	106,294
Distributions to state departments	75,687			75,687
Professional fees	200		70,580	70,780
Scholarship program benefits	39,920			39,920
Printing, stationery, and office supplies	6,827	726	13,861	21,414
Conferences and meetings	55,373			55,373
Fundraising expenses	11,178	15,491		26,669
Payroll taxes	13,851	1,468	7,901	23,220
Expenses of national convention	74,225			74,225
Contributed facilities	12,220	1,361	7,078	20,659
Disaster program benefits	32,000			32,000
Expenses of national commander and officers	9,518			9,518
Postage	1,916		1,233	3,149
Travel	4,076			4,076
Other	769	254	1,897	2,920
Total	<u>\$586,219</u>	<u>\$45,650</u>	<u>\$237,120</u>	<u>\$868,989</u>

See notes to the financial statements.

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	\$ 1,248,652
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:	
Net change in appreciation of investments	(645,069)
Net gain on sale of investments	(354,889)
Depreciation	791
Changes in assets and liabilities:	
Accrued interest receivable	(8,714)
Inventory	4,981
Accounts receivable	8,035
Prepaid expenses	3,261
Accounts payable and other liabilities	3,892
Contributions distributable to state departments	(15,372)
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	<u>(109,563)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>136,005</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Purchases of investments	(7,883,967)
Proceeds from sale of investments	7,300,088
Collections from repayment of education loans	<u>6,135</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(577,744)</u>
NET DECREASE IN CASH	(441,739)
CASH:	
Beginning of year	<u>554,063</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 112,324</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, 2021

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 June 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (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, 2023. A modified retrospective approach is to be used for certain parts of this standard, while other parts are to be applied using a prospective approach. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2016-13 on the financial statements.

In September 2020, the FASB issued ASU No. 2020-07, *Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation and Disclosures by Not-for-Profit Entities for Contributed Nonfinancial Assets*. The amendments require not-for-profit entities to present contributed nonfinancial assets as a separate line item in the statement of activities, apart from contributions of cash and other financial contributions. The standard also requires additional disclosure related to contributed nonfinancial assets. The amendment, which requires retrospective application, is effective for annual periods beginning after June 15, 2021. Management has not yet evaluated the impact of ASU No. 2020-07 on the financial statements.

Cash—DAVA maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. DAVA has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Education Loan Receivable—Students who receive education loans are required to begin repayment six months after completion of their educational programs. DAVA maintains a reserve for uncollectible loans.

Investments—Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of DAVA’s investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities or quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments. DAVA’s policy is to report cash equivalents, which includes money market funds, within its trust accounts as investments.

Contributions—Contributions received are recorded at their fair value and are classified as without donor restrictions or with donor restrictions for purpose. All contributions are considered without donor restrictions, unless specifically restricted by the donor. Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions.

Accounts Receivable—Amounts recorded as accounts receivable are reduced to their net realizable value, as appropriate.

Allocation of Expenses—The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to one or more program or supporting services of the DAVA. Those expenses include salaries and wages, employee benefits, professional fees, printing, stationery, and office supplies, fundraising expenses, payroll taxes, contributed facilities, postage and other. These expenses are allocated between program, fundraising, and administrative based on the percentage of time spent by DAVA staff members on tasks related to each function.

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.

Risks and Uncertainties—In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic. As a result, economic uncertainties have arisen which are likely to negatively impact DAVA’s financial position, cash flows, or results of operations. Other financial impact could occur though such potential impact is unknown at this time.

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 recognized as revenue in the statement of activities. 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 2021 in the reserve for future distribution of life membership dues are as follows:

Balance—January 1, 2021	<u>\$ 6,731,142</u>
Additions:	
Membership dues received	203,449
Net investment return	<u>134,996</u>
Total additions	<u>338,445</u>
Deductions:	
Dues to National Headquarters	377,863
Dues to local units	20,993
Dues to state departments	39,180
Other expenses	<u>9,972</u>
Total deductions	<u>448,008</u>
Balance—December 31, 2021	<u>\$ 6,621,579</u>

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Accounting Standards Codification 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, provides a framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value, as follows: Level 1, which refers to securities valued using unadjusted quoted prices from active markets for identical assets; Level 2, which refers to securities not traded on an active market but for which observable market inputs are readily available; and Level 3, which refers to securities valued based on significant unobservable inputs. Assets are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The DAVA did not hold any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3) during 2021.

The DAVA’s policy is to recognize transfers between levels at the actual date of the event. There were no transfers between Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 during 2021.

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, 2021.

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 and exchange-traded funds (ETFs), categorized as Level 1, are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual security is traded.

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, 2021, 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	\$ 185,672	\$ -	\$ 185,672
Common stocks	1,917,850	-	1,917,850
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	4,004,184		4,004,184
International fixed income funds	252,287		252,287
Domestic equity funds	5,587,769		5,587,769
International equity funds	1,221,937		1,221,937
Total mutual funds/ETFs	11,066,177	-	11,066,177
Total	\$ 13,169,699	\$ -	\$ 13,169,699
Life membership:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 54,562	\$ -	\$ 54,562
Mutual funds/ETFs:			
Domestic fixed income funds	3,773,698		3,773,698
International fixed-income funds	243,189		243,189
Domestic equity funds	623,412		623,412
International equity funds	143,307		143,307
Total mutual funds/ETFs	4,783,606	-	4,783,606
Total	\$ 4,838,168	\$ -	\$ 4,838,168

5. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes or by occurrence of the passage of time or other events specified by donors. The net assets released from restrictions are as follows:

	2021
Subject to expenditure for specified purpose:	
Disaster relief program	\$ 32,000
Education loan/scholarship program	<u>39,920</u>
	<u>\$ 71,920</u>

Service Program—Donations from individuals and amounts received from each unit as a mandate for the service program are recorded as net assets with donor restrictions, which are used for persons eligible for DAVA who are in need of temporary financial assistance in accordance with the bylaws of

DAVA. The total amount of assistance is limited to \$1,000 per individual and in the aggregate is limited to total net assets with purpose restrictions. Benefits are paid directly to the service provider and not to the individual.

Disaster Relief/Other Programs—Donations from units and individuals for disaster relief are recorded as net assets with donor restrictions, which are used for members of DAV and DAVA who are in need of temporary financial assistance due to natural disaster, such as flood or earthquake. Donations from this fund are made to DAV and benefits are paid by DAV directly to the individual. Additionally, included in the net assets with donor restrictions are donations from units and individuals that are to be used for the DAVA Caregiver Initiative, as well as Camp Corral and Winter Sports Clinic.

Education Program—Donations from individuals and amounts received from each unit as a mandate for scholarships are recorded as net assets with donor restrictions from which scholarships are awarded to students in accordance with the bylaws of DAVA. Scholarships are paid directly to the educational institution and not to the student. In 2021, there were 26 scholarships in amounts ranging from \$500 to \$2,500 issued to selected DAVA member applicants for a total of \$39,920. The existing education loans are still required to be repaid in accordance with the terms of the original loan agreements, which includes full repayment within seven years of graduation or withdrawal from school. At December 31, 2021, the total amount of loans outstanding was \$7,304, net of reserve.

6. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The DAVA's working capital and cash flows are attributable to the contributions received from general donations throughout the year.

The following reflects DAVA's financial assets at December 31, 2021, reduced by the amount not available for general use within one year of the statement of financial position date due to donor restrictions.

Total assets, excluding nonfinancial assets (inventory and prepaid expenses)	\$ 19,931,458
Subtract: Life Membership Fund	(6,621,579)
Subtract: With donor restrictions for specific purposes	<u>(1,524,923)</u>

Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	<u>\$ 11,784,956</u>
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The DAVA has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its general expenditures, liabilities, and other obligations come due. In addition, as part of its liquidity management, the DAVA invests cash in excess of daily requirements in various long-term investments. The DAVA's long-term investments, such as common stocks, index funds, Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), and actively managed mutual funds, are invested with the intent on providing a safe return on investments for the general fund use.

7. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Certain employees of DAVA are covered by the Disabled American Veterans Retirement Plan, a defined benefit pension plan. The benefits are based on years of service and the employee's compensation. Contributions are intended to provide not only for benefits attributed to service to-date, but also for those expected in the future. In 2021, DAV charged DAVA \$106,294 for its share of the retirement plan costs, 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 2021, DAV did not charge DAVA for these benefits as such amounts are immaterial.

8. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

DAV provides services to the DAVA, which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of DAVA.

DAV 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 \$20,659 in 2021 and is included as revenue and expense in the accompanying statement of activities.

Certain costs are paid by DAV National Headquarters on behalf of DAVA. Such costs are reimbursed by DAVA. As of December 31, 2021, DAVA owed approximately \$85,304 for such costs, the net of such costs less contributions of \$31,378, which is included in accounts payable and other liabilities 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, 2021, there was no amount due to DAVA for dues collected.

9. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No events have occurred after December 31, 2021, but before April 7, 2022, 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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