

**NINETY-SIXTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
Charlotte, North Carolina
August 26, 27, 28, 2014**

Resolution No. 154: Department of Veterans Affairs Enhanced-Use Leasing

Origin: Maryland

Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

WHEREAS, Formerly under the provisions of Title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.), Chapter 81, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is authorized to lease real property under the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) jurisdiction or control to a private or other public entities for a term of up to 75-years; and

WHEREAS, The Enhanced-Use Leasing (EUL) activity must either: “(i) contribute to the mission of VA; be consistent with, and not adversely affect VA’s mission; enhance the use(s) of the property to be leased; and be in exchange for fair consideration to VA as determined by the Secretary; or (ii) result in a demonstrable improvement in services to eligible veterans in the geographic service-delivery area in which the property is located”; and

WHEREAS, “As part the fair consideration to be provided in exchange for the EUL, the Secretary is authorized to accept “in-kind” consideration such as facilities, office, storage, or other usable space, services, money, and/or other “in-kind” consideration”; and

WHEREAS, The Building Utilization Review and Repurposing Initiative, which cannot be enacted without the EUL program, was started by the VA in order to meet the needs of homelessness, but does not address other needs of the veterans community; and

WHEREAS, There are other needs that the veterans have to include but not limited to: adaptive sports, women veteran health care, mental health, and rural health care; and

WHEREAS, VA has repeatedly negotiated agreements involving use of VA assets with business and organizations without contact or discussion with, or seeking input and involvement from, veterans' service organizations and stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, Third party organizations that engaged in EULs with the VA were not held to the reporting requirements as the VA, which will aide in communications with the Chief Business Office; and

WHEREAS, Congress did not reauthorize the Department of Veteran Affairs Enhanced-Use Leasing in November 2011; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Charlotte, North Carolina, August 26, 27, 28, 2014, That the American Legion petition Congress to reauthorize the use of Enhanced-Use Leasing (EUL) for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress restricts the EUL capabilities to a priority list of services that will meet the needs of the veteran community; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the VA require outside organizations to follow the same reporting procedures as the government in order to ensure effective communication with the Chief Business Office; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports a publicly transparent Enhanced Use Lease process in consultation with veteran service organizations and stakeholders; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion oppose any EUL that does not specifically provide any obvious and permanent benefits, resources or services to the veterans’ community.