Report Of The National Convention Committee On Veterans Affairs And Rehabilitation
Dave Rehbein (Ia), Chairman

The report of the Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation to the 87th National Convention of the American Legion was delivered by Mr. David Rehbein, Chairman, on August 24, 2005, in Honolulu, Hawaii. The recommendations of the Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, in the following condensed version, were accepted as follows.

PETER S. GAYTAN, Director

Eighty-seven members of your Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation met at 9:00 a.m. on August 21, 2005, in the Hibiscus I Room of the Ala Moana Hotel, Honolulu, Hawaii and agreed on the following report, which is respectfully submitted for your consideration.

The Committee was called to order by Cathleen Wiblemo (SD), Liaison Representative appointed by the National Adjutant to act as temporary chairman. Mark Regan (MD), Assistant Director for Program Management, VA&R Commission, acted as temporary secretary and called the roll. A quorum
being present, nominations were received for permanent chairman. Dave Rehbein (IA), Chairman of the Standing National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission, was unanimously elected Chairman of the Convention Committee.

With unanimous consent, the Chairman appointed R. Michael Suter (NY), as Committee Secretary; Tracy Davis (MO), Chairman of the Claims and Rating Subcommittee and James Deremo (ND), Secretary; K. Robert Lewis (CT), Chairman of the Hospital and Medical Services Subcommittee and Chris Harding (OK), Secretary.

Subcommittee liaison assignments were as follows: Mark Regan (MD), Assistant Director, to Claims and Rating and Cathleen Wiblemo (SD), Deputy Director to Hospital and Medical Services.

As has been the custom for the 61 previous National Conventions, a Special Department Service Officers Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Resolutions, in a preconvention meeting, screened and grouped the resolutions. A report of their action, with recommendations, was presented to the Convention Committee for consideration.

The Screening Committee conserved the time of the Convention Committee substantially. It was chaired by Dave Rehbein, Chairman of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission and was composed of the following Department Service Officers:

- REGION 1 – Arthur L. Smith (MA)
- REGION 2 – John A. Katz (PA)
- REGION 6 – Richard D. Anderson (IA), Secretary
- REGION 7 – Marvin R. Siegfried (HI)
- REGION 8 – Kathy D. Nylen (WA)

The Convention Committee recommended that such a Committee be appointed for this purpose to serve the Eighty-eighth National Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation.

The 36 Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation resolutions presented for the consideration of this Convention were referred by the Resolutions Assignment Committee. The following action on the resolutions was taken by the Convention Committee:
A motion was made and seconded to authorize the Chairman and Secretary to sign and deliver the report on the Convention Committee’s behalf.

A report of action taken on the 12 resolutions referred to the Standing National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission will be made to the National Executive Committee and to the Adjutant of the Department concerned.

APPROVED RESOLUTIONS OR APPROVED WITH AMENDMENT

NO. 92 – (Philippines) SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO GRANT FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS EQUAL VA BENEFITS

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Honolulu, Hawaii, August 23, 24, 25, 2005, That The American Legion support legislation that will grant equal benefits to Filipino World War II veterans.

NO. 104 – (Texas) EXTENSION OF THE TIME LIMIT TO APPEAL A BOARD OF VETERANS’ APPEALS DECISION TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

Approved as Amended

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Honolulu, Hawaii, August 23, 24, 25, 2005, That The American Legion shall support legislation to extend the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) Notice of Appeal filing period to one year following a Board of Veterans’ Appeals (BVA) final denial of an appeal.

NO. 149 (Illinois) INCREASE THE MAXIMUM COVERAGE A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERAN CAN PURCHASE UNDER THE SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE PROGRAM

Approved as Amended

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Honolulu, Hawaii, August 23, 24, 25, 2005, That The American Legion shall sponsor and support
legislation to increase to at least $50,000 the maximum coverage a service-connected disabled veteran can purchase under the basic Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance program.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE BEING REFERRED TO THE STANDING COMMISSION FOR STAFF STUDY OR APPROPRIATE ADMINISTRATIVE DISPOSITION

RECEIVED AND RECORDED RESOLUTIONS

21 CO Support Full Federal Funding of All VA Programs

25 CO Support Legislation to Require VA to Provide Contract Health Care to Rural Veterans

29 OH Fund the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System by Passing H.R. 515

32 OH Support Increase of State Veterans Homes Per Diem to Fifty Percent of Cost of Care and Full Funding of the State Veterans Homes Construction Grants Program for Fiscal Year 2006

37 VT Improve the Disability and Death Pension Program

39 VT All Veterans Receive “Wartime” Benefits for Active Military Service Between February 28, 1961, and August 5, 1964

58 MA Increase and Restore VA Burial and Plot Allowance

59 MA Continue to Expand the Persian Gulf Registry

68 MA Support Increase of State Veterans Homes Per Diem and Full Funding of the State Veterans Homes Construction Grants Program for Fiscal Year 2006

69 MO Adequate Funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs

97 WV Support Increased Per Diem Payments to the State Veterans Home Program

98 WV Support the State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program

99 WV Allow VA Reimbursement of Nursing Home Care Costs for 70% Service-Connected Veterans or Higher
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WV</td>
<td>Support the Receipt of Prescription Drugs in State Homes by Certain VA-Eligible Veterans</td>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Support Appropriate Funding to Continue the Development of VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics</td>
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<td>SD</td>
<td>Prevail on Congress to Appropriate Mandatory Funding for VA Health Care</td>
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<td>NY</td>
<td>Fully Fund the State Veterans Home Construction Grant Priority One Projects Fiscal Year 2006</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Designate an Appropriate Portion of the Former Concord Naval Weapons Station in Northern California as a National Veterans Cemetery</td>
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<td>IL</td>
<td>Oppose VA Enrollment Fees and Increased Prescription Co-Payments to Any Priority Group</td>
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<td>AZ</td>
<td>Support Financial Sharing Between Indian Health Services and the Department of Veterans Affairs</td>
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<td>NJ</td>
<td>Support Legislation to Authorize VA to Reimburse State, County and Municipal Veterans Cemeteries For Costs Related to the Interment of Spouses And Dependent Children of Veterans</td>
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<td>WY</td>
<td>Consolidation of Processing Sites for Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD)</td>
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<td>CO</td>
<td>Support Efforts to Establish a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic in Colorado at the Kremmling Memorial Hospital</td>
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<td>PR</td>
<td>Support the Construction of a New Replacement Veterans Medical Center in Puerto Rico</td>
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<td>TX</td>
<td>Effective Date for the Award of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Benefits</td>
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<tr>
<td>MN</td>
<td>VA Clarify the Eligibility of Certain National Guard and U.S. Army Select Reserve to Receive a Burial Flag</td>
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<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Provide Reservist or National Guard Members</td>
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Continuous Active Duty Status for Entitlement To Veterans Benefits

130  NY  Mandatory Deadlines for Adjudication of Appeals by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals

147  IL  Enhanced Use Lease of the Doctor’s Hospital in Springfield, IL

148  IL  Require the Department of Veterans Affairs to Employ Full-Time Veteran Benefits Counselors at Certain VA Medical Centers

162  MX  Rescind Weight Restrictions on Certain Packages sent to Disabled Veterans Through APO and FPO Mail Systems

REJECTED RESOLUTIONS

93  PI  Support Approval of Senate Bill 79 to Validate Claims for Military Service by Certain Filipino Veterans

159  MX  Urge VA to Expand the Availability of Pamphlets and Forms in Spanish

Respectfully submitted:

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Dave Rehbein (IA)
Chairman

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R. Michael Suter (NY)
Secretary