Bills addressed by American Legion Veterans Benefits Policy Analyst Joshua Hastings in a July 12 hearing before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. Legislation supported by the Legion in the hearing included measures to expedite and improve accuracy of temporary VA disability rating processing; require training of VA employees on the reporting of internal wrongdoing (whistleblowing); establishment of a VA Acquisition Review Board; and restoration of the VA Accountability Act.

“Fitness and wellness go hand-in-hand with the Be the One campaign. Be the One to listen. Be the One to reach out. Be the One to stop one veteran from committing suicide. Having the wellness side has been proven to be the key factor in an individual’s mindset. So having this event just made sense.”

- Vienna, Va., Post 180 First Vice Commander Dave Wallace, following a July 1 5K walk/run that promoted the national American Legion Be the One initiative; the National Executive Committee passed a resolution in May urging local posts to have a Be the One event on the first day of each month.
Number of U.S. Flag Code inquiries fielded in July by The American Legion’s national Americanism Division.

Number of veterans service organizations, including The American Legion, who united to send a letter July 18 urging Congress to pass the Afghan Adjustment Act that would provide special immigrant status to at-risk Afghan allies of the United States in the Global War on Terrorism.

Increase in Tango Alpha Lima audio downloads, year over year, in July, when there were 6,720 downloads of the national American Legion podcast, compared to 5,282 in July 2022.
$5,000

27
American Legion national youth scholarships awarded in July, amounting to $79,493.

$34,965
American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grants disbursed in July to five different youth-serving non-profit organizations.

VOICES
“The current programs in many installations are very impressive. They assist veterans with employment. You have various pathways . . . The issue is, for Black veterans, is if they’re going to improve the economic outcomes, they have to take advantage of the resources that are already there. In order to be able to do that and learn of the resources and the various programs the federal agencies have and the private sector has, they have to be allowed to take full advantage of those programs. That’s currently not happening. A lot of it is due to commanders’ input. They’re not allowing these individuals to get to these programs and take advantage of what’s out there in a timely fashion.”

- American Legion Veterans Employment & Education Division Director Joseph Sharpe, in a July 25 Department of Labor panel discussion to commemorate the 75th anniversary of desegregation in the U.S. military

$20,600
Amount in American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grants disbursed in July, purchasing for recovering military personnel and qualified veterans home exercise equipment, a mattress, desk chair and stand-up desk.
Informal Hearing Presentations prepared in July by American Legion national claims specialists, free of charge, on behalf of veterans appealing their VA benefits decisions.

Appeals granted in favor of the veteran in July after free representation by American Legion national staff VA benefits specialists.

Increase in accounts reached by the national American Legion Instagram feed in July, over the previous month’s reach; the total following grew to more than 19,200 in the month.

American Legion service officers accredited in July to serve veterans and their families, free of charge, with their VA and state veterans benefits.
Amount in American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance grants issued in July to stabilize homes for veterans with minor children at home which are facing unexpected financial hardship.

4 New American Legion posts chartered in July: two in Texas, one in Idaho and another in Delaware.

5 New Sons of The American Legion squadrons chartered in July: two in Michigan, one in Washington, another in Ohio and one in North Dakota.

330 Number of participants attending the 60th American Legion National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis July 28-29.