

**RESOLUTION CBL-08-01**

**SUBJECT: Amend Sections 5 & 10 of Appendix E to the AMVETS National Constitution & By laws - voting officers of State (Department) Executive Committees**

**WHEREAS**, sections 5 & 10 of Appendix E to the AMVETS National Constitution currently do not authorize appointed department officers to vote on the State Executive Committee and,

**WHEREAS**, several Departments have traditionally authorized certain appointed officers to vote on their State (Department) Executive Committees now,

**RESOLVED**, That Section 5 of Appendix E to the AMVETS National Constitution & By Laws be amended to read: **“All elected and appointed department officers shall be members of the State (Department) Executive Committee. The authority for officers to vote on the State (Department) Executive Committee shall be prescribed in the Department By Laws.”** And,

**RESOLVED**, That: Section 10 of Appendix E to the AMVETS National Constitution & By Laws be amended to **delete** the last sentence, **“The appointed officers shall be members of the Department Executive Committee but without vote”**.

**RESOLUTION CBL-08-03**

**SUBJECT: Removal from office of an elected national officer**

**WHEREAS**, Article VI, Section 4(e) of the AMVETS National Constitution provides for the method by which elected national officer may be removed from offices, and

**WHEREAS**, the subsection is not clear as to the disposition of National Executive Committeemen, now,

**RESOLVED**, That Article VI, Section 4(e) be amended to **add** after the current last sentence, “The officers subject to removal from office shall be those enumerated in Section 1(a) and Section 1 (e) of this Article. National Executive Committeemen and Alternate National Executive Committeemen may be removed from office by their respective Department Executive Committee.”

**RESOLUTION CBL-08-04**

**SUBJECT: Selection of Departments Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the National Convention**

**WHEREAS**, Section 3 of Appendix E of the National Constitution & Bylaws is in conflict with Article V, Section 2 (b) which calls for the Department Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the National Convention to be chosen at the Department Convention, and Section 3 of Appendix E requires that the Delegate and Alternate Delegate be elected at the Department Convention, and,

**WHEREAS**, many of the Departments appoint or select the Delegate and Alternate by a means other than election, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that Appendix E, Section 3 (the first sentence) be amended by deleting the words “and its delegate and alternate to the national convention,” and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that Appendix E, Section 3 (the first sentence), as amended, shall read, “Each department shall conduct its convention, to be held annually between May 15 and June 30, at which time it shall elect department Officers and its delegate and alternate to the national convention and its national executive committeeman, and alternate.”

## **RESOLUTION CBL -08-06**

### **SUBJECT: ARTICLE II (COMMITTEES) NATIONAL BYLAWS**

**WHEREAS:** Article II of the AMVETS National Bylaws (Committees) has become outdated due to the number of committees that have not received or formulated resolutions, or should be under other committees, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED,** that Article II of the AMVETS National Bylaws be amended to read:

#### **Article II: Committees**

**Section 1: National Committees.** The following committees are hereby identified as national committees. The national commander shall appoint (except where otherwise indicated) a chairman, vice chairman and such members of AMVETS to each committee as are necessary to accomplish its objectives. The National Commander shall prescribe the duties and responsibilities of said committees unless otherwise indicated. All committees will receive and develop and consider resolutions. Appointments are effective September 1 and are for a period of one year (except where otherwise indicated). The member composition, duties and responsibilities of the National Executive Committee, National Finance Committee, National Grievance Committee and Personnel Committee are described elsewhere in the National Constitution and Bylaws.

**(a) Americanism and Patriotic Activities Committee.** The promotion of the American way of life and other related subjects.

**(b) Armed Services and Military Liaison Committee.** This Committee Shall also include any discussions related to Cold War, Viet Nam, and Persian Gulf War veterans.

**(c) Civil Service and Veterans Employment Committee.** Develop, receive, and consider all resolutions as appropriate relating to the field of employment, both governmental and nongovernmental, as they pertain to veterans.

**(d) Community Services and Activities Committee.**

**(e) Constitution and Bylaws.**

**(f) Credentials Committee.** To supervise the registration of delegates, alternates, members and guests at the national convention and to set forth the voting strength of the convention in accordance with the provisions of the AMVETS National Constitution and Bylaws. The national commander shall appoint at least one member to the Credentials Committee as recommended by each candidate for national commander.

**(g) Diversity Committee.** The duties of the Diversity Committee shall include but not be limited to reaffirming AMVETS commitment to embracing all eligible veterans, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, or sexual orientation. The committee shall be composed of six voting members, who shall serve one year terms and shall be appointed annually by the National Commander-elect at the Post Convention NEC meeting. Each year the National Commander shall also appoint a Diversity Committee Liaison to the National Headquarters, who shall be an existing staff member of the National Headquarters, and shall not vote.

**(h) Honors and Awards Committee.**

(1) This committee shall be composed of the past national commanders and the immediate five past recipients of the AMVET of the Year Award. The committee shall function on a continuing basis at the call of the national commander and the chairman. The Honors and Awards Committee shall be charged with the responsibility of promulgating and maintaining a uniform procedure of soliciting entries for all national awards of the organization. It shall select, by majority vote, the nominees of the committee for national awards and report the same to the national convention for approval.

(2) Said committee shall be governed by the following standards:

(a) No past national commander may receive any consideration for selection as a recipient of the Silver Helmet® until five years have elapsed from the past national commander's term of office.

(b) The "AMVET of the Year" shall be selected from among appropriate nominations by an independent entity outside the AMVETS organizational structure. The selection shall be ratified by the Honors and Awards Committee.

(c) No Silver Helmet® shall be awarded or approved except at the national convention, and in no event shall the Silver Helmet® be awarded as the result of a mail ballot.

(d) The Honors and Awards Committee shall give due diligence and attention to a full and complete record of its actions so that a historical record and journal may be preserved with respect to all of its actions.

**(i) Long Range Planning Committee.** To recommend to the National Executive Committee or the national convention, as appropriate, the fiscal, organizational programs, and service directions the AMVETS national organization should take in the future years, and to develop a comprehensive long-range plan to accomplish this mission.

(1) The committee shall be comprised of the following voting members: two members to be appointed each year for a three year term by the commander elect at the post convention NEC, the national 1st vice commander; the 2nd vice commander; the national finance officer; and the president of the National Service Foundation.

(2) The national commander shall appoint a chairman for a one-year term from among the appointed members.

(3) The Committee shall have access to all records of the national department, except individual personnel records and payroll, for the purpose of formulating such directions.

**(j) VAVS & VA Hospital and Medical Services, Rehabilitation Benefits Committee.** The chairman of this committee shall be appointed at the post convention NEC meeting. Further, the chairman shall serve as the national VAVS representative.

**(k) Membership Committee.** To consider all matter relating to the development of AMVETS through membership activities.

**(l) Programs Committee**

(1) The national second vice commander shall be the chairman of said committee. The committee shall have voting members consisting of the chairmen of the following committees: Americanism and Patriotic Activities, Community Service and Activities, and VAVS and VA Hospital and Medical Services, Rehabilitation Benefits.

(2) In addition to the aforementioned members, the national commander is empowered to

appoint six additional voting members to said committee, one from each of the national districts, based on the recommendations of each national district commander.

(3) The following shall be considered ex-officio members of said Programs Committee: a liaison from the AMVETS National Auxiliary as well as announced candidates for the office of national second vice commander, none of whom shall have a vote. The national programs director shall serve as advisor to said Programs Committee.

(4) The Programs Committee shall meet once a year, during the national convention, on the morning after the date on which most of the other national committees meet. The chairmen of the various national committees shall discuss actions taken at their committee meetings at said convention. The Programs Committee shall also review actions taken by other committees in order to coordinate all national programs and have all within established national policies.

**(m) POW/MIA Committee**

**(n) Resolutions Committee.** Resolutions that a committee does not consider its charge shall be referred by such committee back to the Resolutions Committee for reassignment. All resolutions received by the Resolutions Committee shall be assigned to one or more appropriate national committees. The Resolutions Committee shall take no other actions on resolutions other than assignment or reassignment. Decisions involving the assignment or reassignment of resolutions by the Resolutions Committee shall be final, including the return of a resolution to the committee to which it was originally assigned.

**(o) Subordinate Organizations Liaison Committee.** (Ladies Auxiliary, Jr. AMVETS, Sons of AMVETS, and AMVETS Riders)

**(p) Technical Advisory Committee.** To evaluate standards, gather, evaluate and share technical computer information with those departments and posts who want such information.

**(q) Uniform and Insignia Committee.**

**(r) Convention Rules Committee.** To review annually the Rules of the Annual Convention, and present said rules, with any recommended changes, to the Spring National Executive Committee meeting for approval by the NEC.

(1) Besides the members appointed to the committee by the National Commander, the committee shall include the Chairman of the Registration Committee and the Chairman of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee.

**(s) Women Veterans Committee.**

**(t) Honor Guard Committee.**

**(u) Communications Committee.** Shall receive, consider, and develop resolutions and/or initiatives concerning all facets of communications between AMVETS, veterans, the Armed Forces, government, and the general public consistent with the long range plans of AMVETS. The committee shall consist of six members serving staggered three-year terms.

Section 2: Special Committees

(a) The national commander may appoint such special committees as necessary to the proper conduct of organizational affairs, subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee.

(b) Such appointees shall serve during the term of the administration appointing them and terminate on expiration of the term of the appointing administration.

Section 3: Each committee authorized by these constitution and bylaws must report its activities and recommendations at the next NEC meeting and/or at a national convention; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** this amendment shall become effective on September 1, 2007.

**RESOLUTION 08-01**

**SUBJECT: Assured Funding for VA Health Care**

**WHEREAS**, each year, veterans service organizations fight for sufficient funding for VA health care and a budget that is reflective of the rising cost of health care and increasing need for medical services; and

**WHEREAS**, our nation's veterans are continuing to suffer because the system they depend on has been routinely under funded; and

**WHEREAS**, the fiscal year 2006 funding shortfall of more than \$1 billion in health care services for sick and disabled veterans requires a long term fix; and

**WHEREAS**, the current discretionary funding method for veterans' health care is broken and the needs of our nation's sick and disabled veterans are not being met; and

**WHEREAS**, without assured funding, VA will continue to remain under funded and unable to provide timely access to quality health care to many of our Nation's veterans; and

**WHEREAS**, taking VA's budget out of the discretionary budget would eliminate the year-to-year uncertainty about funding levels that have prevented VA from being able to adequately plan for and meet the constantly growing number of veterans seeking treatment: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That Congress enact legislation to make VA health care funding mandatory, thereby guaranteeing sufficient resources to cover expenses of the veterans health care system.

**RESOLUTION 08-02**

**SUBJECT: Adequate Funding for VA Health Care**

**WHEREAS**, VA provides medical services to 5.3 million veterans, and is expected to see 109,000 new veterans in 2007; and

**WHEREAS**, VA is ill equipped to handle the large influx of those waiting and wanting to use its services; and

**WHEREAS**, almost half of the military servicemen and women returning from operations overseas will need healthcare services for the physical and psychological traumas of war that may never heal; and

**WHEREAS**, diminishing veterans earned benefits at a time of war is unwarranted and unrealistic; and

**WHEREAS**, continued efforts by the Office of Management and Budget to undermine the VA budget will lead to further deterioration of VA programs; and

**RESOLVED**, That Congress and the administration provide adequate and timely funding for veterans' health care to ensure that VA can meet the mission of providing the necessary medical services to veterans seeking care.

**RESOLUTION 08-03**

**SUBJECT: Claims Backlogs**

**WHEREAS**, there exists a longstanding problem of large claims backlogs and consequent delays in delivery of crucial disability benefits to veterans and their families; and

**WHEREAS**, the backlog of VA claims grows yearly, yet VA continues to reduce claims processing staff; and

**WHEREAS**, many experienced claims processors are retiring and being replaced by novices requiring years of training; and

**WHEREAS**, with the nation at war, the demand for VA services is only expected to increase with thousands of newly disabled veterans entering the system: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That Congress ensure adequate funding to hire and train VA personnel to improve the timeliness and accuracy of VA's claims decisions; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the Veterans Benefits Administration process quality claims in a timely manner and work together to develop a long-term strategy focused on improving the claims system.

**RESOLUTION 08-04**

**SUBJECT: Flag Protection Amendment**

**WHEREAS**, the flag of the United States of America is a symbol of our country and of freedom around the world; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1989, the United States Supreme Court has ruled that flag desecration is protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, AMVETS has strongly supported reversing this ruling since 1989; and

**WHEREAS**, a flag protection amendment is supported by over 80 percent of the American people; and

**WHEREAS**, all fifty State legislatures have passed resolutions asking Congress to submit a flag protection amendment for ratification; and

**WHEREAS**, Congress should be permitted to protect the American flag from desecration: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS petition Congress to allow the people of the United States to consider for ratification a flag protection amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

**RESOLUTION 08-06**

**SUBJECT: Concurrent Receipt**

**WHEREAS**, Title 38, United States Code, Sections 5304 and 5305, has prohibited the concurrent receipt of both military retirement pay for longevity from the Department of Defense and disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, a disabled veteran who does not retire from military service but elects instead to pursue a civilian career after enlistment expires can receive full compensation and full civilian retired pay; and

**WHEREAS**, a veteran who has served this country for 20 years should have that same right and not be penalized for choosing a military career rather than a civilian career; and

**WHEREAS**, no other category of federal employee faces the same restriction on disability and retirement pay: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS pursue enactment of legislation that would provide full and immediate concurrent receipt for all disabled military retirees; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That enacting concurrent receipt would correct the fundamental inequity in the law that has lasted for over a century.

**RESOLUTION 08-07**

**SUBJECT: Support Veterans' Preference in Public Employment**

**WHEREAS**, AMVETS is committed to seeking full access to employment opportunities for our nation's veterans; and

**WHEREAS**, AMVETS has strongly supported federal, state, and local veterans' preference laws; and

**WHEREAS**, it is important that programs and policies at all levels of government continue to help veterans establish private businesses by providing them with technical, financial, and procurement assistance: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS support the strongest veterans preference laws as possible at all levels of government and oppose any attempt to weaken such laws.

**RESOLUTION 08-08**

**SUBJECT: Develop a “Total Force” GI Bill of Education Benefits**

**WHEREAS**, our nation’s total Armed Forces—active duty, National Guard, and Reserves—are operationally integrated to carry out national security missions, but educational benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) do not reflect this “total force” policy; and

**WHEREAS**, Congress strengthened the MGIB in 1984 to stimulate an all-volunteer force recruitment and retention program and help veterans readjust to the civilian world upon completion of their service; and

**WHEREAS**, in more recent times active duty MGIB benefits have lagged behind the rising cost of tuition; and

**WHEREAS**, for Guard and Reservists, MGIB benefits have fallen to less than 29 percent of the 47 percent benchmark: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS support a new, integrated “Total Force” approach to the Montgomery GI Bill to support service recruitment needs and provide post-service benefits commensurate with the benefits earned through military service.

**RESOLUTION 08-09**

**SUBJECT: Increasing Travel Reimbursement Rates for Disabled Veterans**

**WHEREAS**, the sharp increase in gas prices is causing unprecedented burdens for disabled veterans traveling to VA medical facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, many veterans travel long distances to receive medical care; and

**WHEREAS**, disabled veterans traveling to VA for service-related injuries are only eligible to receive 11 cents per mile reimbursement, but federal employees receive 48.5 cents per mile for travel reimbursement; and

**WHEREAS**, in many cases, after the \$6 roundtrip deductible is subtracted, veterans receive nothing for their expenses: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS endorse legislation that would repeal the roundtrip deductible and create equality between federal employees and disabled veterans; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That aforementioned legislation mandate the mileage reimbursement funding cannot and will not take away from funds already in place to support other Department of Veterans Affairs programs.

**RESOLUTION 08-10**

**SUBJECT: Increase Veterans Burial Benefits**

**WHEREAS**, there have been serious erosion in the value of the burial allowance over the years; and

**WHEREAS**, while these benefits were never intended to cover the full costs of burial, they now pay for only a small fraction of what they covered in 1973 when the federal government first started paying burial benefits: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS support legislation to increase the service-connected burial allowance benefits from \$2,000 to \$4,000 and the non-service connected burial allowance benefit from \$300 to \$1,270; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS support legislation to increase the plot allowance from \$300 to \$745, and expand the eligibility for the plot allowance to all veterans who would be eligible for burial in a national cemetery, not just those who served during wartime.

**RESOLUTION 08-11**

**SUBJECT: Accelerated GI Benefits for Training Programs**

**WHEREAS**, GI Bill benefits are paid as a monthly stipend to a maximum amount of \$1,000; and

**WHEREAS**, many training programs run anywhere from 4 to 6 weeks, and can cost upwards of \$6,000; and

**WHEREAS**, at most, the GI Bill benefit only offsets about \$1,500 of the veterans' training tuition; and

**WHEREAS**, accelerated benefits would cover upwards of 60% of the cost of training program; and

**WHEREAS**, current law only allows certain "high tech" training programs, as determined by the Secretary of Labor, to receive accelerated benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, veterans between the ages of 20 and 24 have an unemployment rate nearly double the national rate of non-veterans in the same age group: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS supports legislation that would expand and enhance GI Bill educational benefits for eligible veterans wanting to use tuition assistance for training programs; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS recognize that accelerating GI Bill benefits for training in high-growth and high-tech occupations would help place veterans in a good paying, long-term, and secure job.

**RESOLUTION 08-12**

**SUBJECT: Oppose TRICARE Increases**

**WHEREAS**, this nation has a moral obligation to provide quality health care to those who protect our freedoms; and

**WHEREAS**, there has been several attempts to shift healthcare costs from the Federal government to active duty, reserve and retired military personnel and their families; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Defense proposes doubling or tripling TRICARE premiums for military retirees under age 65; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Defense admits the premium increases will kick out 600,000 beneficiaries; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Defense is not a commercial business that can undermine health care and benefits in order to increase its bottom line; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Defense has sole authority to increase premiums and fees; and

**WHEREAS**, military retirees premiums have already been paid by 20-plus years of service: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS oppose any and all efforts to increase TRICARE premiums; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS supports legislation that would give Congress the authority to prohibit increases in healthcare costs for members of the Uniformed Services.

**RESOLUTION 08-13-a**

**SUBJECT: Veterans Mental Health Funding**

**WHEREAS**, 17 percent of returning soldiers will have some sort of psychological trauma that may never heal; and

**WHEREAS**, VA and the Federal government have a special obligation to these veterans; and

**WHEREAS**, mental and emotional problems can have disastrous effects not only on the veteran, but the family as well; and

**WHEREAS**, the psychological effects of war vary from person to person and sometimes don't show up for years, which is why it is so important that mental health programs continue to take care of veterans with these kinds of issues: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS recommends to the Congress to double VA's mental health care budget in 5 years to adequately treat veterans suffering from psychological trauma.

**RESOLUTION 08-14**

**SUBJECT: Survivor Benefit Plan**

**WHEREAS**, because retired pay stops when the veteran dies, the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) helps make up for the loss of part of this income; and

**WHEREAS**, under SBP, deductions are made from the member's retired pay to purchase a survivor's annuity; and

**WHEREAS**, upon the veteran's death, the annuity is paid monthly to eligible beneficiaries under the plan; and

**WHEREAS**, if the veteran's death is due to service-connected causes, the SBP annuity is reduced by the amount of dependency and indemnity (DIC) payment; and

**WHEREAS**, the offset of SBP against DIC is inequitable because it penalizes survivors of military retired veterans whose deaths are under circumstances warranting indemnification from government separate from the annuity funded by premiums paid by veterans from retired pay: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AMVETS pursue enactment of legislation to repeal the offset between SBP and DIC.

**RESOLUTION 08-15**

**SUBJECT: Formalizing National Guard Liaison Position**

**WHEREAS**, AMVETS on 23 March 2005 established an outreach program with the National Guard Bureau (NGB) to bolster support for National Guard service members and their families, who face increasing deployments in the War on Terror;

**WHEREAS**, the Memorandum of Understanding signed on that date states that each Department and Post should establish a working relationship with their respective NG State Joint Force Headquarters;

**WHEREAS**, during 2006 seventy-six Posts representative of twenty-six Departments provided numerous services totaling over \$254,000;

**WHEREAS**, communication with NG Joint Force Headquarters, State Family Program Directors is critical to sustaining these services, sharing Best Practices and expanding our capacity to serve these Troops and their families: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that Posts and Departments be required to submit the names and contact information of their duly appointed National Guard Liaison to National Headquarters, as soon as possible after Post and Department elections, but not later than 14 days after said events.

**RESOLUTION 08-17**

**SUBJECT: Formalizing VAVS Department Level Coordination**

**WHEREAS**, AMVETS is a highly regarded member organization of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Voluntary Service program and holds membership on its National Advisory Committee,

**WHEREAS**, in the last program year over 1,800 AMVETS provided 159,000 plus hours of service on behalf of our hospitalized veterans, valued in excess of \$3 million dollars,

**WHEREAS**, this is an awesome responsibility and the need for volunteers continues to grow, and AMVETS must increase our level of commitment, not only to recruit additional volunteers but to ensure the responsible management of those volunteers,

**WHEREAS**, the current requirement is for AMVETS Department Commanders to make bi-annual appointments of VAVS Representatives and Deputies for the VA Medical Centers within their respective departments,

**RESOLVED**, that the Departments now be required to submit the name and contact information of a duly appointed VAVS Department Coordinator, who will provide leadership and support for all Certified Representatives and Deputies within their respective departments; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the contact information for the VAVS Coordinator should be forwarded to the National Headquarters as soon as possible after the Department elections, but not later than 14 days after said event.

**RESOLUTION 08-18**

**SUBJECT: Troops struggle with finding therapists**

**WHEREAS**, Soldiers returning from war are find it more difficult to get mental hearth treatment because military insurance is cutting payments to therapists, on top of already low reimbursement rates, and

**WHEREAS**, Waiting lists now extend for months to see a military doctor and it can take weeks to find a private therapist willing to take on members of the military and the challenge appears great in rural areas where many National Guard and Reserve troops and their families live, and

**WHEREAS**, Roughly one third of returning soldiers seek out mental health counseling in their first year home and they are among the 9.1 million people covered by Tri-care, a number that grew by more than 1 million since 2001, and

**WHEREAS**, Tri-care's psychological health benefit is hindered by fragmented rules and policies, inadequate oversight and insufficient reimbursements and a difficulty in locating mental health specialists who accept Tri-care, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that The Department of Defense raise the reimbursement rates for private contractors providing mental health assistance to Tri-care recipients

**RESOLUTION 08-19**

**SUBJECT: Support for the Republic of China on Taiwan**

**WHEREAS**, the Republic of China on Taiwan is a long-time friend, ally, and seventh largest trading partner of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, Taiwan is a strategically located island and is extremely important to the peace, prosperity, and stability of the Pacific Rim; and

**WHEREAS**, the Republic of China maintains a strong and well-trained military force, has extensive air and naval facilities and, therefore, is a vital link in the Pacific defense chain; and

**WHEREAS**, the People's Republic of China has never renounced the use of force to integrate the Republic of China into its communist system and government and this threat remains substantial: Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, the AMVETS supports and encourages the democratic process in Taiwan, and encourages the President of the United States to promote peaceful dialogue and avoid any actions which could lead to military conflict; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that AMVETS supports the continued promotion of educational and cultural relationships and exchanges between the United States and the Republic of China.

**RESOLUTION: 08-20**

**SUBJECT: Military Retirees Health Care Protection Act**

**WHEREAS,** The Pentagon has tried to closed budget gaps by increasing TRICARE Annual Fees charged to retirees and

**WHEREAS,** These proposed increases would raise fees currently charged retirees by more than four times or approximately \$1000 annually and

**WHEREAS,** Retirees have already faithfully serves their county, experiencing all the sacrifices of family separations, frequent moves, and service in foreign lands often under harsh conditions and

**WHEREAS,** When we enlisted in the military we were promised Free Health care for life for our dedicated commitment and service and

**WHEREAS,** The government has already broken its promise when they instituted an annual co-pay fee for our healthcare coverage under TRICARE

**WHEREAS,** We have already contributed more that our fair share in service to our country and are entitled to free health care for the rest of our lives and now: therefore be it

**RESOLVED,** that AMVETS, actively lobby Congress to oppose any increase in Tri-care fees.

**RESOLUTION: 08-22**

**SUBJECT: Reopen Wood Cemetery in Wisconsin**

**WHEREAS**, Milwaukee County is home to the highest concentration of veterans in the state of Wisconsin and;

**WHEREAS**, the surrounding counties in southeast Wisconsin are also home to concentrations of honorably discharged veterans who are entitled to death benefits as a result of their service and;

**WHEREAS**, Wood National Cemetery has been closed since October 1, 1996 and;

**WHEREAS**, there are over 25 acres of vacant land at the ZABLOCKI VA Medical Center in Milwaukee that have been characterized as underutilized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, now be it

**RESOLVED**, that the AMVETS Department of Wisconsin forward this resolution to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs and that the National AMVETS be called upon to support every effort to reopen the Wood National Cemetery utilizing the vacant 25 acres of land immediately for both in ground and above ground internment. It is requested that the National AMVETS actively lobby Congress for positive action on this issue.

## **RESOLUTION 08-24**

### **SUBJECT: RECA – DU coverage concerns**

**WHEREAS**, our military personnel have and are using Depleted Uranium Munitions in the Gulf Wars Campaigns; and

**WHEREAS**, a complete medical exam of individual service personnel before and after deployment as mandated by Congress is not being performed; and

**WHEREAS**, abnormally high rates of birth defects are known to occur among children born to Gulf War I veterans; and

**WHEREAS**, U238 is found in urine and semen of Gulf War I veterans to date December 2003; and

**WHEREAS**, DU armor plating on our armored vehicles burns off (abates) deflecting or stopping enemy projectiles; and

**WHEREAS**, this burn-off consists of aerosolized dusty particles .01 to .05 micron particles of U236, U237, U238, Plutonium, Strontium90, and Americium, all highly carcinogenic materials with a half life of 4.5 billion years; and

**WHEREAS**, these dust particles are widely disbursed throughout the combat areas and ingested by breathing, drinking, or eating foods contaminated by DU residue; and

**WHEREAS**, once ingested, this material remains in the human body for decades, if not life, causing cancers and other unknown illnesses; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that AMVETS will expend every effort possible through legal advocacy and publicity to expand existing coverage for our Gulf War veterans under the existing Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Program to ensure that these veterans shall be considered service connected for any of the 21 cancers currently covered by RECA under USC 38 CFR Section 3.309 [*not Section 3.311*] plus any other cancers or diseases found to result from DU exposure. If they were assigned to or served in the Gulf Wars areas or clean-up and/ or servicing of vehicles and/ or equipment that had been in those areas: **THEY SHALL BE CONSIDERED AS EXPOSED AND THEIR ILLNESS SHALL BE DEEMED SERVICE CONNECTED.** *Further*, in depth medical studies shall be made by independent civilian medical entities to determine other diseases that may result from the effects of Depleted Uranium (DU) on all DU exposed service personnel.

**RESOLUTION 08-25**

**SUBJECT: Anthrax Vaccination Concerns**

**WHEREAS**, our military personnel have been injected with and orally ingesting Anthrax vaccination in the Gulf War Campaigns; and

**WHEREAS**, abnormally high rates of birth defects are known to occur among children born of Persian Gulf veterans; and

**WHEREAS**, 20,000 veterans have been hospitalized since being administered Anthrax vaccinations, with various symptoms resulting in, it is believed from these vaccinations: now; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that AMVETS recommends to Congress to direct DoD to stop administering Anthrax vaccinations to all service members; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that AMVETS lobby Congress to provide legislation to provide health benefits and further research through Veterans' Affairs for veterans who have symptoms related to Anthrax vaccinations.

**RESOLUTION 08-26**

**SUBJECT: Uniform Star Design**

**WHEREAS**, a number of State Departments and National Districts currently issue Stars to signify a Commander or Past Commander and,

**WHEREAS**, these Stars vary in size, shape, color, insignia, and number of points; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the National Commander and PNC Stars remain as they are currently designed. And that a National District Commander and Past National District Commander Star be designed along the same lines as the National Commander Star only smaller in size. And a gold five point Star be designed with the AMVET logo in the center for use as a Department Commander and Past Department Commander Star. And a silver five point star be designed with the AMVETS logo in the center for use as a State District/Regional Commander and Past State District/Regional Commander Star. And a silver five point star smaller than the District/Regional Star be designed with the AMVETS logo in the center for use as a Post Commander and Past Post Commander Star. And be it further

**RESOLVED**, that current Stars and Badges in use by any entity effected by this resolution be grandfathered and their use be permitted until depletion of supplies, and the National Quartermaster be required to maintain a supply of the above mentioned Stars so that Districts and State Departments may readily purchase said Stars.