

**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
DETACHMENT OF COLORADO
HOME OF THE PAST SAL NATIONAL COMMANDER
MIKE MOSS**



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TRIPLE NICKEL DETACHMENT

Commander Robert Jones

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This publication does not express the official position of the SAL Detachment of Colorado, The American Legion Department of Colorado or their respective National Organizations. It is a forum to share information about events and happenings within the Detachment of Colorado, the National Organization of the Sons of The American Legion, and information of that is pertinent to the programs and four pillars of The American Legion. All members of the Colorado American Legion Family, particularly, Department & Detachment Officers, Committee Chairs, Post Officers, Squadrons and individual members of The American Legion Family are invited and encouraged to share and submit information about programs and events their Post, Squadron or Units are participating in or conducting relevant to the mission of the Sons of The American Legion and purposes of The American Legion. Email your write-up and pictures you wish to have published to: mark.kilstrom@comcast.net. This publication is compiled and published as a volunteer service by Mark Kilstrom.

SAL Donations to CWF top \$9 Million Mark

Submitted by Nick Arceo from www.legion.org/SAL

By [Andy Proffett](#)
MAY 02, 2022

Mark Nave looked around the room as he stepped to the podium Sunday morning at the SAL NEC Spring Meeting at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in downtown Indianapolis.

“This crowd looks fine, and you know why. We reached \$9 million,” said Nave, the chairman of the SAL Child Welfare Foundation Committee, drawing applause from the NEC men and others in the room.

Last week, the total SAL donations since 1988 topped the \$9 million mark, accounting for close to half of the funds raised for the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF).

“Take pride in that, but the work continues,” Nave said. “Yeah, we’re ‘fine at nine,’ but now it’s time to reach ‘the perfect 10.’”

Dennis Boland, a dual member of The American Legion and the SAL and president of the

CWF, thanked the SAL for their donations.

“You have taken the duty upon yourself to take care of the children of our nation, and the veterans of our nation. You have that honor of your family, your father’s or your mother’s heritage, for their service in our country. Our country, this is our home. Right now the turmoil is going around ... this is still our country, our home, and we take care of it,” Boland said. “... I plead with you to keep it up so we will always have an organization that keeps us at the forefront of all the other service organizations at protecting our veterans and our children,” he added.

Boland highlighted Squadron 154 from the Detachment of Nebraska, whose \$100 donation last week pushed the SAL’s contributions to the CWF over the \$9 million mark. The squadron will be recognized at the national convention in Milwaukee in August.

Nave reminded those in attendance and watching the proceedings on the SAL Facebook page that donations for this fiscal year are due May 31. And CWF grant applications are being accepted now through June 15.

“What better PR do you have in your community than knowing that an organization in your community is awarded a grant?” Nave said in asking SAL members to encourage organizations in their community to apply for CWF grants.

CWF accepts funding proposals from nonprofits for projects that contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual welfare of children. Grants are only given to entities that help U.S. children in a large geographic area; they are not awarded for day-to-day or special operating expenses. Grant applications are available online at cwf-inc.org.

Also on Sunday, approximately \$64,000 in donations were presented on behalf of detachments and squadrons across the country, including roughly \$48,000 to CWF, approximately \$8,000 to Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW), about \$7,000 to the National Emergency Fund (NEF), and approximately \$1,500 to the Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF).

“It still always amazes me how much money comes in while we’re here,” said SAL National Commander Michael Fox.

Birmingham, H.S. Junior Sweeps to Victory, Earns \$25K Scholarship in American Legion Oratorical Contest

Submitted by Nick Arceo
From The American Legion

INDIANAPOLIS (April 24, 2022) –

A junior from Alabama School of Fine Arts in Birmingham capped a busy weekend of competition in Indianapolis by earning a \$25,000 college scholarship and first place in The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program – “A Constitutional Speech Contest.” Emma Noble’s winning pre-

pared oration was titled “The Power of the Executive Order: Because I said so.”

Noble, who lives in Birmingham, started the weekend as one of 50 state or department champions in the 83rd annual contest. She advanced to the championship through three rounds of intense competition. Noble was sponsored by American Legion Post 555 in Pelham, Ala.

Ashley Tuell, a senior from Johnson City,

Tenn., earned a \$22,500 college scholarship with a second-place finish, while Jackson Boone, a 12th grade student from Calvert City, Ky., earned \$20,000 and third place in the competition. The scholarships account for a small portion of post-secondary scholarships that The American Legion, the nation’s largest veterans organization, awards annually.

(Continued on page 2)

Oratorical

(Continued from page 1)

In her prepared oration, Noble compared the use of presidential executive orders to the common parental admonishment of authority “because I said so.” She pointed out positive examples of its use, such as the Emancipation Proclamation and the desegregation of the military but also mentioned that it was used by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to establish Japanese American internment camps during World War II.

Noble encouraged people to consider the use of executive orders when they vote. “Executive orders are an extremely valuable tool because they are much faster than passing a law through the legislative branch; however, they are not trivial to undo so you must have

confidence in the person making them. It is a citizen’s responsibility to vote. Not only that, but to vote for someone you trust with the power of executive orders. Because I said so.”

In each round of the weekend competition, orators delivered a rehearsed 8- to 10-minute address and a randomly assigned 3- to 5-minute oration on a constitutional topic, each without the benefit of notes and in front of a live audience, including the judges. The nearly 2-million-member American Legion developed the contest to encourage young people to improve their communications skills and to study the U.S. Constitution. More than \$3 million in scholarships have been awarded over the history of the contest.



Become a CAT Member to Support Youth-serving Nonprofits

From The American Legion, Department of Colorado, “Internet Observer”, May 2022

By: The American Legion

The 2023 American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grant application will be online May 1. CWF grants help youth-serving nonprofits provide information, assistance and opportunities that support the health and well-being of children. Since 1955, the CWF has awarded more than \$18 million in grants to support our nation’s children and youth. The ability to continue awarding grants to youth-serving nonprofits is through the American Legion Family raising awareness and donations for the CWF. One way to do this is by becoming a Children’s Action Team (CAT) member where you serve as an advocate for CWF. As a CAT, you can: - Inform youth-serving nonprofit organizations about the

CWF and how they can apply for a grant. - Promote the CWF within your post, district, department or detachment newsletter, and on social media. - Give a presentation on CWF at American Legion meetings. - Ask Legion Family members, family and friends to make an annual CWF donation. - Create a fun, competitive donation challenge among other posts, districts or departments. - Host a fundraising dinner with a raffle drawing or a silent auction. You can request a CAT membership application by sending an email to CWFadministrator@legion.org. Or download the application found on page 10 of The American Legion Children & Youth Department Chairman Program Guide. CAT membership is open to American Legion, Sons of The American Legion and Auxiliary members in good standing.



National Eagle Scout of the Year for 2022 Named

Submitted by Nick Arceo

The American Legion
MAY 05, 2022

Christopher Adam of Mechanicsburg, Pa., has been named The American Legion’s Eagle Scout of the Year for 2022. The selection was made by The American Legion’s Youth Activities Sub-Committee on May 4 during the Legion’s Spring Meetings. As the National Eagle Scout of the Year, Adam is receiving a \$10,000 college scholarship.

The committee also selected three runners-up who will each receive a \$2,500 scholarship – Jackson Mills of Mt. Vernon, Ill.; Charlotte Beatson of Littleton, Colo.; and Matthew Korf of Woodbury, Minn.

Adam, a senior at Trinity High School and member of Troop 88, was nominated for the National Eagle Scout of the Year award by American Legion Post 109 in Mechanicsburg. For his Eagle Scout project, Adam designed and constructed a World War II D-Day memorial called Liberation Pointe to “honor the sacrifices of D-Day and WWII veterans,” he wrote, “and to make sure that America’s future generations do not forget what these men and women did for our country and for the world.”

Liberation Pointe memorial is located on the grounds of the U.S. Army Heritage and Edu-

cation Center in Carlisle, Pa. The project took over two years to complete with 2,385 hours of volunteer work and more \$42,000 raised, as well as donations from a wide range of vendors that resulted in the project valued at over \$200,000.

Adam unveiled his Eagle Scout project on Veterans Day 2019, the 75th anniversary of D-Day, with 400 people in attendance, including 24 World War II veterans. The veterans were invited to pour sand from each of the five D-Day invasion beaches that Adam had collected during his travels to Normandy, France.

The memorial features:

- Two life-size bronze statues that represent American soldiers landing on Omaha Beach and a life-size steel hedgehog anti-tank obstacle weighing over 600 pounds. The statues and hedgehog are enclosed inside a pentagon border made of Pennsylvania Black Granite. Each of the five sides represent the five D-Day invasion beaches: Omaha, Utah, Gold, Sword and Juno.

- Seven informational panels surround Liberation Pointe – five of the panels give summary to each of the beaches including the troops and units that fought there along with personal accounts from American servicemembers who fought on D-Day that Ad-

(Continued on page 3)

Chaplains Corner

By brad Henderson, Detachment Chaplain

“It’s The Real Thing!”

Coca-Cola’s ‘It’s the Real Thing’ campaign was a way of consolidating all the changes being made to the brand as it entered the 1970s. Coke’s then brand manager, Ira C Herbert, heralded it as a new direction that “responds to research which shows that young people seek the real, the original and the natural as an escape from phoniness.” Whether purchasing cola or carpentry materials, people want something they can depend on. Millions of people today rush to their electronics and to television to watch something which is neither real, nor dependable: “virtual reality”. Virtual reality creates an artificial environment experienced through sensory stimuli, such as sight and sound. Virtual things aren’t as they appear to be.

Recently, my computer was locked, my anti-virus protection disabled, and my system “hacked” by scammers that presented themselves to me as genuine Microsoft and bank anti-fraud security personnel. These folks are “slick”. They cross-reference one another with company identity codes that lead the victim to think one scammer has verified the authenticity of the other. When a fake photo of a Russian with stolen name was displayed on a phony Interpol background, I felt comfortable that these folks were “on top of it.” I learned almost too late, that they weren’t who they claimed to be. It felt good after two days of mentally and emotionally exhausting adventure, to be able to tell my beloved wife, “I have our savings – they don’t.” Since then, I have taken several steps to enhance our personal security. As members of the Legion Family, we need and enjoy genuine fellowship with valued friends. We can count on one another “when the chips are down”. Because we are brothers and sisters together, our mutual helpfulness becomes a reflection of the true love and respect we have for one another. It is that love and respect that will cement our post as the slate of new officers begin their terms.

The wife and I were traveling along the Interstate when I saw a billboard that said, “God is Real.”

REALLY? How do we know what to believe? Who can we really count on?

“Belief” and “faith” are translations of the same Greek word. Some folks are very devout in their faith, while others, as the ol’ country boy might say, “got no religion at all.” I was on social media recently, and someone challenged my faith. “How do you know which god to worship? There are over 300 gods.” I replied, “When my wife faced death, the God I believe in was there to see her through recovery.

None of the other 300 or so gods showed up.” We live in a world filled with international, national, local, and personal challenges to our daily lives.

When you sit looking at the monitor, are you confident that your computer and its software will “deliver”? Just as we can depend on our brothers and sisters to “be there for us”, so too do I rely on

my Lord to do the same. This month, families around the world will celebrate Father’s Day. I miss my dad, “The Old Marine”, but my heavenly Father remains. Whether the times are wonderful, or terrible, the God I rely on is steadfast, as a father should be. I have perceived His presence often in my life. “...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matt 28:20)

My belief system enables me to trust my Lord. He’s “The Real Thing”.

Serving God and Country,
Chaplain Brad



Eagle Scout of The Year

(Continued from page 2)

am interviewed. The other two panels explain Operation Overload.

Four trees that surround the memorial symbolize the four main countries that were involved in the invasion: America, Great Britain, France and Canada.

“I believe I achieved my goal of educating my generation, and many other Americans, about what D-Day and World War II,” Adam wrote. “Working on my Eagle Scout project has taught me four very important life lessons. First, when you commit to something, make it a ‘failure is not an option’ endeavor, learn to pivot and have back up plans constantly ready. Second, hard work has to become the standard if you want to succeed. Third, put integrity in your work and require integrity from those you work with. Lastly, lead by example.”

Kyle Mundis, an Eagle Scout coach for Adam, emphasized that the Eagle Scout project “was not easy. Christopher should feel very proud of himself for accomplishing this project,” he said. “Christopher overcame countless trials and challenges in accomplishing this project, a real testimonial to the character of this young man. Whether the task was polishing the granite after school or organizing the workdays that lead to the spreading the stone and tan bark, assembling the benches or planting of the trees, Christopher saw the project through.”

Adam’s dream is to become a pilot and is looking at attending either the U.S. Air Force Academy or the Naval Academy.

“Christopher represents the kind of individual that we hope will lead our military and The American Legion in future years. We are proud of Chris and are honored to call Chris, our friend,” said Richard Adams and Michael Neff, both past commanders of Post 109.



Department of Colorado Holds Annual Training Seminar

From The American Legion, Department of Colorado “Internet Observer”, May, 2022

Training and Education

By: Chip Kossow , Department Commander

Editor's Note: *At the time of this publication, the training seminar discussed below has already taken place. However it provides information about annual training conducted by the Department of Colorado for those who may be interested in attending in the future. The “Internet Observer” is a monthly publication of The American Legion, Department of Colorado with a dedicated paid staff. This Electronic Update is published on a volunteer basis and not published on a regular set timeline. To stay current with events within the State of Colorado and other news pertinent to The American Legion, you can subscribe to receive the “Internet Observer” at: www.coloradolegion.org.*

This year’s Training and Education Conference will be held 0800-1700, 21 May at Post 1 in Denver. The cost will be \$40 and include a bagel breakfast, lunch, dinner, and training materials. Programs will be the main focus with a few other timely sessions. The entire Legion family, from all levels, are encouraged to attend. A copy of the agenda has been sent to each District Commander and it is available on the Department web site at coloradolegion.org. Please register by 11 May. The conference is intended to provide knowledge of Legion programs for the Post,

Squadron, and Unit members. While it is impossible to provide training on all the Legion programs in one day, there will be a good many covered here. Even if you think you have a good knowledge base, it is possible you could pick up some additional information about a program you thought knew. I feel everyone should take a turn at running their Post, Squadron, and Unit. If you’re hesitant about a Post level position, start small with a program and work your way up. This conference will provide you some tools to be more effective. Every one of the instructors came up through the Post / Squadron / Unit and probably experienced the things you have questions about. They’re here to help you and this is a great opportunity to pick their brain. Also, the Department Training Committee has been conducting Training Tuesdays since last fall. Each of those sessions were recorded and are stored on coloradolegion.org in the training videos tab for you to view and use at your leisure. Another great resource is The American Legion Basic Training. Which is an online course at Legion.org that covers the history of The American Legion (and is free!). Come and join us in a day of comradery, information and idea sharing. Don’t let the words training or education intimidate you. You joined the Legion to serve, so come learn some additional information to improve yourself and your Post and Unit. You may even find a new passion! God Bless our veterans, their families, and the United States of America!



“When you’re told it’s time to go, you set your fears aside and do it”

Barney F Hajiro, United States Army, Medal of Honor.

Convention Information

The 55th Annual Convention of the Detachment of Colorado, Sons of The American Legion will be held June 30th—July 3 2022 at the Crown Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, 15500 E 40th Ave, Denver Colorado. The Call to Convention with the official agenda and properly submitted resolutions will be sent to each Squadron and Detachment Officers by June 6th,

Opening Ceremonies will be at 9:00 am in the Steamboat/Silverton Room. After the opening ceremonies, and awards presentations the SAL will convene in the afternoon in the Vail Room for the Pre-convention DEC meeting The Pre-Convention DEC meeting will be conducted as normal business with officers and committee chairs presenting End-of-Year Officer and Committee .

The Convention meeting will be on Saturday morning starting approximately 9:00am. The Detachment Commander or other presiding officer will appoint such Convention Committees as deemed necessary but at a minimum, a Credentials Committee, Constitutional Amendments, Membership and a Resolutions Committee. The duties for these committees are outlined in the Detach-

ment Code for Convention, which is available on the Detachment website www.salcoorado.org.

On Saturday afternoon a final delegate report will be presented as well as convention Committee reports.

Voting on resolutions and special awards will take place in the afternoon session. Any resolutions submitted by squadrons that are properly formatted and were submitted prior to the established cut-off date off will be presented by the Convention Resolutions Committee. Any resolutions arising from Convention Committees, standing committees or ad-hoc committees will also be submitted for voting at this session as well.

After voting on the resolutions, nominations for special individual recognition awards will be read by the Adjutant. Special individual recognition awards consist of Mother of the Year, VA&R Volunteer of the Year, Dual Member of the Year and Outstanding Member of the Year. Nomination for these recognition awards must be submitted in writing using the form available on the Detachment website. Recipients of these awards are kept se-

cret until the Awards banquet in November.

Any Squadron which desires to host the annual CWF banquet will have a representative give a presentation and the convention will vote to select the host Squadron.

Election of officers will be the next item of business. Nominations will come from the floor with a five minute limit on the nominating speech and a three minute limitation on the second to the nomination,

Newly elected officers will be inducted following the elections.

The newly elected Commander will announce the date and time for the Post-convention DEC Meeting.

Installation of officers will be at the Testimonial Banquet on Saturday evening in Salon B.

On Sunday Morning at 8:30 The Four Chaplain’s and Department Memorial Service will be conducted by Pastor Stan Hamamoto in the Steamboat/Silverton Room

The Convention will adjourn at 9:30 am. Sunday .



Legislative News

From The American Legion Legislative Update

04-29-22

AMERICAN LEGION CONDEMNS FOR-PROFIT CLAIMS COMPANIES THAT PREY ON VETERANS

American Legion Deputy Director for Benefits and Claims Services Marty Callaghan testified April 27 at a congressional hearing focused on ensuring quality representation during the process of filing a claim for veterans' benefits. You can watch the full hearing here. Initiating a claim for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits can feel daunting and overwhelming. The American Legion provides experienced personnel to assist veterans with their claims free of charge. VA-accredited attorneys and agents provide vital services and work in close coordination with The American Legion and other veterans service organizations to ensure veterans have qualified representation for more complex cases. They provide critical services to veterans, including assistance in obtaining key information to prevail in a claim or appeal. National Legislative Division Weekly April 29, 2022 Their legal skills and training enable them to provide the "appropriate legal analysis for written arguments, with current citations to recent precedent-setting court opinions, to assist veterans in navigating VA's complex and evolving claims and appeals system," according to written testimony from The American Legion. Veterans are facing a serious and growing threat to the claims process as unaccredited, for-profit claims companies that charge for their services prey on veterans, Callaghan told the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs (HVAC) Subcommittees on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and Oversight and Investigations. "These companies often charge veterans five or six times the amount of whatever future increase in monthly benefits they receive — violating the intent of federal regulation, which prohibits the payment of fees based on future benefits compensation," he said. Because these companies are not accredited by VA, their activities cannot be monitored by VA's Office of General Counsel. They do not work in the best interests of our veterans, said Callaghan. "In their contractual language, some of these companies carefully limit their own responsibilities, making it clear they are not responsible for the actual filing of VA claims," he said. "They avoid responsibilities that may require any substantial effort. They do not like to involve themselves with pending claims because, as one contract stated, pending claims add a 'substantial additional workload ... these cases are typically a mess and extremely time consuming and we prefer to avoid them at all cost.'" This, says Callaghan, makes it overwhelmingly clear these unaccredited companies want to make as much money as they can, while doing as little work as possible without considering the veterans. "Providing claims assistance should not be about the money," Callaghan told lawmakers. "It should be about service to veterans and their families. The American Legion has been assisting the veterans' community for more than a century, and we are thoroughly invested in that community. Our dedication goes far beyond filling out some paperwork." American Legion Deputy Director for Benefits and Claims Services, Marty Callaghan, testifies at a Congressional hearing focused on ensuring quality representation during the process of filing a claim for veterans' benefits. National Legislative Division Weekly April 29, 2022

Callaghan commended VA for recently launching a Fraud Protection Campaign to protect veterans from these for-profit companies, but noted there is much more to be done to protect veterans from profiteering organizations who refuse to abide by VA regulations. The unaccredited, for-profit companies fail to comply with VA and professional guidelines and inflict serious financial harm on veterans due to the fees they charge. "They are taking millions of dollars from families who do not deserve such loss," said Callaghan. "Their quality of life must not suffer from the greed of others. Unaccredited claims companies are bad for our veterans, bad for their families, and bad for our country. What message do we send to the veterans' community by allowing these companies to grow rich from VA benefits?" To find an accredited American Legion service officer in your area, please visit www.legion.org/serviceofficers.

CONGRESS

The White House has submitted supplemental spending requests for \$22 billion to fight the ongoing COVID pandemic and for \$33 billion to provide more support to embattled Ukraine. When asked, President Biden said he does not care if Congress passes the measures together or separately, "but we need them both." House and Senate Appropriations Committees kept busy this week, with multiple hearings each day. House Appropriations Committee chair Rep. DeLauro (D-CT) called together her Senate counterpart and the top Republican lawmakers on the committees for a "Four Corners" meeting to start negotiating topline spending amounts. No decisions have been reported, but at least they are reportedly talking. House Armed Services Committee chair Rep. Smith (D-WA) says his committee will mark up the FY23 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on June 22. Subcommittees are aiming to hold their markups the week of June 6. The goal, as usual, is to have the full House pass the legislation before the August recess. The Senate Armed Services Committee has not yet announced its schedule. On Wednesday, House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) chair Rep. Takano (D-CA) introduced the Reduce and Eliminate Mental Health Outpatient Veteran Copays (REMOVE Copays) Act. The legislation, HR 7589, would eliminate all copays for a veteran's first three outpatient mental health appointments each year within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) system, including community referrals. Before adjourning for the weekend Thursday, the Senate confirmed, by voice vote, Frank Calvelli to become Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for space acquisition and Krystyn Jones to become the Air Force Comptroller, or Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for financial management. The Senate also approved all pending military nominations at the desk. National Legislative Division

HOUSE SENDS UKRAINE MILITARY AID LEND-LEASE BILL TO BIDEN'S DESK

The House passed Legion-supported legislation on Thursday establishing a lend-lease program to make it easier for the U.S. to send military aid to Ukraine, with the measure now headed to President Biden for his signature. The Ukrainian Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act would make it easier

to provide support to Ukraine as it defends itself against Russia's invasion, which has entered its third month. The bill passed by a vote of 417-10, with all 10 no votes coming from Republicans. The Senate passed the legislation by voice vote earlier this month as part of a deal to end permanent normal trade relations with Russia and Belarus, as well as a bill to ban Russian oil imports. The bipartisan bill, first introduced by Sens. John Cornyn (R-Texas) and Ben Cardin (D-Md.) in January, was aimed at streamlining power that the president already has under the Arms Export Control Act to lend and lease defense equipment when it is in the best interest of U.S. national security. "Ukrainian forces have demonstrated unbelievable strength and bravery, and we must again serve as the arsenal of democracy and ensure they have the full range of resources necessary to defend their sovereignty," Cornyn said in a statement following passage of the bill. "This legislation will be a game-changer for Ukraine, and I'm grateful to my House colleagues for recognizing its importance and quickly sending it to the President's desk," he continued. Passage of the bill came hours after Biden on Thursday sent a request to Congress for \$33.4 billion in additional assistance to Ukraine, including more than \$20 billion in security assistance for Ukraine and other military aid. The request also includes \$8.5 billion for economic assistance and \$3 billion in humanitarian assistance and food security funding. This wouldn't be the first time the U.S. implemented a lend-lease program help its partners. Prior to entering World War II in 1941, Washington established one to help Great Britain and other allies during World War II while not actively fighting in the war. The legislation comes as Russia's invasion of Ukraine drags into its third month. Washington has provided Ukraine with over \$4 billion in security assistance to Ukraine since the beginning of the Biden administration, including about \$3.4 billion since the invasion began on Feb. 24. **TOXIC EXPOSURES** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published an interim final rule this week establishing service presumption for nine rare respiratory cancers. Having found a "biological plausibility" there is a link between airborne hazards and the development of these diseases, the VA is removing the requirement that National Legislative Division Weekly April 29, 2022 veterans prove their cancer occurred due to exposures during military service. These cancers are so rare, the VA expects that only about 100 veterans have previously filed claims for these conditions. The nine cancers are: squamous cell carcinoma of the larynx; squamous cell carcinoma of the trachea; adenocarcinoma of the trachea; salivary gland-type tumors of the lung; large cell carcinoma of the lung; salivary gland-type tumors of the lung; sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung; and typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung. Veterans with these conditions can immediately file claims for VA care and benefits under the new rule.

05-06-22

AMERICAN LEGION CALLS FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM

The American Legion's National Security Commission has been reviewing immigration policy issues with those in the field to discuss needs with the border, visa application, legal

(Continued on page 5)

Legislative News

(Continued from page 4)

immigration application, asylum system and more. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency estimates that there are 11.4 million undocumented immigrants currently residing within the United States – approximately 45% of them arrived in the United States legally but have overstayed their visa. National Legislative Division Weekly May 6, 2022 The American Legion believes in legal immigration into the United States and a path toward becoming a U.S. citizen. To help in those efforts, the National Security Commission presented an immigration reform policy resolution during The American Legion's Spring Meetings May 5 in Indianapolis. Resolution No. 23, Immigration Reform, was adopted by the National Executive Committee. As stated, the resolution urges the U.S. government to:

- Adopt immigration reform policy that emphasizes border security, focusing on funding for barriers where needed, fielding of advanced technologies, and fully manning the border;
- Enact laws that improve visa security through thorough vetting of applicants, reducing visa overstay and ending visa programs that are vulnerable to exploitation by bad actors;
- Streamline the legal immigration application process so as to help reduce and discourage illegal immigration;
- Reform the asylum system and adhere to laws requiring detention and expedited due process and/or removal of illegal border crossers; and
- Strengthen immigration reform agreements with transit countries to discourage the flow of immigrants that attempt to enter the United States illegally.

THE VA AND THE SOUTHERN BORDER

The Biden Administration is reportedly about to lift Title 42 at the Southern border. The previous Administration had used the rule to send undocumented immigrants back to Mexico. Lifting the rule would allow these individuals to stay in the United States while awaiting asylum decisions. There has been a small firestorm in Congress and elsewhere at the prospect of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) calling upon the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to send medical personnel to the border to treat those immigrants for COVID and other conditions. As a result, for the last few weeks, Republican lawmakers have asked a number of VA witnesses whether VA personnel will be diverted from treating veterans to care for migrants. On Wednesday, VA Secretary McDonough hopefully put the matter to rest when he assured the Senate Appropriations Committee's Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee (SAC-Milcon) this will not happen. The American Legion recently passed Resolution 23, which calls for immigration reform

05-20-22

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS HEATH ROBINSON HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS

(PACT) ACT Senate Veterans Affairs Committee chair Sen. Tester (D-MT) and ranking member Sen. Moran (R-KS) on Wednesday announced an agreement to support the House-passed PACT Act. Previously, Moran and his Republican colleagues hesitated to support the legislation due to the cost and fears of overwhelming the VA's benefits and health care systems. The statement announcing the agreement did not indicate what changed GOP lawmakers' minds. Veterans service organizations (VSOs) and other advocates have been lobby-

ing heavily for the bill, which the House passed in March on a bipartisan basis (although only 34 Republicans voted in favor). The PACT Act expands VA health care eligibility to 3.5 million post-9/11 veterans who were exposed to burn pits and other toxins. It adds 23 service presumptions for the health effects from toxic exposures, including hypertension due to Agent Orange. It also expands areas in which veterans exposed to Agent Orange would qualify for service presumptions. The legislation also provides funding for 31 major leases Congress has previously authorized. The funding has been stalled in Congress because of the way CBO scores them for budgetary planning purposes. Finally, the legislation provides additional resources for the VA to bolster both claims processing and the provision of health care in order to manage the increased number of eligible veterans. The Senate intends to vote on the legislation around June 7 or 8. If the House needs to vote (due to the Senate changing language in its bill), Speaker Pelosi (D-CA) has promised prompt floor action. A Pentagon spokesman said on Thursday that Defense Secretary Austin speaks with VA Secretary McDonough about this topic on a regular basis. He did not indicate whether the two Departments have yet created a plan for identifying all service members who were exposed to burn pits and would be eligible for VA services under this legislation

VETERANS-RELATED LEGISLATION

Congress has a tradition of passing a bevy of veterans-related bills just before Memorial Day. On Tuesday, the House passed ten bills: National Legislative Division Weekly May 20, 2022

- o *S 3527, allowing the VA to transfer the name of facilities to other, similar facilities
- o *S 1760, naming the CBOC being built in Oahu, Hawaii, the Daniel Kahikina Akaka VA CBOC
- o *S 2514, naming the Provo Veterans Center in Orem, Utah, the Col. Gail S. Halvorsen "Candy Bomber" Veterans Center
- o HR 7500, FY22 VA Major Medical Facility Authorization Act
- o HR 5754, Patient Advocate Tracker Act
- o HR 6604, Veterans Eligibility to Transfer School (VETS) Credit Act
- o *S 2687, Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act of 2021
- o HR 7375, VA to allow for electronic fund transfer for educational assistance to foreign institutions of higher education
- o HR 6376, Student Veteran Work Study Modernization Act
- o HR 7153, VA Principles of Benefits Automation Act

On Wednesday, the House passed an additional nine bills:

- o HR 5738, Lactation Spaces for Veteran Moms Act
- o HR 7335, MST Claims Coordination Act
- o HR 6961, Dignity for MST Survivors Act
- o HR 6064, requiring the VA to have NASEM review examinations of those who submit claims to the VA for compensation for mental and physical conditions linked to MST
- o HR 2724, VA Peer Support Enhancement for MST Survivors Act
- o *S 4089, Veterans Rapid Retraining Assistance Program Restoration and Recovery Act
- o HR 6052, VA OIG Training Act
- o *S 2533, MAMMO for Veterans Act
- o *S 2102, Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act

The listed bills with an asterisk (*) have already passed the Senate, and are now headed to the President to be signed into law.

\$30B UKRAINE PACKAGE HEADS TO BIDEN'S DESK

The Senate voted 86-11 Thursday to approve a \$40 billion Ukraine aid package that would replenish U.S. stockpiles of weapons transferred to Ukraine, as well as allocate billions of dollars to help the Ukrainian government continue operating and provide humanitarian

assistance. President Biden is expected to immediately sign the legislation, which exceeds his \$33 billion request to Congress. The House passed the legislation overwhelmingly earlier this month by a vote of 368-57. The bill would authorize the transfer of American weapons and equipment to Ukraine and provide \$9 billion to replenish depleted U.S. weapons stockpiles. It would also provide nearly \$9 billion for continued operations of the Ukrainian government and \$4 billion in international disaster assistance. Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged Congress last week to pass the bill by Thursday if the U.S. wanted to continue sending aid to Ukraine at the current pace. The National Legislative Division Weekly May 20, 2022 administration had predicted that the \$100 million leftover in presidential drawdown authority—which allows the Pentagon to send weapons from its own stockpile — would last through the middle of May. Eleven Republican senators led by Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) voted against the measure.

Lamborn Protects Second Amendment Rights, Joins Effort Against Burdensome and Unconstitutional Gun Rule

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Washington, D.C.- Congressman Lamborn joined Congresswoman Hartzler and over 40 House Republican colleagues in pushing back against a final rule issued by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosive (ATF), which unconstitutionally restricts Second Amendment rights. On April 11, 2022, the [ATF announced](#) its final rule to redefine "frame or receiver" and "firearm" under federal law. Additionally, the rule requires federal firearms licensees, including gun retailers, to retain firearm transaction records until they go out of business—indefinitely expanding the ATF's records retention beyond the current 20-year requirement. "The ATF does not have the power or authority to undermine what Congress has clearly defined through legislation," said **Congressman Lamborn**. "This 'rule' is another attempt by the Biden Administration to usurp the rights of Americans. Rather than focus on public safety issues, this president has prioritized making 'criminals' out of law-abiding citizens. I am glad to join Congresswoman Hartzler and my colleagues in pushing back against the ATF and this nefarious 'rule.' I will continue to demand that the federal government follow the letter of the law and respect the 2nd Amendment rights of Americans." The ATF's expanded definition of a firearm, including privately made firearms and gun parts or kits, effectively expands the ATF's already illegal billion-record gun registry housed in the National Tracing Center in West Virginia, further violating federal law.

In the letter, the members state: "While the ATF may apply and enforce relevant laws passed by Congress, the ATF may not reinterpret laws in such a way that rewrites, undermines, or undoes what Congress has expressly legislated, especially if the sole intention is to broaden its regulatory authority for the purpose of eroding our Constitutional rights."

