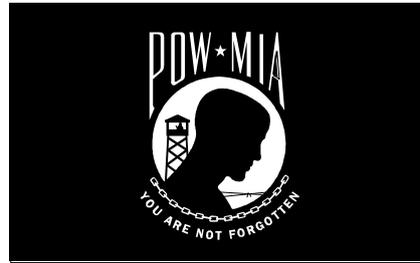


**ADJUTANT'S
NEWSLETTER**
OFFICE PHONE 856-8951
EMAIL:
ADJUTANTNH@LEGIONNH.ORG



THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE THE AMERICAN LEGION

TO MY LEGION FAMILY:



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Now that the elections are done and hopefully our country gets back to the business of taking care of its citizens and what is right for this country, our new President Elect, Donald Trump has already started making his presence known in support of the Constitution and what this country stands for. One of the things that has always been a matter of controversy and ignored by Washington is the protection of our flag. As you may know the American Legion has always tried to lobby the protections of our country's flag with little or no response by our congressional leaders. This hopefully is going to change.

The American Legion supports Trump on flag issue, calls for constitutional protection

(WASHINGTON) November 29, 2016 American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt praises President-elect Donald Trump for his support of the American flag. In a tweet, Mr. Trump said, "Nobody should be allowed to burn the American flag - if they do, there must be consequences - perhaps loss of citizenship or year in jail!"

As the leader of the nation's largest veterans service organization, Schmidt said, "Our brothers and sisters in arms have shed blood, even paid the ultimate sacrifice, in defense of our nation. The American flag represents their sacrifice and our nation's way of freedom. No one should tolerate desecration of the American flag."

The American Legion strongly advocates for a constitutional ban on flag burning, and calls on the new commander in chief to support such a ban with the following wording, "Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States."

There is strong support for such a law. Every U.S. state has passed memorializing resolutions to ratify a constitutional amendment prohibiting flag desecration. Additionally, the House of Representatives has passed an amendment six times by supermajorities, only to see it fall short in the Senate – by just one vote the last time it reached the floor.

"It's time to protect Old Glory from being burned or otherwise desecrated by protesters," Schmidt said. "We are not against civil protest or demonstrations. However, these protesters are not burning a piece of cloth. They are desecrating the sacrifice and honor of all past, present and future servicemembers and their family members, who have given so much to this great nation."

The American Legion is the largest wartime veteran’s service organization with 2.2 million members in more than 13,000 posts in communities across America. The Legion, established by an act of Congress in 1919, was instrumental in getting the original GI Bill through Congress and the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

American Legion Outlines Expectation for Respect of U.S. Flag

The American Legion believes in the U.S. flag and everything it stands for, and Legionnaires who fought for the nation’s symbol take deep pride in it. To continue its flag-protection efforts, the Legion’s National Executive Committee adopted a resolution at its recent Fall Meetings in Indianapolis that outlines the organization's expectation for rendering proper respect to the flag during Legion program participation at the department and national level.

Resolution 16 – brought forth by the Americanism Commission – also comes in light of recent actions by professional athletes, and now that of several youth sports teams, who are kneeling during the national anthem out of protest.

“The American Legion does not deny the right to protest, for that is a privilege given to all citizens of this great nation that is protected by our military and the service of our membership to defend our democracy,” said Richard Anderson, Americanism Commission chairman. “To foster and perpetuate a 100 per-cent Americanism’ defines our responsibility to instill character, citizenship and sportsmanship, among other values. Resolution 16 defines only a small commitment to our youth, to maintain the values upon which The American Legion was founded.”

As stated in the resolution, The American Legion expects participants of its programs to show proper respect to the U.S. flag at all times, including during the national anthem. It recommends for department and post leaders of all Legion programs to clearly state to individuals in advance of program participation about the organization’s expectation for respect of the flag. If a participant involved in any Legion program “cannot or will not” meet the Legion’s expectation, the resolution states that “the individual should not be a participant in American Legion programs.”

“While we cannot mandate this resolution to our respective departments, we hope that this will be a guideline for them to respond in a similar manner (as national) to teach and respect the honor and rights of American citizenship and its responsibilities,” Anderson said.

For individuals participating in American Legion programs at the national level, the resolution states that those who “cannot or will not” meet the organization’s expectations for proper flag respect “will be re-moved from the program and not be allowed any further participation.”

“The resolution is going to set an example for our youth, and our youth will lead by example, for respecting our flag and respecting our national anthem,” said American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt. “And hopefully our youth, through our American Legion programs, will be examples for those professionals who choose not to respect our flag and our national anthem.

“That’s what The American Legion does – we are building great role models for the future of this organization and for this country.”

This article was originally published online at www.legion.org on October 17, 2016

AVOIDING SCAMS

It is that time of the year again where we will see an influx of scammers trying to take advantage of our elderly, but these days almost anymore can be a victim of a scam. Including yours truly, even with all the law enforcement experience I have had I was scammed for a fund raiser some years ago this time of the year. One of the scams going on currently of which I still get is someone calling saying they are with the IRS and there is an arrest warrant out for your arrest which will be acted on unless you pay them so much money to hold it. Do NOT be fooled.

But these days the biggest scam effecting veterans are those misrepresenting the VA for services that are already free to many veterans and their families. I am including some good things to look at to help you recognize and react to possible scams that may be going on out there.

- Don't pay for a service that is free. There is no cost for forms or to apply for veterans [benefits](#), and you can get free assistance from trained veterans service officers across the [United States](#). Check the [VA's](#) accreditation of a person or group.
- Ask an advisor what the impact of purchasing his product will be on your eligibility for other [benefits](#) such as Medicaid.
- Take time to consider your options before signing a contract.
- Don't be pressured into accepting an advisor's advice. If an advisor pressures you, or offers vague or evasive answers to your questions, take those as indicators you should not trust them with your money or paperwork.
- Get everything you've discussed in writing.
- Don't believe a promise or guarantee offered by an advisor claiming they can secure [Aid and Attendance benefits](#). There are no guarantees.
- Dishonest businesses target the military community through advertising, [discounted](#) merchandise, and services and financing. In many cases, service members become aware they've been sold grossly overpriced jewelry, household goods, and electronics only after making these purchases.
- Additionally, some businesses engage in abusive collection practices, like constantly contacting the service members' superiors, which causes some to lose security clearances and face other backlash. Some of these businesses have sued to collect on its loans in only a few limited jurisdictions despite the service member's location, deployment status or residence.
- These unlawful business practices are circulated through misrepresentations and omissions in advertising.
- Comparison-shop costs of both merchandise and financing.
- Get referrals and recommendations from friends, family members, and online sources.
- Contact the Better Business Bureau to see whether the business is accredited and whether there are any complaints against the company.
- Read any financing materials very closely and ask questions.
- Disreputable charities capitalize on the selfless nature of the military community by soliciting them for donations to benefit specific groups of veterans. But some of these entities have either misrepresented themselves as well-known or respected charities, or they have misrepresented who will receive the benefit of these donations or how much of the donation they will receive.
- Ask for and read literature about a charity before you make a donation.
- Find out how much of your donation helps people and program services, as opposed to fundraising and administrative expenses.
- Do not feel pressured to contribute on the spot.
- If you decide to contribute, pay by check. Make the check out to the charity, not to a company or the individual collecting the donations.

Veterans who have questions or believe they are victims of these [scams](#) may call the Attorney General's Office of Military and [Veterans Affairs](#) at [717-783-1944](tel:717-783-1944) or email pavets@attorneygeneral.gov

Below are some contacts you can go to verify a scam or not, and to also get the right information for looking to get or ask questions about benefits.

PLEASE SHARE! Wednesday, Dec 7th at 6:00pm, VA Healthcare (VHA) Bedford and Boston join with VA Benefits (VBA) and VA Cemetery (NCA) leadership and staff to listen to Veterans, answer questions and help you to get the benefits and services you deserve. Enrollment specialists will be present. There will be an observance of Pearl Harbor in honor of the 75th Anniversary at the beginning of the Town Hall. All welcome. Town Hall will be held at the Bedford American Legion Post, 357 Great Road, Bedford, MA.

VERY RESPECTFULLY,

RICHARD E. BARBATO
OUTREACH SPECIALIST
LOWELL VET CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

MAIN OFFICE:
10 GEORGE STREET
LOWELL, MA, 01852

WEB-SITE: [HTTP://WWW.VETCENTER.VA.GOV/](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/)

BLACKBERRY: (781) 382-5911
OFFICE PH: (978) 453-1151
ALTERNATE OFFICE LINE: (781) 687-4944
OFFICE FAX: (978) 441-1271

COMMUNITY ACCESS POINTS IN HAVERHILL AND GLOUCESTER

FOR ASSISTANCE AFTER HOURS, WEEKENDS, AND HOLIDAYS, PLEASE CALL THE VET CENTER CALL CENTER AT: 1-877-WAR-VETS (1-877-927-8387)

VETERANS CRISIS LINE:



NEWS OF INTEREST TO VETERANS



Over Obama's objection, Congress agrees on a bigger military pay raise, more troops

Military personnel would see a 2.1 percent pay raise starting in January and a significant manpower boost within the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps as part of Congress' annual defense spending bill unveiled Tuesday.

The compromise measure also includes a massive overhaul of the military health care system, but it eliminates a controversial proposal to change troops' housing allowance, leaving the military's current stipend program largely unchanged. Totalling nearly \$619 billion, the bill represents lawmakers' final offer to the White House, omitting several problematic provisions debated in recent months.

But that's still about \$3.2 billion more than President Barack Obama's request, setting up a potential veto. Obama has said he won't accept an increase in defense spending without corresponding increases in nonmilitary programs. If the president intends to make good on that threat, he'll have to squash several measures that would benefit the military workforce at a time when many troops and their families feel their compensation and overall quality of life have slipped.

That's because the extra money — tucked into overseas contingency funds, to get around defense spending caps — is used mainly to pay for additional pay and personnel costs. It pushes the 2017 military pay raise from the Pentagon-preferred rate of 1.6 percent to 2.1 percent, a mark equal to the projected rise in private sector wages. If it stands, 2017 will be the first time in six years that the military pay raise tops 2 percent.

Military budget planners had said that money would be better used to pay for training and modernization costs, but lawmakers have argued that three consecutive years of pay raise trims have begun to hurt military families' finances.

Lawmakers also used the additional funds to reject Obama's plans to draw down Army and Marine Corps end strength, again to cut long-term personnel costs.

Under the final authorization draft, Army end strength would be set at 476,000 soldiers, about 16,000 more than the White House had requested for fiscal 2017.

The Marine Corps would be at 185,000 troops, an increase of about 3,000 over requested levels. The Air Force would go to 321,000 airmen, around 4,000 more than Obama wanted.

The Navy would remain at 324,000 sailors.

The defense health care overhaul would transfer control of most military medical facilities to the Defense Health Agency and put in place new fees for enrollment in Tricare. But those fees would affect only new enlistees. All current troops and retirees in the system would not see any increases.

The authorization bill also mandates a reduction in flag and general officers in years to come, trimming about 12 percent of the total now, and includes dramatic changes in defense acquisition processes. Congressional staff touted the final product as one of the most significant pieces of reform legislation in years, touching on a variety of agencies and issues.

But congressional negotiators did drop plans that would have changed even more. A Senate-led plan to award Basic Allowance for Housing stipends based on individual troops' rent costs, instead of flat-rates based on zip codes, was removed. A provision to charge military families health care enrollment fees was similarly dismissed.

Lawmakers did include a provision to deal with the recent California National Guard bonus recoupment scandal, shifting the burden of proof for accusations of fraud or misuse to the Defense Department instead of individual troops. A hearing is scheduled on that issue next week.

The House is expected to vote on the final defense authorization bill draft on Friday, and the Senate is expected to take up the legislation next week. Whether Obama will veto the measure over the extra personnel funds will be among the last legislative decisions of his presidency.

The authorization bill sets defense policy and spending priorities for current fiscal year, but does not actually assign the money for those initiatives. The appropriations process, which distributes the money, has been stalled on Capitol Hill for months.

Over the next few days, lawmakers will need to finalize plans for a continuing resolution to extend federal spending at fiscal 2016 levels into March. Republican leaders in both chambers have said that will allow incoming President Donald Trump to set his own budget priorities for federal programs, but Pentagon leaders have lamented the move as problematic for new purchases and program starts.

Appropriations officials have already said they will adjust some budget items to provide for some increases above fiscal 2016 levels, including the military pay raise. That will go into effect on Jan. 1.

(Leo Shane III, Military Times, November 29, 2016)

DEPARTMENT NEWS:

On November 29 our Bookkeeper, Jim Dupont, of Post 1, Laconia, was involved in a serious accident due to the weather conditions. Jim's vehicle was struck by a cement truck that was out of control and had to be cut out of his vehicle. As a result Jim has suffered numerous injuries, none of which are life threatening but he did require surgery.

Currently Jim is hospitalized at Concord Hospital and if you would like to contact him the department will have that information at the office.

Jim will be sorely missed since his duties are an integral part of the financial operations of this department and we will have to adjust somewhat to maintain those financial operations while he is out. I ask everyone to bear with us. I ask that you continue to send in your membership on a regular basis and we will process it as soon as we can.

I ask that you keep him in your thoughts and prayers and wish him a quick recovery.

Thanks for your support.

Reminder: Mid-Winter Conference is scheduled for January 28, 2017, at Post 7 in Rochester N.H. An agenda to this conference will be out in January's news letter.

**THANKS TO ALL FOR YOUR SERVICE
HAVE A GREAT HOLIDAY SEASON**

Please Post