



JWV of the USA • 2018 Resolutions

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BURN PITS

WHEREAS, burn pits were massive areas wherein everything combustible was thrown and burned; and

WHEREAS, burn pits were located throughout Southwest Asia, and

WHEREAS, the burned combustibles included human waste, discarded food, medical waste, petroleum and even human body parts, and

WHEREAS, the military has denied that there were any ill effects on the men and women assigned to operate these burn pits, and

WHEREAS, the burn pits not only exposed the men and women who operated them but. also, the troops located in their proximity, and

WHEREAS, these men and women are now suffering the ill effects of the burn pits on their health, and

WHEREAS, these denials have a familiar ring to them in the minds of the Vietnam veterans and their issues with the military's denial of any ill effects of Agent Orange and other herbicides;

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans calls upon Congress to appoint a truly independent study commission to review the entire issue of the burn pits and their effects upon the men and women who served in the areas surrounding these burn pits.

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CENTER FOR MEDICARE/MEDICAID SERVICES UNFAIRNESS

WHEREAS, the Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) will cease to reimburse a State-operated veterans' facility when a veteran leaves the facility for ten days within a calendar year for other than medical reasons, and

WHEREAS, a facility may hold the bed open until the veteran returns but does so at its own expense, and

WHEREAS, most state-run facilities cannot afford to hold a bed available at its own cost, and

WHEREAS, this policy of the CMS may result in a veteran not being able to return to the facility for several months and is, thus, homeless, and

WHEREAS, the CMS is inflexible in its policy thereby requiring a veteran to shorten a visitation with friends and family so as not to lose a bed but at the risk of losing friends and family emotional support,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA calls upon the Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services to review its policy on veterans leaving a facility for more than ten days so as to allow the veteran to maintain a support system of family and friends by visitations that extend beyond the ten days per year maximum.

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FIRST RESPONDERS APPRECIATION DAY

WHEREAS, First Responders are the men and women who answer the call when a crisis occurs, and

WHEREAS, First Responders run toward a dangerous situation while most individuals run away from danger, and

WHEREAS, we, the general public, can never do enough to thank those who serve as First Responders, and

WHEREAS, First Responders deserve all the accolades and kudos we can bestow upon them,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA calls upon Congress and the President to set aside one day each year to recognize the self-sacrifice and heroic acts that First Responders perform every day of every year.

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INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEER-TO-PEER COUNSELORS FOR FEMALE VETERANS

WHEREAS, there is now before the Senate, S.2402, which had been passed by the House of Representatives (H.R. 2147), and

WHEREAS, this bill requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase the number of peer-to-peer counselors providing counseling for female veterans, and

WHEREAS, the bill directs the Secretary to seek counselors with expertise in female gender-specific issues and services and employment mentoring, and

WHEREAS, the target population is female veterans that suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or other mental health condition, are homeless or at risk of being homeless, or are at risk of suicide, and

WHEREAS, the Secretary is directed to coordinate his efforts with community organizations, State and local governments, institutes of higher education, chambers of commerce, organizations that provide legal services, and

WHEREAS, the bill provides for the Secretary to provide adequate training to these counselors,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA calls upon the Senate to pass the House bill immediately and forward the now-approved bill to the President for his signature.

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MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION-STUDENT 2 STUDENT

WHEREAS, Student 2 Student (S2S) is a student-led organization founded by the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) designed to raise awareness of the educational concerns of military-connected children and to share the impact being a military-connected student; and

WHEREAS, military-connected children move on the average of 6-9 times during their first twelve years of schooling; and

WHEREAS, these transitions create a variety of educational challenges and, while the Military Interstate Compact Commission was designated to address many of these unique challenges, there still remains the need to provide constant academic transition policy in every school and in every state; and

WHEREAS, military-connected students need peer perspective guiding them in their new community; and

WHEREAS, S2S is founded on six core values of leadership, academics, service, finding the way, relationships and 100% acceptance, and assisting transitioning students in adapting to their new schools, and

WHEREAS, many of the participants in S2S are military-connected students themselves,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA totally supports the efforts of the Military Child Education Coalition and Students 2 Students in their efforts to gain the support of Congress and the various Departments in the Cabinet to recognize the unique needs of the military-connected student population.

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PRESERVATION OF JEWISH ANTIQUITIES/RELICS FOUND IN IRAQ

WHEREAS, American troops found Jewish antiquities and relics in the flooded basement of the Iraqi Secret Service during the operations to rid Iraq of Saddam Hussam, and

WHEREAS, these antiquities, include Torah scrolls, wedding documents, and learned treatises, came into the possession of the Iraqi government by nefarious means, and

WHEREAS, these antiquities are the relics of the Jews who had been in that area of the globe long before the establishment of “Iraq” and are not antiquities of the non-Jewish population of that country, and

WHEREAS, those relics have been transported to the United States for restoration and preservation as they were in horrendous condition, moldy and obviously never cared for by the Iraqi government, and

WHEREAS, these relics are not the property of the Iraqi government but of the Jews that lived in that area of the globe since biblical times, and

WHEREAS, as a result of the persecution of the Jews in Iraq by the Iraqi government, there is presently a handful, if any, Jews still within the borders of Iraq, and

WHEREAS, based on the recent history of the Iraqi government toward its own Jewish population, it seems all too possible that these relics will, again, be allowed to be ill-treated and allowed to be destroyed if only by neglect and disrespect,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA goes on record demanding that these Jewish antiquities/relics be preserved by a government or other agency that will preserve them for all to see and study and NOT be returned to the government of Iraq who has given no assurance that they will be preserved and shown the respect such historical and sacred documents warrant and deserve particularly in light of that government’s persecution of it’s own Jewish citizenry.

FURTHERMORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA extends a sincere thank you to those members of Congress who are imploring the Department of State NOT to return these antiquities to the government of Iraq while discussions of their future location are still ongoing within the United States.

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PROTECTING MILITARY RETIREES BENEFITS

WHEREAS, Armed Forces Retirement Home residents are scheduled to see significant increases in their rentals in several major cities, and

WHEREAS, the cost of rent is based on income for residing in the independent living area and will increase from 40% of their income to 60%, and

WHEREAS, the maximum rent will increase from \$1,458 to \$3,054 per month, and

WHEREAS, there is a proposal before Congress to repeal the grandfather clause in the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act that would increase the cost of TRICARE for those who are under 65 years of age from \$282 individual and \$565 family to \$350 and \$700, while TRICARE select would jump from \$150 and \$300 to \$450 and \$900, and

WHEREAS, these two acts, when taken together, demonstrate a malevolent posture taken by some in positions of power and an anti-veteran animus.

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of USA calls upon Congress to prevent these twin attacks on our retired military.

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PURPLE HEART FOR THOSE SUFFERING COMBAT-RELATED PTSD

WHEREAS, the Purple Heart is awarded to those who suffer battle-related wounds, and

WHEREAS, the men and women suffering the wounds caused by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder can be as debilitating as those suffering physical wounds, and

WHEREAS, the military and society generally recognize the injury known as PTSD, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans' Affairs compensates and treats those suffering from PTSD in the same fashion as veterans suffering more obvious wounds, and

WHEREAS, PTSD leaves permanent scars in the same fashion as do physical wounds, and

WHEREAS, men and women who were wounded as the result of hostile action, and

WHEREAS, there is no cogent rationale to distinguish between wounds to the physical body rather than the mental body,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA calls upon our representatives to award the Purple Heart to the men and women suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as a result of combat with a hostile force.

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RABBIS IN THE MILITARY

WHEREAS, there is a shortage of Rabbis in the military, and

WHEREAS, there are numerous Jewish service members who does not have the benefit of counseling by a Jewish chaplain due to this shortage of Rabbis, and

WHEREAS, service in the military is an honorable profession and method of repaying the United States of America for the freedom we enjoy in this great Nation, and

WHEREAS, enlistment in the military should be encouraged by the Rabbinical seminaries of their graduates as a duty and privilege, and

WHEREAS, with the assistance and emphasis by and of the seminaries the shortage could be alleviated or even eliminated;

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA, in partnership with other concerned organizations, shall contact all seminaries that graduate Rabbinical students qualified for the military chaplaincy and encourage them to encourage their respective graduates to consider entering the Armed Forces of the United States as a viable professional career path.

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REORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, there currently exists within the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Veterans Health Administration, the Veterans Benefits Administration, and the National Cemetery Administration, and

WHEREAS, the numerous agencies and administrations that sponsor, oversee and fund other programs designed to help and assist veterans scattered throughout the Federal bureaucracy, and

WHEREAS, these various agencies do not necessarily coordinate these programs in a cohesive manner, and

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Education, Transition and Opportunity Prioritization Plan (VET OPP Act of 2018) would place under the VBA economic opportunity programs for veterans and their survivors and their families, and

WHEREAS, the VET OPP Act of 2018 would create a new Bureau within the Department of Veterans Affairs entitled the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, led by an Under Secretary appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, and

WHEREAS, the new Administration would absorb several programs now within the VBA, including vocational rehabilitation and employment programs, educational assistance programs, housing and loan programs, and verification of small businesses owned by veterans, and

WHEREAS, this organization would, also, capture the Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program but would not disturb the employment assistance programs now within the Department of Labor; and

WHEREAS, several of our fellow veterans' organizations and associations have come out in support of the VET OPP Act of 2018;

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA joins with those who support the passage of the Veterans' Education, Transition and Opportunity Act of 2018 (VET OPP Act of 2018).

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REPATRIATED REMAINS

WHEREAS, as a result of direct discussions between the President of the United States, Donald Trump, and the Chairman of North Korea, Kim Jong Un, the alleged remains of 55 soldiers killed during the Korean Conflict were turned over to American authorities, and

WHEREAS, these remains were repatriated on the 65th anniversary marking the effective date of the Armistice ending the shooting war on the Korean peninsula, and

WHEREAS, while many issues still exist between these two Nations, North Korea has said it will cooperate and assist in the repatriation of additional sets of remains, and

WHEREAS, the possibility of future cooperation and assistance is a positive sign for the families of men missing in action since the signing of the Armistice in 1953, and

WHEREAS, the return of these remains is the start of the healing process and a sense of closure for possibly 55 families,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA wishes to thank President Trump and Chairman Kim for jointly working together to obtain the repatriation of these 55 remains and the promise of further joint efforts for the discovery and repatriation of additional remains.

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SHORTAGE OF MEDICAL PERSONNEL

WHEREAS, there continues to exist a shortage of qualified medical personnel within the Department of Veterans' Affairs healthcare system, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans' Affairs has 170 Medical Centers and 1,082 outpatient sites, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans' Affairs medical staffing shortage is due to non-competitive salaries, high turnover, and lack of qualified applicants, and

WHEREAS, the Inspector General found inadequate staffing in the areas of psychiatry, primary care, psychology, and medical technology, and

WHEREAS, the general consensus is these shortages are related to non-competitive salaries offered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA calls upon Congress to authorize such salaries and benefits as to make employment with the VA a viable career path.

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SUICIDE PREVENTION

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans' Affairs continues to report some 20.6 suicides per day, and

WHEREAS, 16.8 of these suicides were veterans, and

WHEREAS, 3.8 of these suicides were either active-duty servicemembers, members of the guard or reserve, and

WHEREAS, this equates to 1,319 deaths in one year, a number that represents more than 42 times the number of military killed in action in 2017, and

WHEREAS, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA acknowledges the efforts taken to reduce and prevent this rate of suicides,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA calls upon the Departments of Defense and Veterans' Affairs to increase their efforts in suicide prevention including but not limited to permitting members of the military and veterans to seek counseling without those efforts blemishing their military or civilian jobs.

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“THE VETERAN’S CREED”

WHEREAS, several veterans’ service organizations have endorsed “The Veteran’s Creed” as a statement encouraging veterans of all wars to continue their involvement in their service to this Nation, and

WHEREAS, The Veteran’s Creed truly expresses the philosophy of the Jewish War Veterans of the USA and its members, and

WHEREAS, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA adopts The Veteran’s Creed as a veterans’ service organization,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA says,

The Veteran’s Creed

I am an American Veteran.

I proudly served my country.

I live the values I learned in the military.

I continue to serve my community, my country and my fellow veterans.

I maintain my physical and mental discipline

I continue to lead and improve.

I make a difference.

I honor and remember my fallen comrades.

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VETERANS TREATMENT COURT IMPROVEMENT ACT

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2018, the House of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate the Veterans Treatment Court Improvement Act, and

WHEREAS, the proposed act requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire 50 new Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists and place them in 50 different eligible Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, and

WHEREAS, these Veterans Justice Outreach specialists shall serve, either exclusively or in addition to other duties, as part of a justice team in a veteran treatment court or other veteran-focus court, and

WHEREAS, to meet the criteria of an eligible medical center, a Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center must work within a local criminal justice system with justice-involved veterans and must maintain an affiliation with one or more veteran treatment courts or other veteran-focused court, and,

WHEREAS, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA has, in prior years recognized the importance of Veterans Courts and Veterans-Focused Courts as of vital importance to veterans who, often, bring before the justice system a unique set of issues, frequently arising out of their military service,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA, in the strongest sense of urgency, asks the Senate to set aside other business so the that Veterans Treatment Court Improvement Act can be on the President's desk on or before Veterans Day, 2018.

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WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL AT BLADENSBURG, MD

WHEREAS, the Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit ruled in a 2-1 decision that the “Peace Cross” at Bladensburg violates the First Amendment proscription against establishing religion, and

WHEREAS, the Peace Cross was erected in 1925 as a 40 foot cross in honor of the 49 men from Prince George’s County, Maryland who died during World War I, and

WHEREAS, the Cross is owned and operated by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and is located in one of the busiest intersections in the County, using tax-payer money for its upkeep and maintenance, and

WHEREAS, the Cross was acquired by the Commission from the American Legion in 1961 due to development around the Cross’ site, and

WHEREAS, the American Legion is now prepared to ask the Supreme Court to review the Circuit Court’s opinion,

THEREFORE, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA requests our comrades in the American Legion to reconsider their position and allow the “Peace Cross” to be either moved onto private land or be otherwise modified so as to fairly represent all the men and women who served during World War I.

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