

Resolution 15
Rehabilitation Committee

VA limiting new hiring has negative impact on Claims process

Whereas, the Secretary of the VA has decided to leave thousands of positions unfilled, despite the lifting of the hiring freeze, citing the need for a leaner VA as it develops a longer-term plan to allow more veterans to seek medical care in the private sector, and

Whereas, the Secretary is currently relying on Non-VA entities to complete Compensation & Pension Examinations, and

Whereas, the Secretaries decisions are already being felt with tremendous shortages in Compensation & Pension Offices throughout the VHA, and

Whereas, many of the Contract exams are not being conducted within the guidelines of the 38 USC, C38CFR, or the DSM5 because the examiners cannot access the VHA electronic health records nor can they access the veterans service records, and

Whereas, this lack of access prevents the examiners for providing positive links between medical conditions and military service, and also prevents them from providing reasons & basis for their decisions, and

Whereas, the improper decisions forces the veterans and their advocates to enter the Notice of Disagreement and appeals process, and

Whereas, *THIS IS ESSENTIALLY "KICKING THE CAN DOWN THE STREET"*, AND

Whereas, Compensation & Pension Examiners at the VHA are essential in completing proper protocol to warrant a positive decision through the VBA claims process, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that the American Legion strongly urge the Secretary of the VA to change his stance and require all vacant positions in the Comp & Pen offices be filled, and

Be it Further Resolved, that the American Legion work closely with Congress and the President ensure proper oversight is given in respect to the impact of VHA C&P Examiners on the mounting claims process, and

Be it Further Resolved, that this resolution be approved at the Department Convention in Syracuse, NY on July 20-22, 2017, and

Be it Finally Resolved, that his resolution be forwarded to the National Organization for consideration at the National Convention in Reno, Nevada on August 18-24, 2017.