

DEPARTMENT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
February 13, 2016

The meeting of the Department Legislative Committee was called to order by John Knox, Alternate Chairman on Saturday February 13, 2016, at 1:00 p.m. in the Madison/Mckinley Room of the Holiday Inn Gateway Center in Flint, Michigan. The following members were present: John Knox, Tim Poxson, and Joe Renis.

GUESTS: 6

Meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

It was moved by Poxson and supported by Renis to accept the minutes of the Department Legislative Committee from Fall Conference. Motion carried.

Report by Mark Sutton on Department and State Legislative Activities:

- Over \$406 million returned to Michigan Veterans in Benefits
- Support Charitable Gaming changes for Non-Profit Organizations (SB187)
- Supporting HB4136 which would require High School students to take an online civics exam and pass with 60% or better
- Test in Regional 9& 4 on May 1. This tests the application process. Goal is to reduce admin costs.
- Nationally, Rep Benishek introduced HR1769 to establish in the VA a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service.
- A-106 are saved for now. Continue to advocate support of A-10 platform and mission of Selfridge Air Base.
- Continuing to put Legislature to increase Licensing/Apprenticeship and pushing to expand to more fields.
- Governor's Budget: Still unknown yet what the VSO dollar amount is.
- Calling into question the Veteran's Home modernization that the change in governor may not be following the guidelines of the Michigan Veteran's Facility Act 152 of 1885.

Bills introduced

- HB5332: to define who is considered a veteran
- HB5347: licensing of veterans businesses without cost
- HB5346: amendments of 1885 PA152

All Veteran's Organization opposed to changes in claim requirements in HR1927 "Fairness in Class Action Litigation and Furthering Asbestos claims Transparency Act"

Mark Sutton has had meeting with Reps Inman, Barrett, O'Brien and others educating them on Veterans and Legion concerns.

National Commander Dale Barnett addressed the committee. He will be testifying February 24 in Washington DC. His two main emphasis items are:

- VA Accountability

-Electronic medical records

Michigan Dept. Legion representatives will be traveling to Washington DC the week of February 22 to voice Department concerns.

The committee concurred with the above positions and actions of the Department.

Resolutions were read.

The Legislative committee recommends support of Resolution 16-3-W, which opposes HB4642-Amend Veterans Trust Fund Act.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before this committee, it was moved by Joe Renis and supported by Paxson that the meeting to adjourned at 1:55 p.m. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Knox", written in a cursive style.

JOHN KNOX, ACTING CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE