

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

Resolution Number: 25-23
Submitted by: Legislative Committee
Subject: Claims filed by Accredited Service Officers for Veterans
in the State of Michigan

- WHEREAS,** The American Legion Department of Michigan supports existing Title 38 CFR § 14.629(b)(1) that prohibits any party from assisting a veteran in the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claim unless they are accredited through VA for such purposes; and
- WHEREAS,** Title 38 CFR & 14.629 has no provisions for prosecution or fines if a claim is filed by a non-accredited VA person so no prosecutions have taken place and
- WHEREAS,** Fee's charged by some non-accredited agencies have been known to be as high as thirty percent (30%) of the claim award; and
- WHEREAS,** The American Legion and other Veteran Service Organizations, the Michigan Veteran Service Officers Coalition, do not charge a fee to assist veterans in the preparation, presentation, or legal representation of claims to the VA; and
- WHEREAS,** The American Legion Department of Michigan has deep concerns regarding the protection and security of sensitive personal data and medical information of military veterans; and
- WHEREAS,** Granting unaccredited parties, particularly those with foreign ownership, access to such data poses a potential risk of unauthorized access, misuse, or exploitation, thereby compromising the privacy and well-being of veterans; and
- WHEREAS,** The review of claims for benefits under laws administered by the VA secretary should remain within the purview and oversight of accredited entities accountable to the American people; and
- WHEREAS,** Retaining these processes within accredited agencies Service Organization's ensures the highest level of expertise, transparency, and adaptability to meet the evolving needs of veterans' care; and
- WHEREAS;** The American Legion recognizes that during both the 118 and the 119 congress two competing bills have been introduced however neither has passed the full process to become law; and

WHEREAS; One of the bills will let unaccredited lawyers file claims with restrictions (HR 3132 the Choice Act); and

WHEREAS; One of the bills will let only accredited Lawyers and Service Officers file claims (HR 1732 The Guard act); and

WHEREAS; The State of Michigan has no law at this time with restrictions on who can file VA Claims; and

WHEREAS; The Michigan American Legion supports restrictions on those who file claims for Veterans; and

WHEREAS; There for the Michigan American Legion at this time supports restrictions that will place some guardrails on unaccredited Lawyers; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion recognizes the potential national security risks associated with outsourcing the process and filing of veteran disability claims to unaccredited parties, particularly those with foreign ownership; and

WHEREAS; Further, that the Legislative Chair will work with the Legislators to get the Guard act into Michigan law should it or any like legislation pass in Congress and is signed by the President of the United States into law; and

WHEREAS, The Resolution dated February 9-2024 is here by rescinded and reworded as noted above; and now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Michigan at its Fall Department Conference assembled in Battle Creek at the Doubletree Hotel on September 25 thru September 28, 2025 , Supports Legislation that the State of Michigan pass legislation that puts guardrails in place to control non accredited persons from filing claims for Veterans and those laws be passed for the prosecution of anyone who works outside of those guardrails. Furthermore, that the State of Michigan adopt stricter laws should the U.S. Congress pass such legislation, and it is signed into law by the President of the United States.