THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION: **26-12**

SUBJECT: Establishment of District Veteran Scholarships Utilizing Existing American Legion Department of Michigan Funds

SUBMITTED BY: Education & Scholarship Committee

WHEREAS, Per the State of Michigan Department of Education, a total of 37,208 Veterans are enrolled in Michigan colleges. Of these, 9,302 students were able to utilize a form of GI Bills, additionally, 27,906 Veterans were not eligible for any of the GI Bill programs, highlighting a significant gap in educational support for Michigan Veterans; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation is one of the Four Pillars of The American Legion, dedicated to assisting veterans in overcoming barriers related to service-connected transition, economic hardship, and reintegration into civilian life; and

WHEREAS, Many Veterans within the American Legion Department of Michigan pursue higher education, trade school education, vocational training, technical certification, apprenticeships, and professional development as part of their rehabilitation, self-sufficiency, and long-term economic stability; and

WHEREAS, Veterans often face urgent need for educational support due to time restrictions on GI Bill benefits, making scholarships critical to completing training, trade school programs, or other professional development opportunities; and

Rejected

WHEREAS, Education, workforce training, and skilled trades instruction serve as rehabilitative tools that assist Veterans in addressing employment challenges, financial stressors, and post-service adjustment; and

WHEREAS, The establishment of a structured and sustainable scholarship program directly supports the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Pillar by promoting Veteran independence, employability, and recovery through education, trade skills, and workforce readiness; and

WHEREAS, Providing scholarships on a district basis promotes equitable access to rehabilitative assistance throughout all districts of the American Legion Department of Michigan while allowing flexibility based on Veteran need and applicant demand; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Department of Michigan periodically maintains unused or unallocated funds that may be responsibly reinvested into mission-driven programs that directly benefit Veterans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Department of Michigan Education and Scholarship Committee is authorized under the American Legion Department Michigan Constitution and Bylaws to administer scholarship programs and ensure proper oversight and accountability; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, by the American Legion Department of Michigan, in 2026 Summer Convention assembled in Battle Creek, Michigan, that there is hereby established an annual Veteran scholarship program administered by the American Legion Department of Michigan Education and Scholarship Committee; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the program shall provide a minimum of two (2) scholarships per district, each in the minimum amount of One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00), to eligible veterans; and BE IT FURTHER

Rejected

RESOLVED, that if a district does not have qualified applicants in a given year, any unused scholarship capacity or funding may be reallocated by the Department of Michigan Education and Scholarship Committee to districts with additional qualified applicants, allowing all eligible veterans to be considered for award when funds permit; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that eligibility for said scholarships shall be limited to veterans who are members in good standing of The American Legion, Department of Michigan, at the time of application and award, and who meet any additional criteria established by the Department of Michigan Education and Scholarship Committee; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that funding for this scholarship program shall be derived from unused and/or unallocated funds of The American Legion, Department of Michigan, as approved through established financial and budgetary procedures, and shall not require an increase in Department membership dues; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that all monies designated for this program shall be included as a designated line item within the American Legion Department of Michigan annual budget, approved in accordance with American Legion Department of Michigan financial procedures, and tracked separately for transparency and reporting purposes; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the American Legion Department of Michigan Treasurer shall maintain accurate and complete financial records related to this program, subject to audit in accordance with American Legion Department of Michigan financial policies and bylaws; and BE IT FURTHER

Rejected

RESOLVED, that the Chairman of the American Legion Department of Michigan Education and Scholarship Committee shall submit a written annual report and present said report at the Annual Summer Convention, detailing scholarship awards, expenditures, and program activity; said report shall become part of the official Convention record; and BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED, that this resolution shall remain in full force and effect unless amended or rescinded in accordance with the American Legion Department of Michigan Constitution and Bylaws.

Rejected