

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2009

DRAFT

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on October 14, 2009, at the American Legion Building, 1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond.

Members Present

- George Coker, *American Ex-POWs*
- Brett Reistad, *American Legion*
- Bruce Brown, *AMVETS*
- Donald Kaiserman, *Association of the United States Army*
- David Martinez, *Disabled American Veterans*
- Abe Zino, *Fleet Reserve Association*
- James Jones, *Korean War Veterans Association*
- Roger Dimsdale, *Legion of Valor of the U.S., Inc.*
- Bruce Steeley, *Marine Corps League*
- Robert Fairchild, *Military Order of the Purple Heart*
- Raymond Edwards, *Military Officers Association of American*
- William Townsley, *Military Order of the World Wars*
- Thomas Moran, *National Association for Uniformed Services*
- Frank Driscoll, *Navy Seabee Veterans of America*
- Matthew Dailey, *Non-Commissioned Officers Association*
- David Coffield, *Paralyzed Veterans of America*
- Carmen Gentile, *Reserve Officers Association*
- Lloyd Jackson, *Roanoke Valley Veterans Council*
- Michael Coleman, *Virginia National Guard Association*
- George Corbett, *Vietnam Veterans of America*
- Daniel Boyer, *Veterans of Foreign Wars*
- Jenny Holbert, *Women Marines Association*
- Paul Galanti, *Chairman of the Board of Veterans Services*
- Vince Burgess, *Commissioner of Veterans Services*

Members Absent

- Jeffery Platte, *Air Force Association*
- David Richardson, *Chairman of the Veterans Services Foundation*

Alternates Present (representing their VSO)

- Harold Barton, *Air Force Association*

Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)

- John Clickener, *MOAA*
- John Velleca, *Virginia National Guard Association*

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Beth Camphouse, *Office of the Secretary of Public Safety*
- Jon Hatfield, *Virginia War Memorial*
- Anne Atkins, *Department of Veterans Services*
- Steven Combs, *Department of Veterans Services*
- Jack Hilgers, *Department of Veterans Services*
- Martha Mead, *Department of Veterans Services*
- Judy Reid, *Department of Veterans Services*
- Kenneth Rich, *Department of Veterans Services*
- Danielle Weaver, *Department of Veterans Services*
- Cathy Wilson, *Department of Veterans Services*

Others Present

- Paul Hinkhouse, *USDOL/VETS*
- Harry Warner, *Virginia War Memorial Education Foundation*
- Ed McIntosh, *Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, Virginia Health Planning Region IV*
- Arnold Woodward, *Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, Virginia Health Planning Region IV*
- Chuck Reusing, *Honor Flight Historic Triangle Virginia*
- Angie Eddy, *Seventh Point Advertising (working with Honor Flight)*
- Courtney Mann, *Seventh Point Advertising (working with Honor Flight)*
- Pam Coker, *Public guest*

Agenda Packet

- Agenda
- Presentations (Agenda Item IV)
 - Virginia Wounded Warrior Program – VWWP Annual Report 2009 Excerpts
- Reports (Agenda Item V)
 - Veterans Services Foundation Report
 - Department of Veterans Services Report
 - Excerpt from Governor Kaine's 2010 Budget Reduction Plan
 - Automated Veterans Benefits Claims Process RFI Summary Sheet
- Old Business (Agenda Items VI and VII)
 - JLC 2010 Legislative Objectives – Summary Sheet
 - Draft Position Papers
 - Virginia Wounded Warrior Program
 - Automated Claims Processing System
 - Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery
 - Virginia War Memorial
 - Real Estate Tax Exemption

- Burial Vaults
- Veterans Courts
- Military Family Relief Fund
- Letter to Governor Kaine re: JLC Legislative Objectives

Opening and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Dan Boyer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of VSOs and Quorum Determination

The roll was called, 21 of the 23 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the JLC were recorded as being represented (20 by a primary representative, 1 by an alternate), and a quorum was determined. The Commissioner of Veterans Services and the Chairman of the Board of Veterans Services were recorded as present. Mr. Bruce Brown and Mr. David Coffield arrived shortly after the meeting began, bringing the total to 23 of 23 VSOs represented.

Approval of the agenda

Chairman Boyer asked for a **motion** to approve the agenda (*Attachment 1*). Mr. William Townsley made a **motion**, seconded by Mr. Carmen Gentile, to approve the agenda as presented. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Introductions of Guests

Chairman Boyer asked Mr. Steven Combs to introduce all non-JLC members. Their names and organizations are recorded above. Chairman Boyer welcomed the guests to the meeting.

Review and Approval of August 12, 2009 meeting minutes

The draft minutes of the August 12, 2009 meeting were adopted without change by unanimous consent.

Presentations

Virginia Wounded Warrior Program

Ms. Cathy Wilson, Executive Director, Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP), and Mr. Kenneth Rich, VWWP Regional Director for Eastern Virginia, gave an update on the Program. Ms. Wilson called the members' attention to the excerpts from the VWWP Annual Report (*Attachment 2*) and reviewed the training completed by the VWWP. Ms. Wilson introduced Mr. Ed McIntosh, who is the VWWP Coordinator for Virginia Health Planning Region IV (Central Virginia). Mr. McIntosh provided an overview of the work with VWWP in Health Planning

Region IV, and told the Council that he had created a website (www.vwwp4.com) with more information. The JLC expressed its continuing support for the VWWP.

Honor Flight

Mr. Chuck Reusing, Public Affairs and Fundraising Coordinator, Honor Flight Historic Triangle Virginia (HFHTVA), accompanied by Ms. Angie Eddy and Ms. Courtney Mann of Seventh Point Advertising, told the Council about the work of HFHTVA. Mr. Reusing gave an overview of the group's May 30 trip, in which HFHTVA took 94 World War II veterans from the Hampton Roads area to Washington, D.C. He explained that the group visited the National WWII Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, the Marine Corps War Memorial (the Iwo Jima Memorial), and the National Museum of the Marine Corps. Ms. Eddy and Ms. Mann displayed photographs from the trip. Mr. Reusing reviewed the itinerary for the group's next trip, scheduled for October 17. Mr. Reusing expressed his gratitude to the VSOs that have provided logistic and financial support to HFHTVA.

Donations

Chairman Boyer asked for the Council's indulgence for several items of business not on the agenda. First, he noted that two VSOs had donations for the VWWP.

Mr. Coffield presented a check for \$1,000 to Ms. Wilson for the VWWP from the Paralyzed Veterans of America. Mr. Brown also presented a check for \$1,000 to Ms. Wilson for the VWWP from AMVETS.

Virginia War Memorial

Next, Chairman Boyer asked Mr. Jon Hatfield, Executive Director of the Virginia War Memorial, to give the Council a brief update on the construction of the Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center. Mr. Hatfield said that the construction is on schedule, and thanked the Council for their support of the budget amendment to assist in opening and staffing the Education Center.

Walkway of Honor

Mr. Donald Kaiserman reviewed the *Walkway of Honor* program at the Virginia War Memorial, and noted that organizations or individuals can purchase an 8" x 8" brick or a 4" x 8" brick to support the Virginia War Memorial. He proposed that the JLC participate in this program. Discussion ensued. Chairman Boyer said that a decision on JLC participation would be deferred until later in the meeting.

Reports

Board of Veterans Services Report

Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Chairman Paul Galanti said that the BVS had not met since the last meeting of the JLC, and that the October 28 BVS meeting had been cancelled as a money-saving measure.

Mr. Galanti expressed his admiration for all of the DVS staff, praised Commissioner Burgess' leadership, and said he was particularly pleased that talented employees like Cathy Wilson had been hired to work at DVS.

Veterans Services Foundation Report

Mr. Jack Hilgers delivered the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) report (*Attachment 3*) in VSF Chairman David Richardson's absence. VSF donation pledge cards were distributed.

Department of Veterans Services Report

Commissioner Burgess delivered the report (*Attachment 4*) of the Department of Veterans Services (DVS). Commissioner Burgess reviewed Governor Kaine's FY10 Budget Reduction Plan (DVS excerpt at *Attachment 5*) and reiterated his goal of minimizing cuts in direct services to veterans. He expressed his opinion that DVS has come a long way in providing services to veterans, and said that he is concerned that the budget reductions will set the Department back.

Commissioner Burgess stated that the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery Groundbreaking Ceremony will be held Monday, October 19, and that all JLC members were invited to attend. He noted that there is currently no money in the DVS budget to operate the cemetery after construction is completed in 2010.

Commissioner Burgess told the Council that the Hampton VA Medical Center will give DVS "some prime property on the water" to construct the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center. He said that, because of the state budget situation, DVS is exploring alternatives to building and opening the facility, possibly involving private operation of the new facility. He noted that this was also an option for the veterans care center planned for Northern Virginia.

Returning to the state budget reductions, Commissioner Burgess noted that the majority of the DVS cuts were taken in administrative services. He concluded by saying that DVS is preparing a Transition Brief for the new governor, and that that Brief will describe what it will take to make DVS whole again.

Virginia Citizen-Soldier Support Council Report

Mr. Carmen Gentile, JLC Representative to the Virginia Citizen-Soldier Support Council (VCSSC), reported that the VCSSC had not been met since the JLC met in August. He said that the VCSSC would meet on October 27, and that Mr. Tom Stephen would attend in his place.

The Council took a break between 11:05 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. while the tape was changed.

Old Business

Review of 2010 Legislative Objectives, including actions taken to date

Chairman Boyer pointed out that the summary of the JLC 2010 Legislative Objectives (*Attachment 6*) and the position papers for each objective (*Attachments 7 – 14*) were included in the agenda packet.

Chairman Boyer said that he felt there was general agreement among the Council members on four of the six objectives, but that he felt that there would need to be more discussion on two objectives: Veterans Court and the Military Family Relief Fund.

Chairman Boyer opened discussion on the JLC objectives by asking Mr. Kaiserman to tell the Council about the recent meeting with Richmond area legislators.

Mr. Kaiserman told the Council that the Richmond Area Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (RAC-MOAA) held a meeting with Richmond-area legislators on September 22, and that 8 – 10 legislators attended. At the meeting, RAC-MOAA members briefed the legislators on the JLC 2010 legislative objectives. He said the meeting was a success and that the dialogue between the RAC-MOAA members and the legislators was very productive.

Mr. Kaiserman noted that the Veterans Court objective was discussed at length. He said that Delegate Bill Janis had suggested that an education program for judges and lawyers be implemented, instead of establishing a separate court. He said that Delegate Jimmie Massie had questioned the cost of the program and how many veterans would need these courts, and pointed out that more information was needed to allow the General Assembly to make an informed decision.

Mr. Kaiserman stated that Delegate Janis and Senator Walter Stosch agreed to support the Military Family Relief Fund objective, but suggested that there might be non-legislative solutions to this issue.

Mr. Kaiserman said that Delegate John O'Bannon, Chairman of Virginia War Memorial Foundation Board of Trustees, will support the Virginia War Memorial objective, and that Delegate O'Bannon will also support the Tax Relief for 100% Disabled Veterans objective, as he had last year. Mr. Kaiserman said that Delegate Kirk Cox will support the objectives for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program and the Automated Claims Processing System. He concluded by advising the JLC to identify potential patrons who have seniority, who have a good reputation, and who are on the committee where the bill will be heard, particularly the money committees.

Chairman Boyer asked if there was any feedback on the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery objective. Mr. Kaiserman said that this issue wasn't raised at the RAC-MOAA forum, but suggested that the JLC look for a patron from Southwest Virginia to sponsor this objective. He pointed out that the Commonwealth had an obligation to operate the cemetery because it had accepted federal construction funds. Chairman Boyer said he would look for a patron, and that he would ask Senator William Wampler and Delegate Bill Carrico to patron the burial vaults objective.

Chairman Boyer thanked Mr. Kaiserman and RAC-MOAA for hosting the meeting.

Chairman Boyer pointed out that the JLC Chairman is required to submit an Annual Report on November 30 to the Commissioner and the BVS. He said that the annual report will include the 2010 Legislative Objectives, and that it would also be sent to the Governor and all of the legislators. Commissioner Burgess suggested that the JLC Chairman's report also be sent to the newly elected legislative members.

Chairman Boyer opened the discussion on the Veterans Court objective by stating that he believed the JLC could proceed with the objective as originally adopted, or that the JLC could elect to modify the objective. He asked Mr. Townsley to begin the discussion of this objective.

Mr. Townsley reviewed with the Council members the actions he has taken to date. He said that Delegate Tom Gear will sponsor a bill enabling localities to establish Veterans Courts. He pointed out that, because Virginia was a *Dillon-rule* state, enabling language was required. He said that the proposed bill would be based on a court model implemented in Colorado. He said that Delegate Gear has already requested draft bill language from the General Assembly's Division of Legislative Services.

Mr. Wes Edwards stated that Virginia judges already have the authority to control their dockets, that they could create a special docket for veterans, and that they already had alternative sentencing options. He said that he believed that education was the most important component for this objective.

The Council members discussed the Veterans Court issue, with members weighing in both pro and con. Several members expressed reservation about the lack of specific information.

Chairman Boyer read a motion, submitted by Mr. Edwards:

That the Department of Veterans Services, in conjunction with U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, initiate an education program for Judges, Magistrates, Commonwealth Attorneys, Defense Attorneys, and Public Defenders on the impact of PTSD/TBI on active duty military and veterans,

AND

That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) be commissioned to do a study to determine the best way to assist active duty military and veterans suffering from PTSD/TBI who may become involved with the Virginia Courts system due to a misdemeanor or felony. The JLARC study will quantify the need, determine the cost, and recommend the structure needed.

Mr. Kaiserman suggested that the education program also include law enforcement officials.

Mr. Chip Moran suggested that, as a first step, law enforcement officials be requested to provide information on the number of active duty military and veterans they encounter.

Vice Chairman Jenny Holbert said that, intuitively, many people recognize that veterans are coming in contact with the criminal justice system, and that combat veterans suffering from PTSD/TBI are in need of assistance with legal issues. She stated that passing an enabling act now – giving localities the authority to establish veterans courts – would begin to address the issue much sooner than waiting a year or more for a study. She proposed that the JLC advocate for enabling authority during the 2010 General Assembly session and that the JLC recommend that education programs be implemented before July 2010. She reiterated that if the JLC waited for a study, it would be 18 months or more before something was done.

Mr. Jack Hilgers noted that when the JLC advocated that the VWWP be established, there was no specific information on the number of veterans to be served or the scale of the need. He said that despite the lack of specific information, the JLC still recognized that there was a need for the services now provided by the VWWP, and so the JLC advocated that a mental health program for veterans be established. He added that specific information about the number of veterans needing the services of a veterans court may not be forthcoming until a partnership is established with the law enforcement and court systems and data is collected. He also said that the Council can be certain there is a problem and a need, even if a specific number cannot be determined at present. He closed by saying that it would be difficult to have JLARC conduct a study because the General Assembly's Joint Rules Committee has set a moratorium on new studies by JLARC.

Mr. Lloyd Jackson read a letter from Mr. Dan Karnes, President of the Roanoke Valley Veterans Council, to Mr. Combs. The letter discussed Mr. Karnes feelings and insight in reference to the Veterans Court.

Further discussion ensued

Mr. Townsley made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Frank Driscoll, to recommend the following:

1. That enabling language be passed during the 2010 General Assembly
2. That education programs be initiated with the legal and criminal justice communities
3. That a study be commissioned to further explore the issue and identify ways to further help veterans who come in contact with the legal and criminal justice communities

The **motion** was approved unanimously.

Before the Council moved on to the next issue, Commissioner Burgess asked to make three points:

1. The National Center for State Courts, located in Williamsburg, has been researching the veterans court issue and can serve as a resource in preparing the JLC position paper
2. Commanders of active duty military bases in the Commonwealth should be asked to testify before the General Assembly
3. The Veterans Service Foundation may be a source of funding for the study

Chairman Boyer asked everyone to review the Point Papers included in your packets during the break for lunch.

The Council took a lunch break between 12:15 p.m. and 12:45 p.m.

Chairman Boyer called the meeting back to order at 12:45 p.m. He summarized the actions taken before lunch on the Veterans Court objective:

- The Council had resolved the issue, hopefully to the satisfaction of all members, by the three-pronged approach (enabling language, education, and a study)
- Mr. Townsley and Mr. Combs are to work on exact language for the proposal and to revise the position paper
- Commissioner Burgess had advised him that the education process would begin soon, working through Ms. Wilson and the VWWP
- The JLC and DVS will investigate performing the study outside of JLARC

Chairman Boyer opened the discussion of the Military Family Relief Fund objective by noting that there is a continuing divide among members of the General Assembly, with some feeling that legislation is required to resolve the issue, and with others believing there is an administrative solution.

Mr. Mike Coleman said that the Virginia National Guard has requested opinions from the Attorney General and from the Department of Taxation on this issue.

Chairman Boyer suggested that the Military Family Relief Fund objective remain a JLC objective until answers are received from the Attorney General and the Department of Taxation. He said that the JLC could make a final decision at the December meeting. He asked if this was acceptable to the Council, and the members agreed that it was.

Mr. Coleman stated that he has accepted a position in state government that prevents him from lobbying for this bill. He said that his alternate is not prepared to step forward and take the lead on this issue. Mr. Chip Moran then offered to take over as JLC sponsor for this issue, with Mr. Coleman's assistance.

Review of 2010 Position Papers

Chairman Boyer asked if everyone had time to review the JLC position papers and if there are any objections. He noted that the Veterans Court paper would have to be rewritten. Mr. Combs added that Mr. Edwards had reordered the VWWP position paper. Chairman Boyer said that, unless there were any objections, he would assume the position papers were acceptable as submitted, subject to the revision of the Veterans Court and VWWP position papers. There were no objections.

Prioritization of 2010 Legislative Objectives

Chairman Boyer proposed that the Council prioritize the 2010 Legislative Objectives at this meeting, instead of waiting until the December meeting. He said he believed this would allow Council members to more effectively advocate for the JLC objectives. He stated that the JLC could re-prioritize the objectives in December, based on the Governor's Introduced Budget.

Chairman Boyer proposed the following priority:

1. Real Estate Tax Relief for 100% Disabled Veterans
2. Support the Department of Veterans Services FY11-FY12 Biennial Budget
3. Virginia War Memorial Operating Funds and FFE Funds
4. Burial Vaults for Virginia State Veterans Cemetery
5. Veterans Courts
6. Military Family Relief Fund

Discussion ensued among the Council members as to the priority of the objectives.

Mr. Townsley made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Driscoll, to accept the priority list as presented by Chairman Boyer. The **motion** was approved unanimously.

Mr. Hilgers said that the “JLC Conference at the General Assembly” is scheduled for January 18, 2010. He briefly outlined the day’s schedule, and said that more details would be forthcoming.

Ms. Anne Atkins stated that the Department of Veterans Services will have a display table at the General Assembly Building the week of January 18. She said that each will focus on a different aspect of the Department’s mission.

New Business

2010 Meeting Schedule

Chairman Boyer asked Mr. Combs to discuss the meeting schedule for 2010.

Mr. Combs said that he and Chairman Boyer discussed eliminating one meeting in 2010 for budget purposes. He said that as part of the FY10 budget reductions, the DVS budget for board operations had been reduced by \$8,000, and eliminating one meeting in FY10 would help DVS deal with the cuts. Mr. Combs said that he and Chairman Boyer had discussed holding the 2010 meetings in April, July, September or October, and December, in addition to the JLC Conference at the General Assembly in January. Mr. Combs noted that the Board of Veterans Services had already eliminated its October 2009 meeting to save money.

Walkway of Honor

Chairman Boyer called for a motion to approve support for a JLC brick on the *Walkway of Honor* at the Virginia War Memorial. He said he would leave the means of obtaining the funds to each member. He said that if each VSO contributed \$22, there were be \$506 raised – enough to purchase a \$500 brick.

Mr. Hilgers clarified that the \$22 per VSO donation would come from the Council members. He volunteered to collect the donations, through the Veterans Services Fund, on behalf of the Council. He added that individual VSOs wishing to purchase their own brick should also submit their requests to Mr. Hilgers and the Veterans Services Fund. Mr. Hilgers will then work with Mr. Kaiserman and Mr. Harry Warner, Executive Director of the Virginia War Memorial Education Foundation.

Mr. Driscoll made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Brown, to support the *Walkway of Honor* at the Virginia War Memorial, as outlined above. The **motion** was approved unanimously.

Donations to the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program

Chairman Boyer reminded the members that the VWWP was a JLC initiative, and encouraged the members to make an individual contribution in support of the VWWP. He also asked the members to encourage their VSOs to make a donation, and to ask other individuals to support VWWP.

U.S. Department of Labor

Chairman Boyer introduced Mr. Paul Hinkhouse, Virginia Director of the Veterans Education and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL/VETS), who explained how USDOL/VETS helps veterans transitioning from the military and with finding employment. He said that his office is seeing a lot more veterans who have PTSD, and that he expects the number to increase in the coming months.

Public comment period

There was no public comment.

Preparation for December17 meeting

Chairman Boyer reminded the Council members that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 17, 2009.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Council adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 1

**Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
American Legion Department of Virginia Building
1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond
October 14, 2009
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – *Dan Boyer, JLC Chairman* (5 minutes)
- II. Roll call of VSOs, quorum determination, approval of agenda and introduction of guests – *Dan Boyer* (10 minutes)
- III. Review and approval of August 12, 2009 meeting minutes – *Dan Boyer* (5 minutes)
- IV. Presentations
 - a. Honor Flight – *Chuck Reusing and Bob Doherty* (10 minutes)
 - b. Virginia Wounded Warrior Program – *Cathy Wilson, Ken Rich, and Ed McIntosh* (15 minutes)
- V. Reports
 - a. Board of Veterans Services – *Paul Galanti, BVS Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Dave Richardson, VSF Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - c. Department of Veterans Services – *Vince Burgess, Commissioner* (10 minutes)
 - d. Virginia Citizen-Soldier Support Council – *Carmen Gentile, JLC Representative* (5 minutes)
- VI. Old business (60 minutes)
 - a. Review of 2010 Legislative Objectives, including actions taken to date
 - b. Review of 2010 Point Papers
- VII. Break/working lunch (30 minutes)
- VIII. Old business (continued) (60 minutes)
 - a. Prioritization of 2010 Legislative Objectives
 - b. Action items for December/January
- IX. Public comment period (5 minutes)
- X. Prepare for December 17 meeting – *Chairman* (5 minutes)
- XI. Adjournment

ATTACHMENT 2

VWWP Annual Report 2009 Excerpts

Executive Summary

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program boasts an overwhelming record of success in its first year of operation. Among its major accomplishments are (1) funding and establishing five Regional Consortia across the Commonwealth that are actively serving and reaching out to veterans and their families, (2) establishing an Interagency Executive Strategy Committee and Advisory Committee, (3) conducting a comprehensive needs assessment, and (4) providing state-wide and regional training.

The Regional Consortia comprising community services boards, brain injury services providers and VA healthcare resources have hired their Regional Coordinators. These consortia of providers offer an array of community-based services based on their levels of funding and on the availability of community resources. Among the services that may be provided are assessment and screening, case management, outpatient treatment, rehabilitative services, family support and linkage to other supportive services.

To continue forward progress and to establish a long-term vision the VWWP has embraced multi-level strategic planning and management. This effort is designed to ensure that the program is sustained and enhanced for the long-term. Unprecedented communication and partnerships have already been established and fostered throughout the Commonwealth.

VWWP is already viewed as a model state-funded program for assisting veterans with combat stress and traumatic brain injuries and their families. Appendix B of the report includes a matrix of state programs that have similar components of VWWP.

VWWP has been an efficient and effective steward of the general funds allocated for FY 2009-10. FY '09 funds were spent on administration, outreach, training, needs assessment and grants to the Regional Consortia. Over 70% of VWWP FY '09 funds were allocated to the community. FY '10 fund distribution will be based on successful outcomes of existing investments in the community and projects that will help to sustain or enhance the VWWP effort.

The Veterans Services Foundation coordinated a number of events with Veterans

Services Organizations and other groups, contributing the proceeds to VWWP. Policies and procedures to ensure accountability for distributed funds have been established. VSF funds are being used for veterans who need help with transportation, overnight accommodations, daily living supplies, etc.

VWWP is led by CAPT Catherine A. Wilson USN (ret.). Three Regional Directors were hired in December, 2008 to coordinate and manage services and to improve access through provider coalition building in 3 distinct regions of the Commonwealth. Their previous careers in the military, behavioral healthcare and long-term care make them the ideal administrators for the development of a new community paradigm. This paradigm is based on building partnerships and local coalitions to support military service members and their families upon their return home from deployment and reintegration into the community.

Veterans and their families who live in Virginia will return from combat with issues that if not addressed will be manifested in dysfunction that will be borne by communities through increased costs for law enforcement, social services, healthcare and other public and private resources. The VWWP has served as a catalyst for change in the priority of care given to veterans and families in the community and the data capture that has been sorely missing. As the VWWP matures, harder data will become available to reinforce the return on investment. It is essential to keep in mind that we may never really know how many lives we ultimately affect simply because of the stigma that continues to be associated with mental health issues and the reluctance to tell one's story.

We are confident that we have been efficient and effective stewards of the resources that we have been given. Establishing a sustainable, high-quality program is one that takes time if done correctly.

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP) Year 1

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program boasts an overwhelming record of success in its first year of operation. The program takes great pride in the following record of accomplishments:

- The VWWP Team excelled at bringing together a number of organizations that had not worked well together in the past to establish and fund five Regional Consortia around the state that are actively serving and reaching out to veterans and their families. Each Consortia has hired dedicated VWWP Regional Coordinators who are directing and expanding programs and services throughout the Commonwealth.
- The Team conducted an orientation and kick-off for the regional programs and has scheduled quarterly face-to-face meetings with VWWP Regional Coordinators and monthly conference calls to guide program progress and share services expertise across regions.
- VWWP has established the Interagency Executive Strategy Group including the Commissioners of Veterans Services, Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Rehabilitative Services, the Adjutant General of Virginia, and the Director of the Veterans Administration Mid Atlantic Healthcare Network, VISN 6.
- VWWP has also convened an Advisory Committee including distinguished veterans who will provide their expertise and consultation to the Executive Director and VWWP Team.
- The Team has contracted with the Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and gap analysis of services for veterans and their families in Virginia.
- The Team, working closely with the Woodrow Wilson Training Center in Fishersville, planned, organized and conducted state-wide training for 225 program providers.
- VWWP and the VCU School of Education Partnership for People with Disabilities (PPD) competed successfully for a 3 year grant providing \$398,700 for training across the Commonwealth.
- Working the VCU/PPD the Team conducted well attended and highly acclaimed initial training on military culture, traumatic brain injury, navigating the VA and understanding state and federal benefits in all 5 regions by September 30, 2009.
- As a result of administrative cost savings and delay in VWWP staff hires, VWWP was able to infuse additional funds into the five Regional Consortia. VWWP has augmented state funding with the training grant and is pursuing other federal and grant funded initiatives.

- The Team has worked closely with the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation to develop procedures and protocols as well as promotional materials for private fundraising efforts that benefit VWWP. The VSF had allocated \$15,000 in support of VWWP activities as of June 30, 2009.
- VWWP has applied with the University of Virginia and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services as co-investigator on a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) jail diversion grant that gives priority to veterans. If funded, this grant will pay for additional crisis intervention training throughout the Commonwealth for law enforcement personnel who confront persons with serious mental illness, as well as funding for a trauma-informed recovery program for veterans and their families. A pilot will be executed initially and the successful practices of the pilot will be incorporated in the ten existing jail diversion programs across the Commonwealth.
- VWWP established the Central Office in Richmond at the Sitter and Barfoot Care Center for a central point of leadership. The Office of the Executive Director and Executive Assistant who supports the entire VWWP team are located here. The location also offers direct access to the resources and professionals of the McGuire Veterans Healthcare Administration Center one of ten polytrauma treatment facilities in the country.
- VWWP hired 3 Regional Directors that work in Northern, Southern and Western Virginia. By fiscal year end, only seven months after they were hired, the Regional Directors had served 139 veterans many of whom had families, significant others and friends that also needed assistance. In addition, they had served as the key regional point person for standing up the Regional Consortia in their respective areas.
- The VWWP Team conducted more than 300 presentations to create awareness among veterans services organizations, state agencies, federal agencies and other public and private organizations. It is conservatively estimated that these presentations have reached over 7500 people in the Commonwealth. Commissioner Burgess, Catherine Wilson and Regional Director South, Kenneth Rich have all been guests on radio broadcasts whose audiences reach hundreds of thousands of listeners. These interviews have generated calls for assistance and offers for contributions and volunteers.

ATTACHMENT 3

VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT TO Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) October 14, 2009

The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees met on August 5, 2009 and the results of that meeting were reported at the August 12, 2009 JLC meeting. There have not been any board or standing committee meetings since.

Foundation fund raising for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP) for FY10 totaled \$34,508.22 as of October 8, 2009. The major contributors were Lakeview Golf Club with over \$14,500 and Diageo Americas with \$10,000. Veterans Service Organizations also made FY10 contributions. They included the National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS), Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), Virginia National Guard Association (VNGA), George C. Marshall and Richmond Area Chapters of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), and the James M. Slay (Richmond) Detachment of the Marine Corps League (MCL).

The next Board meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2009. The meeting will be held at the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond. Items for the next meeting may include: (1) approval of the 1st Quarter FY10 Fund Statement and a FY10 budget for VWWP; (2) adoption of a revised policy associated with in-kind donations, (3) review fund raising program for FY10, and (4) review a proposed bylaws change regarding Board nomination procedures as recommended by the VSF Nominating Committee. There will be Finance and Development Committee meetings before the next Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

David Richardson
VSF Chairman

ATTACHMENT 4

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES
REPORT TO
JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
October 14, 2009**

State Budget Reductions

- FY10 budget reduced by \$460,940 – or 6.1% of DVS General Fund budget
- As in previous rounds, DVS goal was to minimize cuts in direct services to veterans
- Affected areas: Benefit Services, Virginia War Memorial, and Administration
- No cuts to Virginia Wounded Warrior Program or Cemetery Services
- No cuts to Non-General Fund (Care Centers and Education Services)
- No layoffs, though one vacant position was eliminated
- General Fund budget reductions:
 - FY08: \$288,236
 - FY09 Round 1: \$38,642
 - FY09 Round 2: \$586,689
 - FY10: \$460,940
 - Cumulative: \$1,374,507

DVS Budget Challenges for 2010-2012

Project	Goal	Challenges
Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery	Open the cemetery in Fall 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$45,000 - \$50,000 needed in FY10• \$300,000 in FY11 and ongoing• \$30,000+ (one-time) for road signs in FY11• Low burial rate the first few years means 90 to 95% of funding must come from GF (70% GF at other two cemeteries)
Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center	Start design as soon as federal matching funds are available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal FY10 Priority Funding list will be released shortly. HRVCC barely missed FFY09 cutoff• Two years to design and build means care center could open in FY12• VVCC cash reserves exhausted by opening SBVCC. VVCC and SBVCC will not have cash reserves to support HRVCC start up

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GF support needed, but likely unavailable, for start up. DVS exploring other options
Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center Addition	Start design and construction as soon as federal matching funds are available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal FY10 Priority Funding list will be released shortly. SBVCC barely missed FFY09 cutoff • Shorter design/construction timetable means addition could open in FY11 • VVCC cash reserves exhausted by opening SBVCC. VVCC and SBVCC will not have cash reserves to support start up • GF support needed, but likely unavailable, for start up. DVS exploring other options
Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) Equipment Replacement	Ensure Amelia Cemetery has proper equipment to conduct operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cemetery has been operational for 12 years • Original equipment is wearing out and needs to be replaced • Requirements: dump truck, backhoe, two pickup trucks, three mowers, and other equipment

Other Challenges

Project	Goal	Challenges
Northern Virginia Veterans Care Center	Start design and construction as soon as federal matching funds are available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVS has submitted application for federal grant assistance • DVS continues to search for potential location and partnership
Burial vaults for state veterans cemeteries	Rectify disparity (highlighted by JLC) between national cemeteries and Virginia state veterans cemeteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVS has submitted applications for federal grant funding to retrofit cemeteries in Amelia in Suffolk • Use state resources wisely to offer maximum benefit and services to Virginia's veterans and their families

DVS Operational Initiatives

Section	Initiative	Discussion
Benefit Services	Open new Benefit Services Office in Fairfax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVS searching for new office location to serve veterans in Northern Virginia

Benefit Services	Claims approval rate – 1Q FY10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDVA Roanoke Regional Office adjudicated 3,814 DVS claims in 1Q FY10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2,546 approved – 67% approval rating • Retroactive claims awards over \$5,000: \$9,793,848 for 700 claims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$210,000 to a claimant in Wytheville ○ \$135,000 to a claimant in Cedar Bluff ○ \$130,000 to a claimant in Bristol ○ \$103,000 to a claimant in Tidewater ○ \$92,000 to a claimant in Alexandria ○ \$74,000 to a claimant in Charlottesville
Care Center Services	Patient days of care – 1Q FY10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VVCC and SBVCC delivered a combined 30,197 patient days of nursing care (capacity = 31,280 days) – a 97% occupancy rate • VVCC delivered 4,709 patient days of domiciliary care (capacity = 5,520 days) – an 85% occupancy rate
Cemetery Services	Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery: Groundbreaking and Check Acceptance Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 19 at noon at the cemetery site
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program	New Western Regional Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Rindorf • US Army and Iraq combat veteran
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program	5 VWWP Regional consortia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All regional consortia up and running. First regional progress reports due at the end of this month
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program	Service provider training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed five regional trainings throughout the state via our CNI Trust Fund grant with the VCU School of Education's Partnership for People with Disabilities • Statewide conference slated for Feb 18, 2010 in Richmond

Respectfully submitted

Vincent M. Burgess, Commissioner

ATTACHMENT 5

GOVERNOR KAINE'S FY 2010 BUDGET REDUCTION PLAN

Department of Forensic Science Totals	
2010 General Fund Appropriation	\$34,938,042
General Fund Reduction	(\$1,087,238)
General Fund Revenue/Transfers	\$0
Total General Fund Impact	\$1,087,238
Total Position Level Changes	0.00
Total Layoffs	0

Department of Veterans Services

Capture general fund balances

Reverts June 30, 2009, discretionary general fund balances reserved by agencies and included in their budget reduction plans to meet the anticipated revenue shortfall in FY 2010.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$72,000)	\$0

Transfer reimbursement to the general fund

Captures reimbursement funds received through a federal grant to offset general fund amounts paid for equipment during the construction of the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center. This cash is available to be returned to the general fund.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	\$0	\$33,424

Transfer Virginia War Memorial expenditures to nongeneral fund

Supplants discretionary nongeneral fund in place of general fund for certain War Memorial expenditures.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$12,366)	\$0

Reduce War Memorial vehicle expense

Reduces travel costs associated with the use of a state vehicle to facilitate the Memorial's educational outreach.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$6,000)	\$0

Eliminate policy and planning assistant position

Eliminates a vacant position that had been previously reclassified.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$10,000)	\$0
Positions/Layoffs	Position Level	Layoffs
	(1.00)	0

Reduce use of contract human resources services

Curtails the amount of human resources services purchased by the agency under a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$30,000)	\$0

Reduce administrative costs

Reduces costs for temporary part-time support services and expenditures for supplies.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$5,000)	\$0

Reduce expenses associated with board meetings

Reduces the costs associated with meetings of the agency's boards and councils.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$8,000)	\$0

Reduce hours for support position

Reduces the hours of a part-time position providing support to the Veterans Services Foundation.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$16,150)	\$0

Reduce administrative costs in benefits office

Captures savings from more efficient use of supplies and equipment.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$75,000)	\$0

Transfer administrative costs to nongeneral fund

Increases the amount of central office administrative cost allocated to the agency's two care centers.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$193,000)	\$0

Department of Veterans Services Totals

2010 General Fund Appropriation	\$7,551,661
General Fund Reduction	(\$427,516)
General Fund Revenue/Transfers	\$33,424
Total General Fund Impact	\$460,940
Total Position Level Changes	(1.00)
Total Layoffs	0

Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council

Reduce agency operating costs

Reduces expenditures for printing, agency mailings, office supplies, and equipment maintenance reserve.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$1,500)	\$0

Eliminate funding for curriculum committee meeting

Eliminates funding for the curriculum committee that determines prosecutor training needs and plans the agency training program.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$2,000)	\$0

Eliminate legal research materials

Eliminates funding for subscriptions and purchases of legal publications for agency in-house research library.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$1,538)	\$0

Eliminate training program

Eliminates funding for single topic training offerings.

GF Savings/Resources	GF Reduction	Revenue/Transfers
	(\$6,000)	\$0

ATTACHMENT 6

2010 LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

The following legislative objectives were adopted by the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) on August 12, 2009. These are the top legislative objectives of the 23 Veterans Service Organizations represented on the JLC.

- Support the Department of Veterans Services FY11-FY12 Biennial Budget, to include:
 - **Continued Level Funding for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program:** Support a budget item in the Governor's Budget that (a) appropriates necessary funds to continue the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program at current funding levels, and (b) expands the staff by one full-time position.
 - **Continued Level Funding for the Automated Claims Processing System:** Support a budget item in the Governor's Budget that appropriates necessary funds to continue development of the Automated Claims Processing System for veterans disability claims.
 - **Provide Funding to open and operate the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery:** Support a budget item in the Governor's Budget to provide the funds required to open and operate the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery.

- **Virginia War Memorial Operating Funds and FFE Funds:** Support budget items in the Governor's Budget for (a) one-time funding for furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE), and (b) increased on-going operational funding for the Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center.

- **Real Estate Tax Exemption for 100% Disabled Veterans:** Support legislation to amend the Virginia Constitution to require local governments to grant real estate tax exemptions for 100% service-connected disabled veterans without regards to means testing. Identical legislation passed the 2009 General Assembly and must pass the 2010 General Assembly in the same form.

- **Burial Vaults for Virginia State Veterans Cemeteries:** Support a budget item in the Governor's Budget that appropriates funds so that burial vaults may be provided for resale at cost at Virginia state veterans cemeteries.

- **Veterans Courts:** Support legislation that would authorize localities to establish treatment courts for veterans.

- **Military Family Relief Fund:** Support administrative or legislative initiatives to provide a subtraction when calculating Virginia taxable income for individuals receiving a grant from the Military Family Relief Fund

ATTACHMENT 7

JLC Position Paper Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP)

DRAFT

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To sustain base funding for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program and to approve an additional full-time position.

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP) was unanimously enacted by the General Assembly in 2008 in response to the growing need to improve and expand services to our nation's veterans and their families. Operated by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services in cooperation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Department of Rehabilitative Services, this program has met or exceeded all implementation goals set forth in the original plan. In addition to the legislatively mandated partnership of these three state departments, the Adjutant General of the National Guard and the Veterans Healthcare Administration network director for Virginia have signed an interagency agreement and are active members of the VWWP Executive Strategy Committee.

 - The VWWP supports the following persons on their road to recovery from the effects of stress related injuries, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as traumatic brain injuries:
 - Veterans of any era who are Virginia residents.
 - Members of the Virginia National Guard not in active federal service.
 - Virginia residents in the Armed Forces Reserve Components not in active federal service.
 - Family members of veterans and service members in the above categories.

 - Five regional VWWP consortia have been established consisting of brain injury and other service providers, area Community Services Boards, and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) providers. All five consortia have received VWWP funding through a competitive grant process and are strengthening services in their local area that may include: case management; outpatient treatment; rehabilitative services; family support and linkage to other services such as benefits, housing, employment and education. These newly organized and functional consortia have been sorely needed to effectively and efficiently serve our veterans and their families. By USDVA estimates Virginia has moved up from eighth to seventh in veterans population among the states with an estimated veterans population of 819,490, as of September 30, 2009, and hold relatively steady through fiscal year 2013.

- The VWWP's first year was devoted to building infrastructure, increasing awareness of PTSD and TBI in the behavioral health community, and getting \$1.7 million in funding into the hands of service providers at the local level so they can increase capacity and access to treatment and other support services for veterans with PTSD and TBI.
- At the end of its first year, VWWP has three primary messaging goals:
 - The first goal, to increase program visibility for sustainability, is critical for continued funding, increased participation by behavioral health and other service providers, fund raising, and support within the veterans community and by the general public.
 - The second goal, communicating Virginia's ongoing commitment to the quality of life for veterans and building a long-term vision for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, dovetails with the first and broadens the program's scope and reach by making it representative of statewide support for veterans and their families.
 - The third goal, trust building with DVS employees and partners, focuses on continuing to build and strengthen the program's infrastructure, access to resources, and strong working relationships with program partners to ensure seamless and transparent service and care for veterans and their families.

3. **DISCUSSION:**

- The first year of operation has been devoted to building quality, sustainable administrative and service support at both the state and local levels, educating communities about the program, and serving as many veterans and families as possible. In April 2009, through a competitive grant process, the VWWP infused \$1.7 million into these newly established regional consortia of service providers to generate and expand behavioral health and rehabilitative services across the state.
- The General Assembly provided funding of \$2.4 million for the first year of program start-up and \$2 million for program sustainment and implementation in FY10 and beyond. To augment that funding, aggressive pursuit of grants and other funding streams have been explored with some early success. Recently, a grant was secured through the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Education's Partnership for People with Disabilities. The grant, worth \$398,700, enables the Partnership to be the training arm for the VWWP over the next three years. Initial training for community service providers within each of the five regions will be completed by the end of September 2009 with a statewide conference planned for February 2010. Other grant applications are pending approval.
- Data collection regarding services being provided to veterans and their families in the community has begun; this was no small feat since data sharing among disparate provider groups is difficult at best. As the program matures, so will the quality of data captured. The VWWP has partnered with Virginia Tech who is conducting a state-wide needs assessment to help target the gaps of services for our veteran population. Results of that survey should be available in early 2010.
- Fully develop a Communication Plan that will:

- Increase program visibility for sustainability.
- Communicate ongoing commitment to quality of life for veterans and build long term vision for the VWWP to include need for continual funding.
- Trust building with DVS employees and partners.
- This Plan is near full development and is in the process of concurrent execution
- As a result of the VWWP efforts, unprecedented collaborations and partnerships have been established within the state, Department of Defense, the USDVA and local communities. The value of having a quality and sustainable VWWP for our veterans is profound. The VWWP is the principal, coordinated, Wounded Warrior program that is supported by the Commonwealth. One out of every ten citizens in Virginia is a veteran. The frequency of deployments since the start of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, coupled with the known potential delay of onset of symptoms associated with combat stress and brain injury, makes sustainment of this effort essential if we are to meet the behavioral health and service demands of this population.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly ensure that the funding for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program in the amount of \$2 million for each fiscal year 2011 and 2012 remains in the base funding of the Department of Veterans Services

ATTACHMENT 8

JLC Position Paper Automated Claims Processing System

DRAFT

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To continue funding the development of an automated system for the electronic preparation of veterans' disability claims.

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - There are almost 820,000 veterans in Virginia; over 121,000 receive disability compensation benefits.
 - Veterans who were wounded or injured while on active duty may file a claim for disability compensation benefits with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (the VA).
 - The VA adjudicates the claim based on evidence submitted or subsequently gathered.
 - On average it takes 12 months for a claim to be adjudicated.
 - If a claim is approved, a veteran will receive between \$117 and \$3,000 per month, depending on degree of disability and number of eligible dependents.
 - If a claim is denied, a veteran may appeal – a process that generally take 2-3 years.
 - Complex laws, with entitlements linked to rigorous documentation and proof of eligibility, make the process of developing and filing a disability claim time-consuming, confusing, and complicated.
 - Redundant information must be entered on multiple forms that must be visually checked.
 - Returned claims greatly delay the adjudication process and increase manpower costs.
 - The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) assists Virginia veterans in preparing and filing claims
 - DVS human resources and IT solutions have reached capacity. DVS cannot keep up with the ever-increasing demands to assist veterans applying for disability compensation benefits.
 - The number of disability claims filed by DVS on behalf of Virginia veterans is increasing by over 1,000 each year and places an added burden on an already overloaded VA system.
 - Given current technology, DVS must add one additional claims agent for every 500 new claims filed.
 - Additionally, DVS is losing qualified claims agents. Because the claims-filing process is as complicated as the tax code, it takes 3 – 5 years to fully train new claims agents.

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - An automated system for the electronic preparation of veterans' disability claims will simplify the process of developing a claim, resulting in claims that are more complete, more accurate, and present the necessary supporting information in a clear and consistent manner. This will provide for:
 - Faster ratings decisions by the VA.
 - Higher initial approval ratings – fewer claims will have to be appealed.
 - Virginia veterans receiving their disability compensation checks sooner.

- Employing an electronic veterans' disability claims system will therefore:
 - Expedite receipt of veterans' disability benefits.
 - Increase revenue flow to Virginia's veterans and the state.
 - Provide DVS with a cost-effective way to serve more veterans within current human resource levels.
 - Have a definite, positive impact on the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program by allowing veterans to receive VA disability compensation benefits for PTSD and TBI much faster.
 - The 2008 General Assembly appropriated \$100,000 for the development of an automated claims preparation system. The 2009 General Assembly reaffirmed this decision and appropriated an additional \$100,000.
 - DVS is pursuing non-general fund options to bring the new system on line. It is imperative, however, that DVS continue to use all available General Fund resources to prepare for system deployment.
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly continue to fund the development of an automated claims processing system.

ATTACHMENT 9

JLC Position Paper Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery

DRAFT

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To fund the opening and operation of the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery.

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - The 2006 General Assembly authorized the construction of the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (SWVVC), acceptance of donated land, and acceptance of federal grant funding.
 - The U.S. Army donated 80 acres adjacent to the Radford Army Ammunition Plant in Dublin.
 - Virginia has accepted a \$7.2 million federal grant to design, build, and equip the cemetery.
 - As a condition of accepting the grant, the Commonwealth of Virginia must operate the cemetery in accordance with federal guidelines, for a period of at least 20 years.
 - Design work is complete; a groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for October 19, 2009.
 - Construction will last approximately 12 months; the cemetery will open in fall 2010.

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - To open a new veterans cemetery, key staff must be hired 6-12 months ahead of time in order to conduct training, purchase equipment, and prepare the cemetery for full operation.
 - The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) estimates that \$45,000 - \$50,000 will be needed in FY10 to hire key staff and perform essential pre-opening activities.
 - Approximately \$300,000 per year is required in FY11 and ongoing.
 - DVS expects the SWVVC to perform approximately 50 – 75 burials the first full year of operation, growing by approximately 25 burials per year to a level of 200 burials per year.
 - Operations at the state veterans cemeteries in Amelia and Suffolk are funded by the General Fund (approximately 70%) and Non-General Fund (approximately 30%).
 - Because the Dublin cemetery will perform fewer burials the first few years, it will initially need a greater percentage of General Fund support: 90 to 95% per year for the first three years.

4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly provide \$40,000 in FY10 to open and \$300,000 in FY11 and ongoing to operate the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery.

ATTACHMENT 10

JLC Position Paper Virginia War Memorial FFE Funds and Operating Funds

DRAFT

1. **ISSUE:** To prepare for the opening of the Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center at the Virginia War Memorial by increasing the Memorial's on-going operating budget and by securing one-time funding for furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE).

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - Over the past twelve years, the Virginia War Memorial Foundation Board of Trustees has overseen the renovation of the Memorial and the development and implementation of award-winning educational programs.
 - Since it was dedicated in 1956, the Memorial has become not just a shrine of memory to the brave Virginians killed in our nation's wars, but also a place to educate all Virginians on the service and sacrifice of our nation's warriors.
 - *Virginians at War*, the Memorial's award-winning documentary film series, is used by middle and high schools statewide. With regular patriotic events, student seminars during the school year, teacher institutes during the summer, and the acquisition of nationally sought-after artifact collections, the number of visitors to the Memorial has increased dramatically over the past several years.
 - The Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center at the Virginia War Memorial will provide the space, now sorely lacking, to conduct educational programs, exhibits, student seminars, teacher institutes, and other programs to support the Memorial's expanded mission.
 - The General Assembly has provided over \$7 million to construct the Galanti Center, and an additional \$2 million in private funds have been raised.
 - The Galanti Center will open in mid-2010

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - The Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center will be completed by mid-2010. A one-time appropriation of \$910,000 is required to purchase the furniture, fixtures, and equipment needed to support the mission of this \$9.1 million center honoring Virginia's military and their sacrifices to secure our freedoms.
 - In addition, an additional \$449,000 in operating funds (for a total annual operating budget \$693,313) will be required annually to meet the increased rent plan charges, deliver education programs, and staff the new center. For example, the Memorial's rent plan – money paid to the Department of General Services to maintain the Memorial – will increase by \$239,900 per year. This amount is equal to the Memorial's entire current operating budget.

4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly appropriate the necessary funding to outfit, open, and operate the Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center at the Virginia War Memorial: \$910,000 (one-time) for FFE and \$693,313 per year (on-going) for operations

ATTACHMENT 11

JLC Position Paper Real Estate Tax Exemption for 100% Disabled Veterans

DRAFT

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To provide real estate tax exemption for 100% disabled veterans without means testing.

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - The Code of Virginia, §58.1-3210, provides that the “governing body of any county, city or town may by ordinance provide for the exemption from ...taxation of real estate for persons “at least sixty five years of age or if provided in the ordinance anyone found to be permanently and totally disabled.”
 - The Code further sets restrictions and conditions on any exemption provided by the localities which include 1) income restrictions and 2) financial worth restrictions. Income restrictions apply to the owner and any relatives living in the dwelling. Financial worth restrictions apply to the owner and his/her spouse.
 - Localities may set income/net worth caps lower than those mandated by the state but may not set caps higher than those set by the state.
 - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (the VA) reported that 7,358 Virginia veterans were rated 100% disabled as of May 2009.
 - The 2009 General Assembly unanimously passed HJ648 and SJ275, beginning the process amending Virginia’s Constitution to require local governments to grant real estate exemptions for 100% disabled veterans without means testing.

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - The Department of Veterans Services (DVS) held numerous town hall meetings in 2007 and 2008 at locations across the state. Each revealed the need for real estate tax exemption for 100% disabled veterans.
 - 100% disabled veterans continue to suffer from disabilities incurred during active military service to our Nation and our Commonwealth.
 - In Executive Order 19, “Serving Virginia’s Veterans,” Governor Kaine directed DVS to pay particular attention to the needs of disabled veterans. In its report to the Governor, DVS recommended real estate tax relief for 100% disabled veterans.

4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the 2010 General Assembly pass resolutions identical to those passed by the 2009 General Assembly (HJ648 and SJ275), thereby continuing the process of amending Virginia’s Constitution to provide real estate exemptions for 100% disabled veterans.

ATTACHMENT 12

JLC Position Paper Burial Vaults for Virginia State Veterans Cemeteries

DRAFT

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To appropriate funds so that burial vaults may be provided for resale at cost at Virginia state veterans cemeteries.

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - A burial vault is an in-ground protective concrete shell into which a casket is placed.
 - Burial vaults are required at state and national veterans cemeteries.
 - Burial vaults are provided at no cost at national cemeteries.
 - At Virginia's state veterans cemeteries, veterans must purchase a burial vault from a funeral home, at a cost of \$800 to \$1,200.
 - Vaults can be "pre-placed" (installed in large numbers on a prepared foundation) or individually placed. Pre-placed vaults are used in relatively flat terrain, while individually placed vaults are used both in flat terrain and in hilly/sloping terrain.
 - The Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin will be constructed using federal grant funds and will have 2,750 pre-placed burial vaults. These vaults will be provided to veterans free of charge.
 - Because they do not currently have pre-placed vaults, the state veterans cemeteries in Amelia and Suffolk will continue to require veterans to purchase a vault.
 - Pre-placed vaults cannot be used in all sections of the Dublin because of topography.
 - DVS has requested federal grant funding to retrofit the Amelia and Suffolk cemeteries with pre-placed vaults. However, federal funding is uncertain and even if provided will not solve 100% of the problem.
 - Cemetery topography will not allow 100% use of pre-placed vaults, meaning that individually-placed vaults will still be needed.
 - Individually-placed vaults are also needed for oversize caskets, third burials (i.e. burial of an eligible child next to his/her parents) and in some other circumstances.

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - Virginia state veterans cemeteries should provide the same level of service as national cemeteries, to include providing burial vaults at no cost
 - The state budget situation may prevent full funding of this initiative
 - As an interim measure, state veterans cemeteries can purchase vaults for resale at cost.

- Approximately \$20,000 should be appropriated to purchase the first set of burial vaults. The cemeteries can purchase subsequent vaults using funds generated through vault sales. In addition, approximately \$16,000 in one time funding is required to purchase the specialized equipment needed to install the burial vaults.
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly appropriate \$36,000 to enable burial vaults to be resold at cost at Virginia state veterans cemeteries.

ATTACHMENT 13

JLC Position Paper Veterans Courts

DRAFT

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To authorize the establishment of treatment courts for veterans.

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - Military service entails high costs. In addition to the risk of death or physical injury, service members, especially those in combat, can face situations that place them under extreme mental stress.
 - This mental stress can lead to mental illness, alcohol or substance abuse, homelessness, unemployment, and strained relationships. Some of these conditions may not manifest themselves for weeks, months, or even years after the veteran has left military service.
 - These conditions are evident not only in active duty service members and veterans, but in Guardsmen and Reservists.
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) – severe manifestations of mental illness and mental injury, respectively – have been called the “signature injuries” of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.
 - In some cases, these conditions, arising from military service, will lead to behaviors that bring veterans in contact with the criminal justice system.
 - Veterans treatment courts have been established in Alaska, Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, and elsewhere to help veterans.
 - Veterans courts are modeled on drug and mental health treatment courts, and are based on the premise that veterans respond more favorably to other veterans in court, and that a unique solution is needed for a unique problem. As noted by Judge Robert Russell, who established the nation’s first veterans court in Buffalo:

“Veterans courts allow veterans to go through the treatment court process with people who are similarly situated and have common past experiences and needs. This type of court links individuals with service providers who either share or understand the unique experience of military service, military life, and the distinctive needs that may arise from that experience.”

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - Establishing veterans treatment courts in the Commonwealth of Virginia would leverage the myriad of federal, state, and local resources available to veterans, especially the unique resources of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (the VA), to provide an effective alternative to incarceration
 - Military service can create conditions that turn otherwise law-abiding veterans into offenders, simply because of what they experience while serving in the U.S. Armed

Forces. Creating veterans treatment courts would give these veterans the unique care they need to recover from their injuries and would give them a second chance to resume their place in our society

4. **RECOMMENDATION**: That the General Assembly and the Governor authorize the establishment of veterans treatment courts

ATTACHMENT 14

JLC Position Paper **Military Family Relief Fund**

DRAFT

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To exempt from Virginia Income Taxes distributions made from the Virginia Military Family Relief Fund (VMFRF).

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - The VMFRF (Virginia Code 44-102.2) was established in 2006 to assist military families that are having difficulty meeting basic needs due to military deployments.
 - Under the VMFRF, Guardsmen and Reservists who have been called to extended active duty (periods in excess of 90 days) or their family members may apply for financial relief to meet basic needs, such as food, housing, utilities, and medical care.
 - Since inception, the VMFRF has provided relief to 95 families and disbursed \$98,100. The average disbursement was \$1,000.
 - Disbursements from the VMFRF are classified as taxable income under the Code.

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - Taxing VMFRF disbursements means that only a portion of the funds may be used for the intended purpose. This is contrary to the purpose of the VMFRF, which is to provide relief to military families, not to return revenue to the state.
 - The Virginia Department of Taxation estimates that exempting distributions from the VMFRF would reduce General Fund revenues by only \$7,200 per year.

4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation to exempt from Virginia Income Taxes distributions made from the Virginia Military Family Relief Fund.

ATTACHMENT 15

JLC Chairman's letter to Governor Kaine re JLC Legislative Objectives

October 8, 2009

The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine
Governor of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Dear Governor Kaine,

As we have done for the past several years, the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) has developed a set of budget and legislative recommendations for your consideration. I have attached a summary of those recommendations, along with position papers that provide more in-depth background and discussion.

Our recommendations are the result of careful consideration, lively discussion, and frank debate among the 23 veterans service organizations represented on the JLC. In making our recommendations, we have tried to carefully balance the Commonwealth's current financial situation with the needs of Virginia's 820,000 veterans.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss our recommendations with you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Daniel D. Boyer, Colonel, USAF (Ret)
Chairman