

**THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
HOLIDAY INN, MORGANTOWN-READING
MORGANTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
APRIL 11-12, 2026**

Resolution No. 1170

Submitted by: Philip G. Mowry, Esq.
Constitution & By-Laws Committee Chair

WHEREAS, the military Departments of the United States (“the military”) releases Service members under formal discharges or separates them under administrative separations (hereinafter collectively referred to as “Categorizations of Service”); and

WHEREAS, the military ascribes a formal categorization of service to the type of discharge or administrative separation the Service member receives; and

WHEREAS, the military has many specific types of categorizations of service; and

WHEREAS, the military has a specific characterization of service designation titled “Honorable” to designate honorable service, whether honorably discharged or administratively separated under honorable conditions; and

WHEREAS, the military also has other specific characterizations of service designations, including the words “Entry Level Separation”, “General”, “Other than Honorable”, “Bad Conduct”, and “Dishonorable”; and

WHEREAS, the military considers the service characterization term “Honorable” as the only term that reflects honorable service; and

WHEREAS, the military does not have any service designation which is described to assume or presume Honorable or Under Honorable Conditions, without specifically enumerating the term “Honorable” in the Categorization of Service; and

WHEREAS, the characterization of “Honorable” military service is one of the most distinguished and prized accomplishment any American citizen can achieve; and

WHEREAS, the earning of an “Honorable” Categorization of Service carries with it a lifetime of honor and pride; and

WHEREAS, the founders of The American Legion understood all of the above and also considered the term “Honorable” as a term of art; and

WHEREAS, the founders of The American Legion intended The American Legion to be comprised of members who served on wartime active-duty service, and shared the unique experiences

that only come with active service which create a unique comradeship only possible by experiencing such active-duty service; and

WHEREAS, the founders of The American Legion valued and understood what was necessary to earn an Honorable Categorization of Service and therefore made such a specific discharge characterization a requirement for American Legion membership; and

WHEREAS, the inclusion of individuals into American Legion membership who do not possess a military service characterization specifically termed “Honorable” deviates from this essential foundational requirement of membership in The American Legion, and undermines the honored status of those Veterans who have earned such an “Honorable” Categorization of Service; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion over the last few decades has allowed such a degradation of the membership requirement of The American Legion, by allowing membership for individuals who do not possess a military characterization of service specifically designated as “Honorable”; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has created out of whole-cloth, unsupported by any military authority, the idea that the military has many, many characterizations of service, not specifically designated as “Honorable” but which somehow the military intends for these non-Honorable service categorizations to presumptively confer the prestige and honor of an “Honorable” categorization, without actually stating this either on the separation or discharge paperwork or in military regulations covering those types of military service characterizations; and

RESOLVED, That the American Legion Department of Pennsylvania Executive Committee meeting in regular session April 11-12, 2026 at the Holiday Inn in Morgantown, PA, urgently appeals to our National American Legion to return to the original and intended standard for membership in The American Legion, to wit, that a military service member, in order to be eligible for the high honor of American Legion membership, shall have served or be currently serving on active duty, and shall have been discharged or separated from such military service with a Categorization of Service specifically stating such service has been determined and characterized by the military as “Honorable”, with such specific term “Honorable” specifically listed and appearing in the characterization section of said discharge or separation document, or, if a prospective member is still serving, such service must be demonstrated honorable by all available evidence, consistent with the meaning of “Honorable” as articulated above; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded upon approval to the National American Legion for their consideration.

APPROVED X REJECTED REFERRED CONSOLIDATED FILED