



**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA**

**CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL**

**RESOLUTIONS**

**2020 - 2022**

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## **AGENT ORANGE COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

### **AO-1998 AGENT ORANGE PROGRAM**

#### **ISSUE**

**Vietnam veterans require current information regarding the possible effects to them and their families caused by exposure to Agent Orange and other identified carcinogens, mutagens and toxic substances during their service to the Nation.**

#### **BACKGROUND**

**Daily, Vietnam veterans and their family members are dying due to the health consequences of the veteran's exposure during their service to the Nation. Veterans and their families need to know the most current information and where to seek help for this intensely human problem. The personal support by veterans for veterans on disseminating information about this issue is critical to the survival of many of our fellow veterans.**

**This resolution was originally adopted at the State Convention in Ontario, June 1998, as AO-98-2 and reaffirmed as AO-2000-2 and AO-2002-2.**

#### **POSITION**

**Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. California State Council at the state Convention in Ontario, California, June 4 - 5, 2004, directs that the California State Council Agent Orange Committee under the direction of the Committee Chairman, shall:**

- 1. Hold an annual Agent Orange Symposium which Chapter Agent Orange Chairpersons shall attend, and any other interested parties may attend.**
- 2. Develop a state program of direct and/or referral services.**
- 3. Develop and implement a questionnaire and registry for the purpose of recording and measuring the past and current health status of Vietnam veterans, and their spouses, children and grandchildren.**
- 4. Develop and implement an interstate networking model of information and**

**support services in concert with the National Agent Orange Program.**

- 5. The California State Council Agent Orange Committee shall submit to the California State Council a budget and proposals to support Committee activities and above directives.**

**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
RESOLUTION  
G-1994-1**

**VOTER AWARENESS PROGRAM**

**ISSUE**

Since VVA California State Council's reorganization in 1986, several approved resolutions have continued to be relevant and meaningful to the goals and principals of this organization. These previous resolutions still represent the objectives that the membership of CSC wishes to accomplish.

**BACKGROUND**

The California State Council, pledging to build on its past commitment, recognizes and supports the importance of the Right to Vote and encourages all VVA members and their families to exercise this Right, and also encourages all the chapters within the state to establish a program of voter awareness.

This resolution was originally adopted at the State Convention in Fresno, June 1994, as G-94-1, and has been reaffirmed as G-96-1, G-98-1, G-2000-1 and G-2002-1.

**POSITION**

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. California State Council at the State Convention in Ontario, California, June 4 - 5, 2004, recognizes and supports the Right to Vote and encourages all VVA members and their families to exercise this privilege, and also encourages all chapters within the state to establish a program of voter awareness.

# **Sons and Daughters in Touch Special Committee Resolution**

**IT-1992-1**

## **CSC SUPPORT FOR SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN TOUCH**

### **Issue**

**The Vietnam Veterans of America, California State Council, Inc. wishing to continue their past commitment and support to the Sons and Daughters of our missing and fallen brother and sister veterans of the Vietnam War, reaffirm our dedication to our adopted Nieces and Nephews through the CSC's Sons and Daughters in Touch Special Committee.**

### **BACKGROUND**

**In June 1991 the healing began for the forgotten victims of the war in Southeast Asia, the children of those who fell in battle or did not return home, held as Prisoners Of War or Missing in Action. The Sons and Daughters in Touch and Vietnam Veterans Of America, California State Council, Inc. formed a relationship born out of our shared experience from that conflict.**

**This resolution was originally adopted at the State Convention in Sacramento, in June 1992, as IT-92-1, and reaffirmed as IT-94-1, IT-96-1, IT-98-1, IT-2000-1 and IT-2002-1.**

### **POSITION**

**The Vietnam Veterans of America, California State Council, Inc. at the State Convention in Ontario, California, June 4 - 5, 2004 resolves to continue with its "adoption" and support of the Sons and Daughters In Touch.**

**POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER  
AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE COMMITTEE  
RESOLUTION**

**PTSD-1992-1**

**PTSD TREATMENT**

**Issue**

**Hundreds of thousands of veterans and their families suffer severe psychological and emotional difficulties related to the veterans military service. However there remains a serious lack of department of Veterans Affairs and Government commitment to providing realistic treatment, treatment facilities, trained personnel, and more adequate budgeting and compensation for this tragic problem.**

**BACKGROUND**

**Enacting legislation to increase VA treatment of PTSD is very important because not enough has been done by VA to address the magnitude of the PTSD epidemic. It is critically important that veterans with PTSD who are treated in VAMC, VA clinics and Vet Centers receive appropriate and timely treatment.**

**It is apparent that VA Medical Centers, VA Clinics and Vet Centers are unable to meet the demand of veterans who have established eligibility for treatment because of the lack of funding and medical staff. VA health care in general is sparse and may be located at an inaccessible distance from the veteran. Chronic PTSD is widespread and has associated disorders such as depression and substance abuse, and dual-diagnosis, which complicates the treatment process. A variety of treatment levels are necessary to provide a continuum of care for individual veterans at varying levels of recovery. These program levels should be mutually supportive with the appropriate and accessible levels of care and counseling provided.**

**VA needs to provide sufficient and qualified staff at their Medical Centers, Clinics and Vets Centers in order to provide treatment for the veteran population.**

**This resolution was originally adopted at the State Convention in Sacramento, June 1992, as PS-92-1, and reaffirmed as PS-94-2, PS-96-1, PS-98-1, PS-2000-2 and PTSD-2002-2.**

**POSITION**

**Vietnam Veterans of America, California State Council, Inc. at the State Convention in Ontario, California, June 4 - 5, 2004, pledging to build on its past record to address meaningful treatment of the effects of PTSD, encourage the U.S. Congress to increase sufficient funding to adequately treat the PTSD issue, through VAMC, VA Clinics and the Vet Center System.**



**PTSD COMMITTEE  
VETERANS INCARCERATED SUB - COMMITTEE  
JOINT RESOLUTION**

**VI – 1992 -1**

**CALIFORNIA D.O.C. PTSD TREATMENT PROGRAM**

**ISSUE**

Since VVA California State Council's (CSC) reorganization in 1986, several approved resolutions have continued to be relevant and meaningful to the goals and principals of this organization. These previous resolutions still represent the objectives that the membership of CSC wishes to accomplish.

**BACKGROUND**

The California State Council, pledging to build on its past commitment, recognizes the accomplishment of Veterans PTSD Treatment Programs at Correctional Institutions, The CSC applauds and endorses these programs and encourages State and Federal Correctional Institutions to implement programs to help those veterans incarcerated within those facilities, with their PTSD.

This resolution was originally adopted at the State Convention in Sacramento, June 1992 as VI-92-1, and reaffirmed as VI-94-1, VI-96-1, VI-98-1, VI –2000 – 1 and PTSD-2002-3.

**POSITION**

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. California State Council at the State Convention in Ontario, California, June 4-5, 2004, endorses the Veterans PTSD Treatment Programs at Correctional Institutions, and encourages State and Federal Correctional Institutions to implement and continue programs within security limits to help those Veterans Incarcerated within those facilities, with their PTSD.

**VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
RESOLUTION**

**VA-1996-1**

**VVA SUPPORT FOR US ARMED FORCES VETERANS OF  
PEACEKEEPING AND OTHER CONFLICTS**

**ISSUE**

**Members of US Armed Forces deployed worldwide in the protection of Freedom and Democracy, veterans of other conflicts and Peace Keeping efforts, Desert Shield/Desert Storm Persian Gulf War, Operation Iraq Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom Veterans are suffering in great number the physical, medical, and psychological effects of the “Gulf War Syndrome”.**

**BACKGROUND**

**In keeping with the spirit of Vietnam Veterans of America’s very First adopted resolution, “*Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.*”**

**This resolution was originally adopted at the State Convention in San Diego, June 28-30, 1996 as VA-96-1, and has been reaffirmed as VA-98-2, VA-2000-2 and VA-2002-2.**

**POSITION**

**Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. California State Council at the State Convention in Ontario, California, June 4-5, 2004, reaffirms its commitment of Chapters to reach out and support in any way they can, Persian Gulf War Veterans, Operation Iraq Freedom Veterans, and Operation Enduring Freedom Veterans, and their families, in their struggle with “Gulf War Syndrome “or” Burn Pitts Exposure” or any other problems that they might have, as a result of their service to their Country during the Persian Gulf War, Operation Iraq Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom.**

**VETERANS BENEFITS COMMITTEE  
RESOLUTION**

**VB-2008-1**

**MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT**

**CSC SUPPORT FOR MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT**

**ISSUE**

**An unknown number of American Veterans pass away every year. Many of these veterans have no family or friends remaining or are estranged from their families. Their cremated remains may be left on a shelf in a mortuary or morgue somewhere in the country, to be forgotten. As Vietnam Veterans of America's first adopted resolution states, "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another", we should not abandon these veterans. Vietnam Veterans of America, California State Council, Inc. will support the Missing in America Project, with no cost to this entity.**

**BACKGROUND**

**The Missing in America Project was launched nationwide in January 2007. The Missing in America Project (MIAP) is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. The purpose of the MIAP is to locate, identify and intern the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations; to provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes.**

**Local, state and national laws must be followed in the identification, claiming process and proper interment of the unclaimed remains of forgotten veterans.**

**Since July 17, 1862, veterans have been buried with honor and respect. We need to make sure this continues for all veterans, including the unclaimed cremated remains that may be sitting on shelves across the country. By supporting the Missing In America Project, the California State Council, Inc. can help provide these heroes, who served their country, with a proper resting place.**

**POSITION**

**As Vietnam Veterans of America’s first adopted resolution states, “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another”, we should not abandon these veterans. Vietnam Veterans of America, California State Council, Inc. will support**

## **Agent Orange Resolution**

### **Toxic Exposure Town Hall Meetings**

#### **AO-2016-1**

#### **Background**

Agent Orange and other Toxic exposures have been haunting veterans since their return from service. This problem has been passed to the children and grandchildren of veterans. VVA and AVVA have been holding town hall meetings talking about the health issues of veterans and their children for many years. With the hopeful passage of S901 and HR1769, The Toxic Exposure Research act of 2015, we will need to take the lead on getting information out to the public to be able to reach the children of all veterans. Some of the children of the Vietnam veterans may be suffering without knowing why because of the high divorce rate of the Vietnam veterans and being estranged from their fathers for many years.

#### **Issue**

VVA State Council and Chapters have not been doing a good job in presenting the information to the public about these and other unknown health issues and birth defects in the children of all veterans. VVA is the leader in information regarding to Toxic Exposures. We must use every means available to put this information out to the public.

#### **Resolved**

The California State Council and the Chapters in California shall diligently attempt to put on town hall meetings throughout the state to present the information available on the health problems of the children of all veterans, regardless of time and place of service.

Cost to State Council

I foresee no cost to the State Council at this time.

## **Public Affairs Resolution PA 2021-1**

### **Safe 21**

### **VVA Support for US Armed Forces Veterans**

#### **ISSUE**

A recommended program to increase public awareness of Veterans.

Military service to the United States of America requires devotion to duty and a willingness to sacrifice personal comfort and safety. Inherent in military service are stresses, including traumatic stress for some. Recognition of Veterans and active-duty personnel by fellow-Americans is both deserved and appreciated. Currently less than 1% of the United States population serve in the military. This recognition can be therapeutic as many struggles with suicidal thoughts and other effects of extreme stress from exposure to combat. No matter where a service member is stationed, they pledge to defend the constitution including making the ultimate sacrifice.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In keeping with the spirit of Vietnam Veterans of America's very first adopted resolution, "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another". The plan is to simply ask, at all public events where our flag is saluted or our National /anthem sung, for all active service and military veterans be asked to stand or raise their hand and be recognized. The announcer will make a statement to the effect that "We honor those who make it possible for us to be here today!"

Experience has shown that the process of inviting active service and military veterans to stand and be recognized takes approximately five seconds and involves no monetary expense. But it means so much to those who have served our country. This recognition is referred to as the **S.A.F.E. [Salute Armed Forces Everyday]** program.

#### **POSITION**

Vietnam Veterans of America, inc. California state Council at the state convention, Visalia California 27-28 August, 2021 affirms its commitment to all Veterans of Military service to the United States of America and Endorses the S.A.F.E. program and its promulgation for implementation.

## **Government Affairs Resolution 2021-2**

### **Changing name of organization and or other veterans joining prohibition**

#### **Issue**

Maintain Vietnam Veterans of America as a “last person standing organization without changing its name.

#### **Background**

Over the years the Vietnam Veterans of America, officers and board members have attempted to expand our organization’s membership to include all veterans who served after the Vietnam era. In 2019 GA-2 was adopted and will be voted in 2022 at the National Convention.

#### **Position**

Vietnam Veterans of America inc. California State Council at the state convention, Visalia California 27-28 August, 2021 resolves that: Vietnam Veterans of America, its Officers and Board members be prohibited from changing the organizations name and/or creating any new veterans organization to replace our current one; thus, making us a “last person standing” organization

## **Government Affairs Resolution GA 2021-3**

### **WLAVA**

**Issue:** The construction of permanent, supportive housing for Veterans on the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs (WLAVA) Medical Center campus, comprised of approximately 388 acres located in the heart of Los Angeles.

**Background:** In March 1888, the United States received a donation of the land, now comprising the WLAVA campus, from John P. Jones, Arcadia B. DeBaker, and John Wolfskills, for the specific purpose to be used to establish a Pacific Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. The Federal government maintained this purpose for the property with fidelity until the 1970's. Following damage from the 1971 Sylmar earthquake, the VA began transitioning away from housing with much of the property ultimately being leased to private, non-Veteran focused companies (e.g., a rental car business, a hotel laundry facility, etc.).

In June 2011, Valentini et al. v Shinseki et al. was filed in U.S. District Court on behalf of homeless veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, and Carolina Barrie (a descendant of the family that donated the land to the government) for misusing the WLAVA campus. The suit argued that the 388-acre campus, donated to the federal government in 1888 for the purpose of being a National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, was misappropriated for uses that in no way provided housing or healthcare services to veterans.

The Honorable S. James Otero ruled in August 2013 that the VA violated federal law when it leased portions of its WLAVA campus to 11 businesses and organizations for purposes unrelated to Veterans' interests. The court did not specify remedy and encouraged settlement negotiations between the parties.

In January 2015, VA Secretary Bob McDonald and Plaintiff Partners signed the "Principles for Partnership and Framework for Settlement" agreement which called for the creation of a veterans homelessness strategy, mutual cooperation in the development of a Master Plan to set out the most effective use of the campus for veterans, development of an exit strategy for leases not pertaining to veteran healthcare or housing, and the creation of a non-profit entity to assist in such efforts. Both parties also agreed to file a joint motion to the District Court that would vacate its judgment in Valentini v. McDonald.



A Draft Master Plan was created and signed by VA Secretary Bob McDonald on January 28, 2016. Key to the creation of the Master Plan, and stipulated in the Partnership Agreement, was the solicited input from a full range of stakeholders in determining how best to use the campus in a Veteran-centric manner so that Veterans living on or visiting the campus would experience superior care, support, convenience, and customer service. The results of this outreach, which included input from thousands of Veterans (including representatives from Vietnam Veterans of America) in working sessions throughout LA county, a public comment period that collected a record number of entries (1,002) on the federal register, and several surveys led to the goals used to drive the Plan.

The West Los Angeles Leasing Act of 2016 reauthorized leasing activity on the WLAVA campus under specific Veteran-centric activities e.g., supportive housing, health and wellness, education, vocational training, legal and federal benefits assistance, family support services, and transportation. The act also required the formation of a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC), the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board (VCOEB), assigned to three functional areas of expertise: Master Plan, Services, and Outreach. The VCOEB was established on June 1, 2017.

In July 2018, VA released solicitation in a competitive bid process for private sector affordable housing construction and financing services. The West L.A. Veterans Collective LLC (WLAVC), comprised of three well-respected Los Angeles based organizations: Century Housing Corporation, U.S. VETS, and Thomas Safran & Associates, was selected as Principal Developer in November.

During the first week of October, 2019, members of the VA/Central Office, Office of General Counsel, conducted a series of meetings with VSO representatives and WLAVA staff, the primary purpose of which was to 'brainstorm' regarding funding for the development of supportive housing on the WLAVA campus. Discussion centered around how to increase funds available for building and to address a \$100 million infrastructure shortfall. The VA was legally prohibited from building housing, so the money for housing at WLAVA came from the enhanced use leases.

The two primary means discussed for accomplishing that were regarding the funds from easements (e.g., the Purple Line) and funds from money/property seized (e.g., from Richard Scott, the Westside parking lot operator). However, that would require legislative changes to the West Los Angeles Leasing Act of 2016.

In late October, VSO representatives (including from Vietnam Veterans of

America), and community Veterans advocates (including a member of Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America) met with Congressman Ted Lieu and Senator Diane Feinstein. Discussion centered around funding means and sources. On June 23, 2021, President Biden signed the West Los Angeles VA Campus Improvement Act of 2021 into law allowing the VA to spend revenue generated through land-use agreements on campus to help fund housing, services and infrastructure upgrades, and making approximately \$10 million immediately available for wrap-around and supportive services.

**POSITION: Vietnam Veterans of America inc. California State Council at the state convention, Visalia California 27-28 August 2021, supports continuous progress of the Greater Los Angeles Campus Draft Master Plan, the West Los Angeles Veterans Collective's Community Plan calling for the construction of 1,691 permanent supportive housing units on campus and requests that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs make any successor Master Plan available for public comment (no less than 90 days) prior to its official ratification**