

# Did You Know?...

**Office: 312-980-4266 Email: Raymond.Toczek@va.gov**

...that I have been on the Department VA&R Commission for over 25 years. During that tenure our Commission has reviewed over 200 resolutions submitted by our various Posts and Districts. As our State Convention draws near I want to point out some that were actually implemented into practice or the law was changed.

A Post in the Moline area had a widow of a former POW whose claim for survivor's benefits was denied. Her husband passed away in 1997. The VA law at that time said widows were eligible only if the POW died on or after Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. A resolution was submitted, passed at State Convention and went on to become a Public Law. The date was changed from 9/11/01 to 12/7/41. She got her benefits.

A Post near Peoria had a veteran whose case was on appeal for seven years. During that time he died and the widow carried on with that appeal. It was won but the law at that time said accrued benefits on appeal could only go back 2 years. A resolution was submitted, passed at convention and became law. The 2 year restriction was removed and she got 7 years of back payment.

A veteran from a Post in Springfield had visited California and noticed that drivers in that state could have "veteran" placed on their driver's license. His Post did a resolution, that was passed and the State of Illinois now allows "veteran" designation on driver's licenses.

A Post downstate near Marion had a member who was a caregiver for his WWII disabled father. He applied for assistance under the VA Caregiver Act. He was turned down as the law only covered vets disabled on or after 9/11/01. The resolution came to our Commission was passed and later became law. The VA is now in the process of updating caregiver assistance back to WWII vets.

Several Posts in the Chicago area had Navy veterans who were being turned down Agent Orange benefits because they only served within 12 miles of the coast of Vietnam and never had "boots on the ground". Resolutions were submitted, passed and there is now a recent court ruling which will probably go into effect this fall covering these Navy vets. Stay tuned for details.

So, if your Post has been discussing a topic or benefit which you feel should be changed or updated please prepare a resolution, pass it at your next Post meeting and send it to Department for consideration at the next State Convention. Who knows, it may become law!

If you need help preparing a resolution or need the forms visit our National website at

<https://www.legion.org/resolutions>

and you will find a plethora of information. Our Commission looks forward to your ideas.

**No idea is too small, and all sorts of ideas have potential to change the country as we know it for the better.**