

Minutes for Fall Legislative Commission Meeting
27 Sep 25

An in person meeting was called for the Department Legislative Commission at 10:00am on September 27, 2025. A zoom session was also active, which included American Legion Family members from the Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion.

Commission Members present were:

Chair Larry Miller, Div 5

Vice Chair: Cheri Stanton, Div 3

Member: Edward Stash, Div 2

Division 4 was represented in Bloomington by Theresa Thomas sitting in for commission member George Elzy.

Division 1 member Terry Cornell Jr was present via Zoom.

Guests present via Zoom were:

Linda Iberg, Auxiliary 1st Vice President and Auxiliary Legislative Team Chair

Michael Canevit, SAL Legislative Commission Member

Angie Golightly, Auxiliary Legislative Team Member

Becky Larsen, Auxiliary Legislative Team Member

Chairman Miller opened the meeting with a salute to the colors and Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call and introductions followed.

Chairman Miller then read the purpose of Commission as found in the Department Directory:

"LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION shall accept resolutions requiring legislative action passed at the Department Convention, Cause Appropriate bills to be drawn in proper form by the Illinois Legislative Reference Bureau, and secure sponsors for such bills in both the Illinois House and Senate. Testimony before Legislative Commission will be presented by individuals indicated by the Legislative Commission Chairman and appropriate monthly reports will be made. Assistance will be given on Federal Legislation when requested by the National Legislative Director, or such other authorized person on the National level."

Miller suggested Division commission members need to pass information about legislative efforts down through the districts to the posts.

The commission was visited by Department Commander Roy Smith, Department Senior Vice Commander Celeste Latham, Department Adjutant Joshua Theilen, and Department Membership Mike Monroe.

Commander Smith provided a list of expectations for Committee Chairman and encouraged our commission in this election year, to emphasize the Legion "Get out the Vote" campaign. Adjutant Theilen provided a document regarding commission/committee Zoom meetings.

As there were no resolutions from the Department Convention that required action by the commission, Chairman Miller suggested our job in the commission should be to monitor and report on Legislation in Illinois affecting veterans or military members. We need to encourage Illinois

Legionnaires to become aware of and submit "Witness Slips" prior to hearings on legislation affecting veterans and military members. He encouraged everyone to create an account at the Illinois General Assembly website. (<https://ILGA.gov>) This allows a person to create a list of bills they wish to follow in the 104th General Assembly and receive status of the bills. When hearing are scheduled, the status will give information about hearings and members then may submit Witness Slips to show they approve or disapprove the legislation. The ILGA.gov website has been revamped and what the witness slip process will look like will be forwarded once committee hearings are scheduled. A spreadsheet of bills affecting veterans was distributed to commission members and will be emailed to those not present in person.

A "Department Of Illinois TAL Legislative Action Center" group has been created on Facebook for use by commission members to get the word out regarding pending hearings and other actions on bills that have been introduced relating to veterans and military members. It is a private group and membership requests from commission members and district legislative contact will be approved to join the group.

Chairman Miller suggested visiting Springfield as a Legion Legislative Day, to visit members of the General Assembly and address the concerns of the Illinois American Legion, either Feb 4 or 18, 2026, ahead of the Veterans Legislative day tentatively scheduled for March 11, 2026. This would be strictly a voluntary effort as there is no funding to reimburse anyone for attending. Chairman Miller plans to attend a Department of Indiana Legislative Day scheduled for Monday, January 12, 2026 in Indianapolis, to get ideas for a possible Illinois Legislative Day.

At the National Convention, Legislative Chairman Matthew Shuman provided some training for Legislative visits to the capitol. In the training, two documents, "10 Tips for Successful Meetings on Capitol Hill" and a worksheet to plan your visit were distributed. The tip sheet and worksheets may be found at <https://legion.org/advocacy/legislative> in the Advocacy Resources & Toolkit link. Scroll down to the "Downloadable Tools" on the right side of the page and download copies of the documents. These tips and worksheet are beneficial at all levels when planning a visit to an elected official.

Miller gave a quick review of the legislative pages on the national website to those attending the commission meeting. Our role in the National legislative arena is to help by promoting National programs and all members should sign up for the Grassroots newsletter and participate in the Voter Voice campaigns. The Grassroots newsletter has a scoreboard of Departments submitting Voter Voice emails to their elected officials. Illinois should be one of the top 5 in each newsletter.

Chairman Miller suggested that all members sign up for Fast Democracy, <https://fastdemocracy.com>, a free service that tracks legislation on a national and state level and provides periodic email updates on actions being taken on bills. When signing up, select to receive emails on legislation affecting "Veterans and Military."

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:03am.

Larry Miller, Chairman