The American Legion
Department of Illinois

Legislative Commission

Minutes for the meeting held on Oct 3, 2026 in Bloomington IL

The Department Legislative Commission met at Department headquarters in Bloomington at 10:00 am on October 3, 2026.

Present were Commission Chairman, Larry Miller (5th Div); Commission Vice Chairman, George Elzy (4th Div); Commission Members, Ed Stash (1st Div) and Terry Cornell (2nd Div). Absent was the 3rd Div member.

Chairman Miller passed to the commission that we have a job to do to emphasize and encourage Divisions/Districts/Posts/Squadron leaders to support the legislative programs and pass information to them to flow down.

The commission reviewed the Department Commanders goals and developed a goal of their own. The commander has set a goal to "Advance The American Legions legislative priorities by strengthening advocacy efforts educating members on key issues, and fostering productive relationships with elected officiails."

The commission set a goal to work toward organizing a Legion only Legislative Day in Springfield, to meet with members of the General Assembly and promote legislation beneficial to veterans and ask them to sign on as sponsors to such legislation.

There was one resolution passed at the Department Convention in June that required action by the Legislative Commission. The resolution called to a change in the 35 ILCS 200/15-169 to lower homestead property tax for veterans with a 29% or less, service-connected disability receive the same reduction in their property taxed (EAV) as those veterans with less than 50% service-connected disability. The committee recommends changing 35 ILCS 200/15-169 (b-3.1) (1) to read "if the veteran has a service connected disability of less than 50%, as certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as of the date the application is submitted for the exemption under this Section for the applicable taxable year, then the annual exemption is $2,500;..."
As the General Assembly is not accepting new legislation until the beginning of the 105th General Assembly in January of 2027, the commission recommends that following the elections, meeting with senators and representatives to find sponsor(s) for the bill, and carry through with writing a change to the law.

Chairman Miller also promoted The American Legion Voter Voice and Grass Roots newsletter. Both are vehicles to learn about legislation pending that needs the grass roots support of Legionnaires. Legion members need to learn how to follow bills and contact their legislators as bills are presented.

Miller further encouraged commission members to create accounts on the Illinois General Assembly web page (ilga.gov) and to sign up for a free account on fastdemocracy.com to monitor legislative actions in both the state general assembly and federal congress pertaining to military and veteran legislation.