



## Legislation Text

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### **RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION IN ITS MISSION TO IMPROVE THE TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Staff Contact: Brent Stoddard, Director, Intergovernmental Programs

#### **Purpose and Recommended Action**

This is a request for City Council to waive reading beyond the title and adopt a resolution supporting the Arizona Department of the American Legion in its mission to improve the technology infrastructure of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

#### **Background**

The American Legion is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. It is the nation's largest veterans service organization, committed to mentoring and the sponsorship of youth programs in our communities, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting strong national security, and continued devotion to service members and veterans.

The Legion's Department of Arizona has developed a resolution that seeks to address some of the veterans health system issues that were recently brought to light during the investigation of the Phoenix V.A. Hospital.

Specifically the resolution calls for Congress to enact legislation that will allow service men and women who are honorably leaving active duty, guard or reserve to be automatically enrolled into the Department of Veterans Affairs patient enrollment system.

In addition, the resolution calls for a process to start an electronic workflow of the service men and women's medical records by automatically scanning them into the VA's system so that there is a complete record as they begin to receive medical care after separation.

The City of Glendale would be the first Arizona city to support the Legion's efforts. The Legion plans to also ask the cities of Phoenix, Yuma, Sierra Vista and Gilbert for support because of their proximity to veteran and military facilities. The Arizona Legislature has introduced House Resolution HR2001 (American Legion; Tech Infrastructure Improvement) to support the efforts of the Legion. There has been no action taken on the House resolution to date.

#### **Previous Related Council Action**

At the February 17, 2015 Council Workshop, Council expressed support for the American Legion's efforts and asked staff to provide a statement of support.

During the December 16, 2014 Council Workshop, as part of the call for Council Items of Special Interest, Mayor Weiers stated that “he received information regarding a resolution passed by the American Legion Department of Arizona that calls on Congress to enact legislation to direct automatic enrollment of service members from the Department of Defense into the Department of Veterans Affairs patient enrollment system.” He further stated that he would like staff to bring the information to the Council for “a chance for us to be able to talk about it in workshop.” The Mayor went on to say that “they are not asking for us to do anything other than basically sign on as a letter encouraging and recommending the V.A. do that and this has a good opportunity to help our veterans out.”