



Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations 2008 LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

The following legislative objectives for 2008 were adopted by the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) on August 8, 2007 and updated on December 19, 2007. These are the top legislative objectives of the 23 Veterans Service Organizations represented on the JLC.

1. Fully fund the Department of Veterans Services Budget and Strategic Plan as outlined in Executive Order 19: The JLC requests the Governor and General Assembly appropriate \$300,000 to deploy Phase II and \$900,000 to deploy Phase III of the TurboVet System, a simple, complete, and secure web-based tool that facilitates the development and filing of veterans disability claims.

Budget amendments expected by Governor Kaine, Delegate Cole, and Senator Edwards

2. Support the Virginia National Guard: The JLC requests the General Assembly and Governor pass legislation to protect the custodial rights of mobilized service members.

Senators Blevins (SB170) and Herring (SB188)

3. Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care: The JLC requests the General Assembly appropriate \$3 million to establish the Virginia Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care Program, which will provide first-class treatment for Virginia veterans with combat stress, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and traumatic brain injuries. The program will be community-based and will include such initiatives as suicide prevention, family counseling, and readjustment assistance.

Delegates Cox (HB475) and Brink (HB1064); Senators Puller (SB297) and Houck (SB304)

4. Virginia War Memorial Education Wing: The JLC supports the funding levels proposed in the Governor's Caboose Bill, but requests that the General Assembly modify the Governor's proposed budget such that \$500,000 of the \$5,720,000 in state support be released upon certification that the War Memorial Education Foundation has secured \$1,000,000 in donations and/or pledges. The balance of the state funding (\$5,220,000) would be released after the War Memorial Education Foundation has secured the remaining \$1,250,000 in private funds. The purpose of the \$500,000 is to keep Education Center planning on its time line and to prevent further cost escalation.

Delegate Cox (HB474); Senator Stosch (SB662)

5. Tax relief for 100% disabled veterans: The JLC requests the General Assembly and Governor pass legislation to amend the Virginia Constitution that would require local governments to grant real estate tax exemptions for 100% disabled veterans without regard to means testing.

Delegates Lingamfelter (HJ18) and Ware, O (HJ38); Senators Puller (SJ8) and Reynolds (SJ10)

6. Provide Tax Relief for Virginia Citizen Soldiers called to Active Duty: The JLC requests the General Assembly and Governor provide an income tax exemption to Virginia citizens who serve in the National Guard or Reserve and who are activated into full-time service outside the Continental United States in excess of 90 days.

Delegates Watts (HB473), Moran (HB1193) and Cline (HB1364); Senators Puller (SB293) and Northam (SB502)

7. Permit Virginia Resident Service Members to place a freeze on their Credit Files: The JLC requests the General Assembly and Governor pass legislation that would allow Virginia-domiciled service members and their spouses to place a freeze on their credit accounts in order to help prevent identity theft.

Delegates Ware, O (HB175) and Morgan (HB1307); Senators Wagner (SB325) and Whipple (SB461)

As of 1/31/08