

MINUTES
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING OF
NOVEMBER 19, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.
VIRTUAL-ZOOM

1. Call to Order 6:00 P.M.
Department Chairman White opened the meeting of the Department Legislative Commission at 6:00 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Michael White, Department Legislative Chairman

Members present:

Dean Boyers, 1st District Chairman- PRESENT
Tim Shaw, 2nd District Chairman- NOT PRESENT
Michael White, Department Chairman- PRESENT
Ronald Chapman, 4th District Chairman- PRESENT
David Root, 5th District Chairman- NOT PRESENT
Christopher Miller, 6th District Chairman- NOT PRESENT
7th District Chairman- VACANT
8th District Chairman- VACANT
Joyce Hannum, 9th District Chairman- PRESENT
Robert Withrow, 10th District Chairman- NOT PRESENT
April Ogilbee, 11th District Chairman- NOT PERSENT
Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman- PRESENT
Bert Boyd Sr, 13th District Chairman- PRESENT
Jacob Marx, 14th District Chairman- PRESENT

Guests Present:

Christie White, Americanism and Children & Youth Coordinator

3. Approval of previous minutes

Joyce Hannum, 9th District Chairwoman motions, seconded by Bert Boyd, 13th District Chairman to approve the minutes from the previous meeting

MOTION PASSED

4. Legislator of the Year Criteria
Discussion was had about editing the Legislator of the Year award criteria.

1. Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be a current member of the United States Congress or the State of Ohio General Assembly or was a member of the United States Congress or Ohio General Assembly at the time of application.

2. Alignment with American Legion Preamble Principles:

- Demonstrated commitment to Americanism, including promoting patriotism and responsible citizenship.
- Efforts to maintain a strong national defense.

- Dedication to the rehabilitation and care of all veterans.
- Active in programs that benefit the youth of America.
- Commitment to fostering a sense of community and mutual support among citizens.

3. Legislative Achievements:

- Sponsored or co-sponsored legislation that significantly benefits veterans, military personnel, and/or their families. Which supports American values, freedom, and democracy.

4. Community Impact:

- Evidence of positive impact on local communities, especially in areas that resonate with the American Legion's mission and programs.

5. Nomination Process:

- Nominations can be made by American Legion posts through their Districts then submitted to the Department Legislative Commission for review.
- A detailed submission outlining the nominee's qualifications and contributions, with specific examples, is required. *i.e. suggested, 1-2 pages*

6. Selection Criteria:

- The Legislative Commission will select from the nominations one (1) Member of Congress and one (1) member of the Ohio General Assembly.
- The selection will be based on the extent to which the nominee's actions reflect the American Legion's preamble and overall impact.
- The Legislative Commission will make this recommendation to the Department Executive Committee each year at the December meeting for presentation in the following year.

7. Award Presentation:

- The award for a member of Congress will be presented in Washington D.C., during the Washington Conference.
- The award for the Legislator of the Ohio General Assembly will be presented at the Ohio State House.
- Should neither of the above locations be an option, the awards may be presented to either recipient within their District or at an American Legion Department of Ohio Convention or Conference.
- The presentation might include a plaque or certificate, along with a press release to local and national media, the Ohio Legion News, and video if appropriate, to ensure appropriate recognition.

8. Additional Considerations:

- The award should be non-partisan, focusing solely on the achievements and impact related to the American Legion's values.
- Consider establishing a recurring schedule for the award, such as annual, to maintain its prestige and relevance.

This framework aims to ensure that the award is meaningful, aligning closely with the values and objectives of the American Legion while honoring significant legislative contributions.

5. Dave Joyce Proclamation- Commission would like the proclamation to be sent to their office and they can add or remove things they see fit as a courtesy.

Congressman David Joyce has been actively involved in supporting veterans, Americanism, children and youth, and national defense through various initiatives and legislative actions:

1. Support for Veterans:

- Congressman Joyce introduced the Solid Start Act, which was signed into law. This law makes permanent a program that contacts every veteran three times by phone in the first year after they leave active duty to connect them with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs programs and benefits. The program prioritizes outreach to veterans who accessed mental health resources prior to separation, aiming to quickly connect at-risk veterans to services.
- He introduced a resolution designating September 30th as National Veterans Suicide Awareness and Prevention Day, emphasizing the importance of supporting veterans' mental health and suicide prevention efforts.
- Joyce supported the passage of the PACT Act, which expands healthcare benefits to millions of veterans exposed to toxic burn pits during military service.

2. National Defense and Military Families:

- He introduced the Military Family Violence Prevention Act, aiming to improve the Department of Defense's Family Advocacy Program. This bill focuses on resourcing, improving coordination on military installations, and increasing education about the program to prevent domestic violence and abuse in the military.

3. Children and Youth:

- Joyce, along with Congresswoman Ann Kuster, introduced a resolution to recognize April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. This initiative is part of their work as Co-Chairs of the Bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence, focusing on raising awareness for child abuse, educating on signs of abuse, and promoting ways to help in communities.

4. Americanism:

- While there is no specific legislation directly mentioning Americanism, Joyce's actions, such as supporting veterans, addressing child abuse, and preventing violence in military families, reflect values aligned with Americanism. These actions demonstrate a commitment to protecting the rights and welfare of American citizens, including those who have served the country and the younger generation.

These contributions show Congressman Joyce's dedication to issues critical to veterans, the military, children, youth, and overall national well-being, reflecting principles that are often associated with Americanism.

Whereas, Congressman David Joyce of Ohio has exhibited exceptional dedication and service to the ideals of Americanism, the well-being of Children & Youth, the support of Veterans & Active Duty personnel, and the fortification of National Security; and
Whereas, his commitment to Americanism is evident in his unwavering support for our constitutional rights and freedoms, demonstrating a profound respect for the foundational principles of our nation; and
Whereas, Congressman Joyce has actively worked to safeguard the interests of children and youth, championing initiatives that promote their safety, education, and overall well-being, thereby ensuring a brighter future for the next generation; and
Whereas, his support for veterans is unparalleled, as showcased through his instrumental role in the passage of the Solid Start Act, which aids veterans in transitioning to civilian life, and his efforts in establishing the National Veterans Suicide Awareness and Prevention Day, reflecting his deep concern for the mental health and well-being of those who have served; and
Whereas, his advocacy for the Military Family Violence Prevention Act underscores his commitment to the safety and welfare of military families, thereby enhancing the strength and resilience of our national defense; and
Whereas, Congressman Joyce's actions have consistently reflected a steadfast commitment to the values of duty, honor, and country, serving as an exemplar of true public service and patriotism;
Now, Therefore, I [Your Name], [Your Position/Title], on behalf of [Your Organization/Community], do hereby recognize and commend Congressman David Joyce for his distinguished service and outstanding contributions to Americanism, Children & Youth, Veterans & Active Duty, and National Security. We express our deepest gratitude for his continued dedication and efforts that significantly benefit our community and the nation.
In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of [Your Organization/Community] to be affixed this [Date] day of [Month], [Year].

[Your Name] [Your Position/Title] [Your Organization/Community]

6. Tracey Richardson Proclamation-

Ohio State Representative Tracey Richardson has demonstrated her support for veterans, national defense, Americanism, and children and youth through various actions and initiatives:

1. **Support for Veterans and National Defense:**

- Richardson is a West Point graduate and a U.S. Army Reservist, having served in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and earned a Bronze Star Medal. Her military background and continued service reflect a strong commitment to national defense and support for veterans.
- She introduced legislation aimed at assisting disabled veterans by addressing property tax concerns, demonstrating her commitment to veterans' welfare and support.

2. **Americanism:**

- Her belief in the fundamental right to freedom for every American, coupled with her support for the military, law enforcement, and other safety personnel, aligns with the values of Americanism. She has expressed a commitment to defending constitutional rights and freedoms, including the right to bear arms.

3. Children and Youth:

- Richardson places a high priority on education, advocating for quality, well-rounded education, local control of schools, and parental involvement. Her focus on ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for students demonstrates her commitment to the youth.
- She has been actively involved in fighting drug addiction and improving mental health, especially among youth and teens. Her long-term involvement with the Drug Free Coalition and her efforts to improve mental health and addiction services statewide show her dedication to addressing key issues affecting children and youth.

These initiatives and her background indicate a strong commitment to the welfare and support of veterans, national defense, Americanism, and the well-being of children and youth. Richardson's actions in these areas are indicative of her dedication to serving and improving her community in these crucial aspects.

To Ohio State Representative Tracey Richardson,
Whereas, Ohio State Representative Tracey Richardson has exemplified outstanding dedication to the State of Ohio, embodying the principles of Americanism in her distinguished service; and
Whereas, her remarkable career as a West Point graduate and a dedicated veteran, notably through her service in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and as a recipient of the Bronze Star Medal, reflects her profound commitment to National Security and the defense of our nation; and
Whereas, Representative Richardson has tirelessly advocated for the rights and welfare of Veterans and Active Duty personnel, ensuring they receive the recognition and support they rightfully deserve for their valor and sacrifice in protecting our freedoms; and
Whereas, her legislative actions have greatly contributed to the advancement of the welfare of Children & Youth, particularly through her efforts in education, promoting safe and nurturing environments for learning and growth, and her vigilant work in combating drug addiction and improving mental health services among the young; and
Whereas, her unwavering commitment to these pillars of American society - Americanism, Veterans and Active Duty, Children & Youth, and National Security - has significantly enhanced the quality of life for her constituents and set a commendable example for current and future leaders;
Now, Therefore, the American Legion Department of Ohio Legislative Commission, with great pride and respect, does hereby acknowledge and celebrate the exemplary legislative contributions of Ohio State Representative Tracey Richardson. We commend her for her steadfast dedication to these crucial aspects of our community and nation. In acknowledgment of her exceptional service and in gratitude for her contributions, we hereby present this Proclamation as a symbol of our deep appreciation.
Presented this [Date] day of [Month], [Year], by the American Legion Department of Ohio Legislative Commission.

[Your Name] [Your Position/Title] American Legion Department of Ohio
Legislative Commission

7. Legislative Commission mission statement-

The mission of the Legislative Commission is to identify, communicate, and seek grassroots advocacy from members in Ohio, and at National, regarding pending Legislation at the State and Federal levels of both

the House, and Senate, that relates to the Four (4) Pillars of The American Legion. To develop relationships with Members of the Ohio General Assembly and Members of Congress in order to stay relevant and abreast of current matters for the Good of the Legion and Society as a whole. To develop a report that will be communicated to the Department Commander at each regular meeting of the Department Executive Committee by the Chairman of the Commission.

8. Adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 6:54 P.M.