

VFW Bylaw Resolution to Formalize the Conference System for Selecting National Officers

Resolution Number: 2026-0001

Date: 17 January 2026

Proposed By: Department of Nevada

Preamble

WHEREAS, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is committed to a transparent, democratic, and equitable process for the selection of National Officers; and

WHEREAS, longstanding practice has established that each Conference customarily selects and advances candidates from within its own Conference for National office consideration; and

WHEREAS, a long-recognized gentleman's agreement has established a rotational practice among the Conferences for National Officers, ensuring balanced leadership representation throughout the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the National Organization has tacitly recognized the Conference system by allocating designated time for Conference meetings during the National Convention, assigning National representatives to support each Conference during scheduled meetings, and providing funding for National Council of Administration members to attend their respective Conference meetings; and

WHEREAS, candidates for National office and elected National Officers routinely identify with and maintain affiliation to their respective Conferences throughout the election process and their tenure in office; and

WHEREAS, the formal establishment of a four-Conference system would strengthen member engagement, uphold the principles and integrity of the organization, and ensure equitable representation of the diverse regions and membership of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

That the following Bylaws are hereby established to formalize and implement a four-Conference system for the selection and endorsement of National Officers.

ARTICLE — CONFERENCES

Section 1 – Recognition and Formation

For the purpose of recommending members for election to National office at the National Convention, the existing Conferences of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States are hereby formally recognized. These Conferences, established through long-standing agreement and practice, shall continue as presently constituted. There shall be no more than four (4) Conferences, known respectively as the Eastern Conference, Southern Conference, Western Conference, and Big Ten Conference.

Section 2 – Governance and Authority

Each Conference shall be governed by such Bylaws and Rituals as may be adopted by that Conference, provided that such Bylaws and Rituals do not conflict with the Congressional Charter, National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure, or Ritual of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, nor with the lawful orders or directives of the National Convention, the Commander-in-Chief, or the National Council of Administration.

Section 3 – Advisory Role in National Candidate Endorsements

- (a) The Conference endorsement process shall be advisory in nature only and shall not restrict, limit, or prohibit any qualified member from seeking or being nominated for National office.
- (b) A Conference may endorse one or more qualified candidates for National office at the National Convention; however, such endorsement shall not constitute automatic advancement or guarantee election to any National office.
- (c) Each Conference shall publish and distribute to its respective Departments the established timelines, procedures, and criteria for candidate endorsement to ensure transparency and uniform understanding.
- (d) All Conference endorsements shall be certified by the presiding officer of the Conference and submitted to the Commander-in-Chief for inclusion in the official records of the National Convention.

Section 4 – Voting Procedures within Conferences

- (a) Each Department represented at a Conference shall be entitled to five (5) votes in the endorsement process. The Department Commander, or a duly designated representative, shall cast the Department's five (5) votes in accordance with the direction provided by the Department delegation.
- (b) Endorsement of a candidate shall require a majority of the votes cast by the Departments present and voting at a duly convened Conference meeting.

Section 5 – Rights of Delegates at the National Convention

Nothing contained in this Article shall be construed to limit or infringe upon the right to nominate a qualified candidate for National office in accordance with the National Bylaws. Delegates to the National Convention shall retain the unrestricted right to nominate and vote for any qualified candidate, whether or not such candidate has received Conference endorsement.