



THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF IOWA

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



1. Veterans Property Tax Exemption

The American Legion Department of Iowa supports an increase to the veterans' property tax exemption. The Veterans Property Tax Exemption has existed since 1886. The taxable value used to calculate the exemption that most closely resembles today's exemption was last increased from \$500 to \$1,852 in the 1974 session.

2. Military Homeownership Assistance Program

The Military Homeownership Assistance Program is one of the most attractive benefits within Home Base Iowa's arsenal aimed at the recruitment of out of state veterans.

The Military Homeownership Assistance Program continues to be marketed to veterans even after the funds have been exhausted for the fiscal year and veterans are placed on a waiting list.

The American Legion supports increased funding for the Military Homeownership Assistance Program to make the program available throughout the entire fiscal year.

3. Increase Spendable Amount annually to Veterans Trust Fund

The American Legion of Iowa supports an increase in the amount the Commission of Veterans Affairs may use from amounts received annually by the Veterans Trust Fund from the state lottery fund.

4. County Commission of Veterans Affairs Fund

The American Legion Department of Iowa supports an increase to the annual appropriation to the County Commission of Veterans Affairs fund to be used for national training and related expenses for county veteran service officers and appropriate staff.

5. Veterans' Treatment Courts

The American Legion urges the State of Iowa to establish and expand Veterans Treatment Courts.

Veteran Treatment Courts are hybrid Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts and have evolved out of the growing need for a treatment court model designed specifically for justice-involved veterans to maximize efficiency and economize resources.

Many veterans that enter the veteran treatment courts are not aware of their federal, state, county and a variety of additional benefit programs, such as Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits for compensation, pension and health care.

Grouping justice-involved veterans into a specific court docket significantly expedites access to veteran-specific resources, including benefits and treatment earned through military service and provides options for treatment as opposed to incarceration.