

Colorado Legionnaires,

As we begin the process to return the charter of the Department of Colorado, I want to share that process with you. Before that though, I want to emphasize up front that this process has several steps and unless the membership of The American Legion in Colorado works together, that process can be easily delayed or destroyed.

You should also know that the process I will describe has been used in Washington as they work to regain their charter. They have successfully approved a new Constitution and Bylaws and elected acting Department officers. That gives us confidence that this process will also work in Colorado.

The work will begin with the selection of a small (5-6 member) working group to create a first draft of a new Constitution and Bylaws for Colorado. The members of this working group will be chosen by National Judge Advocate Seavey and myself. We anticipate that the group will meet to create that first draft during the month of September. The draft will remain confidential and be submitted to a constitutional convention.

The members of that constitutional convention will be chosen by the districts in Colorado. The choices your district makes are extremely important. We want the voices of the Colorado Legionnaires to be heard in writing those new documents. This process creates the possibility of a new beginning for Colorado and the choice of the Legionnaires representing your district is critical, critical in that they have the future of Colorado in mind but also very importantly, that they be trusted by the members of your district to speak for them.

Some of the districts, yours may be among them, made those choices during spring conference. The coming fall conference is the chance for your membership to ratify those choices or to change them. These choices are similar to the choices made when the US Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia or the choices made by the states in their representatives to the St Louis Caucus. Those decisions are in the hands of your membership.

This constitutional convention will receive the first draft from the working group and create a final draft to be presented to a special convention of The American Legion. It is anticipated that the constitutional convention will convene sometime in November for their work. We will plan that meeting for a date following the last district conference. We will talk more about that conference later in this message.

The constitutional convention will operate under a few restrictions. First, we want their work to remain confidential to the group until they have a finished draft and we can coordinate release to the posts and membership. Second, as was done in Philadelphia, the group must be unanimous in their deliberations before their work becomes final. We will share best practices and not-so-best practices from other Departments with them as they deliberate and will ensure that their work does not violate the National Constitution or Bylaws.

If all continues to go well, their final draft from the Constitutional Convention will be submitted to a special convention of The American Legion of Colorado. That special

convention will be held on January 24-26 in Fort Collins. More information will be available on the convention later.

At that convention, the drafted Constitution and Bylaws will be considered and if passed, elections for the officers specified in those documents will be held. Once that is accomplished, we will begin working with those newly elected acting officers to have the charter reinstated. Those officers will not be official until the charter is restored but they will be part of the work to make that recommendation to the national Executive Committee.

For now, we encourage you to consider who you would like to represent your district at the Constitutional Convention. Please also consider who from your district they believe would serve them well as acting and then official Department officers. If you would like to be one of those delegates to the constitutional convention or if you want to be a candidate for Department office, that process should start with an endorsement from your Post.

We have a place on the Colorado American Legion website to post endorsements and resumes for candidates that have been endorsed for one of those future offices. Contact Headquarters for information on how to submit that information.

One final note, we plan to have a member of the reorganization committee address your fall conference and answer any questions you may have. Please watch for the date and place for your district's conference and bring any questions you have.

Best Regards,

*David H. Rehlein*

PNC, Reorganization Committee chair