



CENTENNIAL

Schmidt: Urge Congress to support centennial coin bill

National Commander Charles E. Schmidt is calling on all members of the American Legion Family to contact their congressional delegations now to:

- Request their co-sponsorship or a pledge to vote in favor of **H.R. 2519** and **S. 1182**, The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act, as introduced by U.S. Sens. Todd Young, R-Ind., and Joe Donnelly, D-Ind., and Reps. Phil Roe, R-Tenn., and Tim Walz, D-Minn.
- If they have already co-sponsored or committed to support the bipartisan coin legislation, Schmidt requests that Legionnaires and friends thank them for helping veterans, because sales of a Legion centennial coin through the U.S. Mint would directly support VA health-care and claims assistance; programs for homeless veterans; job fairs for transitioning troops, veterans and their spouses; and more activities conducted by the nation's largest veterans service organization.

Congressional authorization is required for the U.S. Mint to strike any commemorative coin, no more than two of which are offered per year. If passed, an American Legion 100th Anniversary coin by the U.S. Mint would be issued for just one year, starting Jan. 1, 2019. Such commemorative coins honor people, places, events and institutions in American society.

"With your help, we can encourage Congress to mark The American Legion's 2019 centennial with these limited edition, exquisitely crafted commemorative coins," Schmidt wrote in a July letter to members and friends of the organization. "Not only would these coins raise public awareness about the most influential veterans organization in the world, but proceeds from their sale would raise funds for our programs that assist veterans, servicemembers and their families."

The legislation requires that proceeds from sales directly help time-honored American Legion programs under the four pillars of support for veterans, the military, youth and Americanism.

"From service officer training to Operation Comfort Warriors to American Legion Baseball, these programs enrich our communities, states and nation," Schmidt wrote.

To send a message to a member of Congress, visit www.capwiz.com/legion and click the "Take Action" button related to the coin bill. Messages of support may also be emailed to Young's office at kevin_marshall@young.senate.gov or Walz's office at christopher.bennett@mail.house.gov.

For more information, contact the Legion's Legislative Division at legislative@legion.org or call (202) 263-5752.

SERVICE

NALC's Heroes of the Year include Legionnaires

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), founded in 1889 by Civil War veterans, is one of the oldest U.S. labor unions in the United States. Many of its 280,000 members served in the military, including three of NALC's eight 2016 Heroes of the Year.



Patrick Byrne of Lynn, Mass., received NALC's Education Award. The Army veteran and Legionnaire has worked with substance-abuse addicts and their families, as well as with the local homeless, for a decade.

Byrne's motivation is personal: his son battled addiction until his death last year. Byrne's experiences led to the "Silent No More" initiative, started by NALC, the U.S. Postal Service and Magellan Health Care to provide support for families dealing with mental health problems, substance abuse and suicide.



Bradley Gentz of Osage, Iowa, received NALC's Humanitarian of the Year Award. An Army veteran of Iraq and member of American Legion Post 278, he began training for marathons years ago and met a boy on his route,

Ryan, who has spina bifida and is in a wheelchair. Sold on the benefits of running and training, Gentz thought he could do the same for Ryan, and raised \$7,500 to purchase a custom-built chair in which he could push Ryan while competing. The two were featured in *Runner's World* magazine.



Michael Murphy of Florissant, Mo., received the Central Region Hero of the Year Award. On Oct. 28, 2014, the Marine Corps veteran and Navy reservist was on the scene when a man with a cinder block started

going after nearby cars – and the people inside them – as part of a carjacking attempt. Murphy took the lead in subduing the man until the police arrived.