

Date: June 19, 2024

To: EANGUS Auxiliary President, Margie Holcomb

From: EANGUS Auxiliary Constitution Committee Co-Chair, Amanda Wilwert Bradley

RE: Proposed Revisions to Auxiliary Constitution – Qualifications and Requirements for Membership

Ms. Holcomb: Prior to the 2023 EANGUS Auxiliary Annual Conference in Rochester, Minnesota, I proposed several revisions to the Auxiliary Constitution. The proposed changes can be summarized into three general categories: (1) revisions addressing the inconsistencies between the Constitution and Standard Operating Procedures; (2) revisions changing the deadline for dues and good standing for delegates; and (3) revisions expanding the category of individuals eligible to be annual members of the Auxiliary. The first two categories were presented to the Auxiliary for vote and passed by unanimous vote. The third category regarding changes to the qualifications and requirements for membership was tabled by the Constitution Committee for further consideration and discussion with the plan of presenting proposed revisions to the Auxiliary at the 2024 Convention.

Between the 2023 Convention and the submission of this report, several meetings were held between EANGUS Auxiliary President Margie Holcomb; EANGUS Auxiliary Treasurer Debra Campbell; EANGUS Auxiliary Membership Committee Chair Judith Putman; and EANGUS Auxiliary Constitution Committee Co-Chair Amanda Wilwert Bradley. Members of this small group engaged in research with other similar organizations, such as the VFW and combined military associations, regarding eligible members of those organizations. This report and the revisions proposed is the product of the research and discussions of that small group.

The EANGUS Auxiliary was formed 50 years ago to support EANGUS in its purposes with the motto of “Side by Side We Stand with Pride.” To date, to be eligible for annual membership an individual has to be a spouse of an EANGUS member. The organization has allowed other individuals that support the objective of the Auxiliary to be an associate member, but those individuals were afforded a second-class membership. Associate members could not be a voting delegate, eligible for scholarships, or hold office in the Auxiliary.

We have great respect for the history of the organization. We would not be the organization we are today without the hard work of our predecessors. However, the military family is changing and the policy initiatives of the Defense Department with respect to military families is also changing. As the focus is shifting to family readiness, i.e., promoting and enhancing family readiness, resilience and quality of life. The Defense Department is widening its lens and looking beyond the nuclear family to make sure its policy initiatives capture the extended family. To continue to be relevant, our organization must also evolve. Moreover, most legislators want to hear directly from the individuals that will be impacted by policy changes. The individuals impacted

by policy can extend beyond spouses. With this in mind, the proposed changes to the Auxiliary Constitution are as follows.

I. Article III, Section 3.2 Qualifications and Requirements for Membership

Currently, the Auxiliary has five classes of membership: Annual; Life; Honorary; National Associate; and National Associate Life. The proposed changes would move to three classes of membership: Annual, Life, and Honorary.

A. Honorary

The description of the qualifications and requirements for membership for Honorary Membership would remain the same and is as follows: “Honorary. The Executive Council may, by majority vote, confer honorary membership on a person who has rendered outstanding service to the United States, any political subdivision thereof, or the AUXILIARY. Honorary members shall not be: a voting delegate, eligible for scholarships, or qualified to hold office in the AUXILIARY.”

B. Life

At this time, the core language for Life Membership would remain the same. However, the proposed changes do include the removal of “in addition to the annual dues which apply until the applicant reaches the age of sixty (60). After age sixty (60) no dues are required.” The calculation of Life Membership dues is complex and difficult and tends to discourage Life Membership for younger individuals. Going forward, the dues for Life Membership would be an amount approved by the membership, which is similar to the approach used by EANGUS. Thus, the proposed Life Membership would be as follows: “Life. An annual member may become a life member by payment of an amount approved by the membership. This is a non-refundable payment. Application must be accompanied by verification of eligibility by the treasurer of the chartered state of which the applicant is an annual member. (1) Each state shall notify the Auxiliary Treasurer of the ineligibility of any life member when submitting the annual membership list and dues payment.”

C. Annual

For Annual Membership, there would be three subdivisions of membership: Members; Family Members; and Friends/Associates.

- **Members:** Those persons who are an enlisted member, currently serving, separated, or retired, of the National Guard.
- **Family Members:** Those persons who are related by marriage, birth, or adoption to a member in good standing of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States or a deceased member in good standing at the time of his/her death, of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States.
- **Friends.** Any individuals who support the objectives of the Auxiliary and are sponsored by a member in good standing or a deceased member in good standing at the time of his/her death, of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States.

This language would result in the complete removal of the Associate Membership category and any individual that meets the requirements of a subdivision of Annual Membership can be a voting delegate, be eligible for scholarships, and hold office. With respect to the “sponsorship” requirement for a Friend, the Executive Council would adopt a Standard Operating Procedure to address the sponsorship requirement, i.e. a form or something similar.

Further, if adopted, the Executive Council would have the authority to adopt any Standard Operating Procedure as the Council feels necessary to facilitate the orderly operation of the organization. Such procedure could an age or other eligibility requirements, such as a length of time a person has been a member before they can hold an office.

The membership is encouraged to carefully consider all changes. As a matter of procedure, each potential change will be addressed separately at the 2024 Annual Conference. For example, the changes to Life membership will be addressed separately from other changes. Similarly, the proposal of Family Members will be taken up separately from Friends.

I am happy to stand for questions at the next Executive Council meeting and at the Annual Conference. If you would like to discuss this memorandum proposal with me, please feel free to contact me at amanda.wilwert@gmail.com or 785-221-3278 (mobile).

DISCLAIMER: While I am an attorney licensed to practice in Kansas, Missouri, and Washington D.C., I am not EANGUS Auxiliary’s attorney. My review of the Constitution was in my individual capacity only. This memorandum is provided for general information only. This information is not designed to provide legal or other advice or create an attorney-client relationship. If there are concerns regarding the information contained in this memorandum, contact legal counsel.

Respectfully,

Amanda Wilwert Bradley
Constitution Committee Co-Chair