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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The American Legion Department of Virginia Calls on Congress to End Government Shutdown and Support America's Military

[Richmond, Virginia] – [October 21, 2025] — As the federal government shutdown enters its third week, Department Commander **Scott Maddrea** of **The American Legion, Department of Virginia**, is calling on Congress to fulfill its constitutional duty and pass legislation ensuring that America's men and women in uniform receive their pay without delay.

“Congress must do its job,” Maddrea said. “If they would perform their duty as well as our military does theirs, our country would be in far better shape. Passing a budget is not optional— it's a constitutional responsibility. Our troops take an oath to defend that Constitution every day. It's time for Congress to honor its own oath.”

Maddrea's words echoed the strong statement of American Legion National Commander Dan K. Wiley. “We all know that military life is stressful enough. The troops should not have to worry about whether they can buy groceries, or make their next rent and car payment, or how they're going to make ends meet because the government's not doing its job. Our troops are doing the job. They deserve better,” Wiley said.

The shutdown has already begun to affect military families and veterans across the nation. Thousands of service members face uncertainty about when they will next be paid, while many federal employees who are also veterans have been furloughed or are working without pay.

“The effects of this shutdown are being felt in every community across the Commonwealth,” Maddrea said. “If there was ever a time to step up and check on our fellow veterans and military families, now is that time. Let’s make sure they know they are not alone.”

Maddrea also underscored the impact on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. While VA hospitals remain open, regional benefits offices have closed, halting outreach programs, transition assistance, cemetery maintenance, and the GI Bill Benefits hotline.

“The shutdown hurts readiness, morale, and stability,” Maddrea said. “But the immediate priority must be to protect our troops, our veterans and their families from financial hardship.”

The American Legion is urging Congress to pass the **Pay Our Troops Act—H.R. 5401** and its Senate companion bill—which would guarantee pay for all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, including the Coast Guard, throughout any government shutdown.

“The next military payday is fast approaching,” Maddrea said. “Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and Guardians should never have to wonder if they can buy groceries or pay rent because of political gridlock in Washington. They are doing their jobs. They deserve better.”

Commander Maddrea is calling on Legionnaires and the public alike to use The American Legion’s **Grassroots Action Center** to send a message to Congress demanding swift passage of the Pay Our Troops Act.

“Veterans, uniformed service members, and their families live with enough uncertainty already,” Maddrea said. “It’s time for Congress to act—stop the shutdown, pay our troops, and restore confidence in the government they have sworn to defend.”

About The American Legion

The American Legion is the nation’s largest wartime veterans service organization, committed to mentoring youth, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting strong national security, and providing continued devotion to service members and veterans. Learn more at www.legion.org.

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