

December 7, 2011

WASHINGTON, D.C. –The U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation that will update the American Legion charter to improve the membership process. Congressman Altmire sponsored the House companion bill to S. 1639, which received final passage yesterday and can now be sent to the president for his signature. Congressman Altmire's bill, H.R. 2369, the *American Legion Charter Modernization Act*, received 432 co-sponsorships, a record for any bill in the House.

"Streamlining the membership process for the American Legion makes funds more readily available for local posts to continue their important work independently and prevent legal concerns that could not have been anticipated when they originally crafted their charter," Congressman Altmire said. **"At a time when bipartisan bills are rare, I am proud that a record-breaking 432 Members of Congress co-sponsored this bill to support our veterans. Moving forward, I will continue to push for this type of bipartisanship in Congress and look forward to working with the American Legion to help the organization be as successful as it can be."**

"The American Legion is indebted to the leadership of Representative Altmire in pursuing the changes to our corporate charter," said Tim Tetz, Legislative Director for the American Legion. **"For too long, the courts have upheld the autonomy of the local posts. This bill will guarantee that legal costs associated with defending this position can be better used for the programs, scholarships, and community efforts we support throughout Pennsylvania."**

The *American Legion Charter Modernization Act* and S. 1639 will allow individual posts to operate autonomously even though American Legion members now pay their dues and renew their membership online through the use of a credit or debit card. This is necessary because of liability issues that occur when money flows from the national organization to individual posts rather than vice versa. In the past, Legion members paid their dues and renewed their membership in the American Legion by cash or check at their local posts. This commonsense change gives American Legion members a new, more convenient option to meet their financial obligations, while allowing their post to continue to operate independently. Under current law, all changes to the Legion's charter must be approved by Congress and signed into law by the President of the United States.

Before passage of the bill, Congressman Altmire spoke on the House floor. To view the floor speech, please [click here](#) .