



## The American Legion Department of Washington Constitutional Speech Contest

February 14, 2026

Dear Contestant,

On behalf of The American Legion Department of Washington and the Oratorical Contest Committee, we congratulate you on your entry into The American Legion Department of Washington's 2026 National High School Constitutional Speech Contest. Your application has been accepted.

The Washington State Constitutional Speech Contest is scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2026, at Big Bend Community College located at 7611 Bolling Street, Moses Lake, Washington. You **MUST** be present at said location at 8:00 PM on Friday, March 27, 2026, for the contest orientation and contestant briefing or you will not be allowed to compete. You will receive your contest-round notification during orientation.

The contest is scheduled to start at 9:00 AM on Saturday March 28, 2026. The top four finishers will receive scholarships of \$500, \$1,000, \$1,500, or \$2,000, respectively, based on their order of finish. The State Champion will also earn the right to represent Washington at The American Legion's National High School Constitutional Speech Contest, held the weekend of May 15-17, 2026, in Hillsdale, MI. A pool of over \$203,000 in scholarships will be awarded there. The contest winner **MUST** be able to attend the National Contest!

Please be ready to deliver your 8- to 10-minute Prepared Oration. The subject to be used for the Prepared Oration must be on some phase of the Constitution of the United States that gives emphasis to the duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. In order to preserve contestant anonymity, we ask that you do not use your name or the city in which you reside in your speeches.

One of the four Assigned Topics for 2026 will be randomly selected during each contest. You must be prepared to deliver a 3- to 5-minute presentation on the Assigned Topic. You will be taken to a private room and given five minutes, without notes, to prepare for the Assigned Topic. Please refer to the Rules Brochure for a list of Assigned Topics so you can prepare in advance to speak on each.

At all contests, both orations must be delivered in English, without notes, without a podium or lectern, and without amplification. All notes must be left behind as you leave the first holding room to begin the contest. Please bring a printed copy of your speech to submit to the chairman for archival purposes.

An American Legion Post sponsor has paid your \$150.00 sponsor fee. Individuals from the American Legion and people from across Washington State have also volunteered to serve in staff and judging roles for this contest. We trust that you will honor your commitment and attend the contest. If, for any reason, you are unable to participate (or find yourself unexpectedly delayed by traffic on your way to Moses Lake), please notify Carol Reed, Contest Chairman, via email at [cmreed98058@hotmail.com](mailto:cmreed98058@hotmail.com) or at 206-683-5950, ASAP. If you have any other questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Since we are holding simultaneous contests on Saturday morning, we plan to livestream only the Finals on our Facebook page so those who cannot attend can view it. Changes and additional information will be communicated to you prior to the contest.

The American Legion will pay up to \$75.00 to help cover your travel expenses to the contest site and back home. The reimbursement rules are as follows:

- **TRAVEL and PARKING:** The American Legion Department of Washington will pay 15 cents per mile up to the \$75 limit, plus any ferry or toll road costs. You must provide receipts or proof of payment for any additional costs. Reimbursement will be based on the most direct route from your home to Moses Lake. Mileage will only be paid if you participate in both the prepared oration and the assigned topic phases of the contest. Payment will be processed via a voucher approved by the contest chairman.
- **CHAPERONES:** Each Contestant **must** be accompanied by an adult Chaperone assuming legal responsibility and staying in the same room with the Contestant. Chaperone must be 21 years of age or older.
- **LODGING:** The American Legion Department of Washington will furnish lodging for Friday evening for each Contestant and Chaperone at the Inn at Moses Lake located at 1745 E Kittleson Rd. located just off Interstate 90 at Exit 179. When you check in at the hotel, inform the desk clerk that you are with the American Legion Constitutional Speech Contest. They will assign you a room, and the American Legion will pay for it.
- **HOW TO FILE FOR REIMBURSEMENT:** A Legion representative will be available on site following the contest to collect travel receipts and to assist each contestant with the reimbursement process. A reimbursement check will be mailed to each qualified contestant about 2-3 weeks after the contest.
- **SATURDAY BREAKFAST / LUNCH:** The contest hotel has breakfast items available on Saturday morning for no cost. The contest will provide lunch for contestants and their chaperones between the morning and afternoon contest rounds. Please notify the contest chairman of any dietary restrictions by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

The 2026 Constitutional Speech Contest Agenda is included in this mailing, along with an official Rules Brochure, and Driving Directions to the BBCC Conference Center.

The Oratorical Committee is pleased to offer this contest and is excited about your participation. We all look forward to seeing you in Moses Lake on March 27, 2026.

All applicable Washington Oratorical contest information, maps, and updates will also be posted on the contest website at <https://WAConstitutionalSpeechContest.org>

Sincerely,

*Carol M. Reed*

Carol Reed, Chairman

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cc: Post Sponsor