



THE EAGLE



THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

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STILL SERVING



NEWS AND VIEWS May 2014

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

During the May 3rd PA Council of Chapters Board Meeting it was a pleasure to welcome State College MOAA national members COL Francis Gatto USAF Ret, LTC Gerald Golofski USA Ret, and CDR Edward Tracey USN Ret. They were contacted by Past President Bill Harris in an effort to start a chapter in State College. Response has been positive and the arrangements are made for the May 18th recruiting reception at 7PM in the Days Inn State College.

The Council has received data from national MOAA showing our chapters have 1,894 members and another 10,591 MOAA national members live in PA and are not in chapters. That means our total PA membership is 12,485.

Stay active in communicating with your US Congressman and State legislators as they work on the 2015 budgets. They value your

input and consider it in their decisions.

Regards,
Bob Gray

COUNCIL MEETING DATES

July 18 Chapter recruiting meeting to establish a State College Chapter

July 19, State College

September 12-13, State Convention
Meadowlands, Washington, PA

November 8, State College

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State Veterans Legislation

**Senate Veterans Affairs &
Emergency Preparedness
Committee April 30, 2014**

SB 403 (physician recruiting and retention incentive program for Guard) reported out as amended 4/30/14

SB 923 (Military Family Relief Asst. for active PA military families - extension) reported out as amended 4/30/14

SB 1115 (VA benefits used before state Educational Assistance Program) reported out as amended 4.30/14

Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee Meeting April 19, 2014

SB 1129 (Amputee and paralyzed Veterans) Amends eligibility to only severely disabled veterans. Reported out as amended 4/29/14

SB 1224 (Allows VA medications to be broken down into single unit doses in personal care and assisted living facilities) Passed the Senate 4/7/2014. Sent to the House

Other Bills we are tracking: Part of Education Package

HB 1164 (Veterans Priority College Registration) Passed the

Senate, signed in the Senate, Signed in the House, presented to the Governor 5/8/2014

HB 1460 (protects money paid for semester when mobilized and to

change W-withdraw on transcript to M-mobilized) reported out of Education 4/8/14 referred to Appropriations 4/9/14

HB 472 (waive residency for veterans moving into PA for instate tuition) Stalled in Senate Education Committee - Two separate letters of support provided for this bill from the PA War Veterans Council

Federal Legislation

Key Committee Rejects Personnel Cuts

May 9, 2014 - MOAA Legislative Update

The House Armed Services Committee followed the lead of the Personnel Subcommittee and rejected administration proposals to increase TRICARE fees, cut the active duty pay raise, the commissary benefit, and increase out-of-pocket housing costs when it passed its version of the FY 2015 defense authorization bill on May 7.

The committee's mark paves a path for Congress to block these proposals this year, though much depends on the Senate's deliberations later this month. The bill addresses several key MOAA concerns:

TRICARE Fees: rejects the administration's proposals to hike TRICARE fees for beneficiaries of all ages, eliminate TRICARE Prime, and consolidate health care options for beneficiaries under age 65.

Housing: rejects the administration's proposal to increase servicemembers' out-of-pocket housing costs.

Pay: Supports a 1.8 percent pay raise to keep pace with private sector wage growth. However, current law allows the president to implement an alternative pay raise, an authority he exercised last year. The Committee also supports a pay freeze for flag and general officers in FY 2015.

Commissary: The committee rejected the reduction in the commissary benefit this year but indicated calls for an outside review of the commissary system to identify future budget savings.

Other key personnel-related provisions include:

- improving sexual assault prevention and prosecution – including the elimination of the “good soldier defense”
- \$45 million for behavioral and mental health programs for Special Forces
- report on the Defense Health Agency's structure
- protection of child custody arrangements for deployed servicemembers
- additional study and reporting of servicemember and family member suicide

The House is expected to consider the defense authorization bill in late May. The Senate Armed Services Committee is also expected to begin its mark by the end of the month. There is still a long way to go in the

defense bill process, but this represents another significant step.

MOAA, Joint Chiefs Clash on Budget

On May 6, the Joint Chiefs of Staff made a rare unified appearance before the full Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) in support of the Pentagon's FY 2015 budget proposals to “slow the growth” in personnel costs in pay and benefits.

MOAA Chairman of the Board, Gen. John H. Tilelli, Jr., USA (Ret.) [provided the counter-argument](#) to the Pentagon's proposals during a second panel that included representatives from the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), the Association of the United States Navy (AUSN), and the Air Force Association (AFA).

Tilelli explained that while debt reduction is a national priority, a disproportionate share of the burden of reducing it must not be placed on the backs of servicemembers and military families.

He called on Congress to support a bipartisan debt reduction package to replace sequestration. “Continued sequestration cuts for FY 2016 and beyond will place national security at risk,” he said.

Much of Joint Chiefs testimony focused on personnel cost growth since 2000. Tilelli countered their argument saying, “Since 2000,

personnel and health care costs experienced an average 7.8-percent rate of growth due to the necessity of correcting previous cutbacks from breaking the career force. However, since 2011, personnel cost growth has not just slowed, but [rather] declined on an average of 1.5 percent per year.” - See more at: http://www.moaa.org/Main_Menu/Take_Action/Top_Issues/Serving_in_Uniform/Compensation/MOAA_Joint_Chiefs_Clash_on_Budget.html#sthash.cA3b6Fhn.dpuf

Bob Gray, Legislative Chairman

Army consolidates programs for retired Soldiers and Veterans

WASHINGTON — Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno approved the reorganization of the Army Retirement Services Office (RSO) and the Transition Strategic Outreach Office (TSO) under the Soldier For Life Program (SFL) effective Feb. 1, 2014. At the same time, SFL was reorganized under the Directorate of Military Personnel Management within the Army G-1. The moves bring together under one umbrella the three organizations at Department of the Army level that connect transitioning Soldiers to their communities and the employment, education, and health resources available to veterans through government, for-profit, and non-profit organizations. SFL promotes the mindset that service and a sense of

community do not end at separation or retirement.

The Soldier For Life concept is a holistic approach to this entire cycle, which ensures veterans connect to resources and their communities as they make the important transition from active duty back to the Army Reserve, National Guard or become civilian leaders.

Post AKO: Retirees access personnel and benefits info via DS Logon

By Marvin D. Wages, AKO Transition Chief, Army CIO/G-6

As of June 30, 2014, most retirees and family members will access personnel and benefits information held by both the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs via DOD Self-Service Logon (DS Logon).

DS Logon, which is operated by DOD, allows access to multiple DOD and VA websites using a single username and password. You sign in once, and then can get to any of the connected sites and your accounts on them. DS Logon complies with federal security guidelines and provides a secure user experience.

You must be enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) to obtain a DS Logon account. Soldiers (active duty, National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve, and retired), spouses, veterans and family members are eligible for DS Logon accounts.

Retirees can register using their DFAS My Pay account or by contacting the VA. Visit

<https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/help.do?execution=e4s2#retiree> for more information.

Family members' registration options include: (a) your military sponsor can request an account for you; (b) you can ask for a DS Logon account when getting your military ID card; and (c) you may go through a TRICARE Service Center. Visit

<https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/help.do?execution=e4s2#familyMember> for more information.

For sites not currently using DS Logon, like myPay, you must establish an individual username and password. myPay is planning to adopt DS Logon in 2014. For additional information, visit the Migration Page for retirees and family members at www.eis.army.mil/ako.

Hershey Park: Military Discount Program - Active, Guard, Reserve, Retired and Former military. You must show military ID card or DD-214 at the Hershey Park Ticket window. \$20 off price for regular admission tickets, age 9-54, and \$4 off Juniors age 3-8 and Seniors 55-69.

<http://www.hersheypark.com/tickets/discounts/index.php>

Levels of Excellence Awards

The deadline to enter the Levels of Excellence Awards, which recognizes MOAA's best councils and chapters, is June 1. Winners will be invited to attend MOAA's 2014 annual meeting in Arlington, Va., where they will be honored at a special dinner and presented with award streamers.

Affiliates will be judged on their activities for calendar year 2013. Councils and chapters that score between 220 and 240 points will receive five-star Levels of Excellence Awards, while those with scores between 200 and 219 points will receive four-star awards.

Entry information and judging criteria can be found on MOAA's Web Base. Read "[MOAA Levels of Excellence Award](#)," and submit your entry today!

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Transition Assistance

Troops to Teachers — Taking Skills, Experiences, Knowledge and Dedication Into Classrooms

Veterans bring unmatched skills, experience and dedication to schools and students.

Troops to Teachers is a Department of Defense program established in 1994 to assist transitioning service members in beginning new careers as teachers. The program provides counseling and referral services for participants to help them meet education and licensure requirements to teach and subsequently assist them with securing a teaching position. Veterans bring unmatched skills, experience and dedication to schools and students. Traits leading to successful military service, such as maturity, leadership, initiative and discipline naturally transfer to success in classrooms. Veterans are a long-term solution to help schools meet teacher shortages in critical subjects like math, science, special education, foreign languages and vocational education. They also serve as a unique resource for military-connected children, while helping fellow teachers understand the experiences of military children.

As part of the [Joining Forces](#) initiative to give service members and their families the opportunities they have earned, the White House is helping to showcase veterans' unique skills and their ability to positively impact public education.

[**Read More »**](#)

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PA Council of Chapters



2014 State Convention

September 12-13

www.pa-coc.org

**Doubletree Hotel,
Washington, PA**

**Attractions:
Meadowlands Casino
and Racetrack**

**Pennsylvania Trolley
Museum, Tanger
Outlets and Pittsburgh
is only a 15 minute
drive**

**Presentations by MOAA
Staff, MOAA Travel and
USAA**

**Speakers: Vadm Norb
Ryan Jr.**



**and Todd DePastino -
writer, educator and
motivational speaker**





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GLORIOUS INSULTS

"Some cause happiness wherever they go;
others, whenever they go." - Oscar Wilde



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