



THE EAGLE



THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

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Pay Raise, TRICARE Changes, and More: What Made the Cut in This Year's NDAA

With the distant sounds of sabers rattling from the borders of Ukraine and the Taiwan strait, the Senate passed the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on Dec. 15 by a 88-11 vote. The importance of a strong national defense to deter conflict is notable by the increased appropriations despite the end of 20 years of war in Afghanistan.

By MOAA Government Relations Staff December 15, 2022

The bill, which passed the House 363-70 on Dec. 7 and is en route to the president's desk for signature, authorizes \$768.2 billion – 5% increase from last year, keeping pace with Inflation – and is \$25.1 billion more than requested by the president. Rising inflation, competing economic priorities, and a pandemic that continues to create new uncertainties and fears will make MOAA advocacy for our uniformed community more challenging in the coming years. Read text summary of 2022 NDAA: <https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/fy22-ndaa-agreement-summary>

This NDAA did not follow the regular congressional process, where amendments are offered and voted on in each chamber before the bill proceeds to a joint conference committee and a final up-or-down vote in the House and Senate. This year, the Senate ran out of time and chose to accept the House-negotiated version to avoid a vote on amendments.

Negotiations occurred behind closed doors, unlike in previous years, leaving less opportunity for organizations like MOAA to influence lawmakers during the decision-making process. However, much of what is in the NDAA is supported by MOAA and The Military Coalition (TMC), a group of organizations representing nearly 5.5 million members of the greater uniformed services community.

[[READ TMC's LETTER ON THE NDAA](http://www.themilitarycoalition.org/uploads/4/7/6/9/47692523/fy22_ndaa_tmc_confe_rees_letter_final.pdf)]

http://www.themilitarycoalition.org/uploads/4/7/6/9/47692523/fy22_ndaa_tmc_confe_rees_letter_final.pdf

What's in the Bill?

Pay raise: A 2.7% raise for servicemembers keeps pace with the Employment Cost Index (ECI) but does not address the 2.6% gap behind ECI from previous years. The House Rules Committee asked the House Armed Services Committee to look for further increases in the next NDAA, given concerns over junior enlisted family financial problems.

[[RELATED: 2023 Could Bring Largest Military Pay Raise in Decades. But Is It Enough?](#)] [MOAA - 2023 Could Bring Largest Military Pay Raise in Decades. But Is It Enough?](#)

Basic Needs Allowance (BNA): A version of the MOAA-supported BNA is included, but it is not the proposed automatic payment for junior military families falling within a band of the poverty line. The bill's version places a bureaucratic burden on servicemembers and their families who often want to avoid the stigma of seeking help and the risk of losing a security clearance or damaging a career. It also does not address the use of the basic housing allowance when computing eligibility, a move which significantly reduces who may apply for support. More advocacy will be needed next year to support vulnerable families as [some experts seek to cut personnel costs](#).

Enhanced parental leave: Primary and secondary caregivers for the birth, adoption, or long-term foster placement of a child will be authorized up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave. This is a significant increase for Navy and Marine Corps secondary caregivers, who currently only have two weeks of parental leave.

New leave category for bereavement: Servicemembers will have access to two weeks of bereavement leave following the death of an immediate family member. Those who have less than 30 days of leave will be provided the two weeks at no charge; those with a balance of over 30 days will be charged only to the point that their leave balance remains at 30 days.

Child care: This NDAA authorizes an expansion of the in-home child care pilot program, which is currently only available in five locations. Additional locations have not yet been identified. Additionally, the bill requires DoD to conduct safety inspections at all child development centers and develop a 10-year facility improvement plan for these centers.

[RELATED: [Military Will Pay Toward In-Home Child Care for Some Families in Pilot Program](#)]

Impact Aid: Federal Impact Aid provides financial assistance to local school districts that have lost property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt federal property. This bill authorizes \$50 million in DoD Impact Aid to assist local educational agencies. An additional \$10 million is authorized to support local educational agencies with higher concentrations of military children with severe disabilities.

Military spouse employment: A pilot program designed to provide direct hire authority for spouses of uniformed servicemembers at OCONUS locations supports First Lady Jill Biden's [Joining Forces](#) initiatives to make "the federal government the employer of choice" for military spouses. The bill also includes language to develop a pilot program to establish employment fellowship opportunities for military spouses.

National Guard and Reserve special pay parity: The NDAA eliminates disparities of incentive pays for hazardous duties and aviators. Servicemembers performing these duties have historically earned pay at a rate of 1/30th of their active-duty counterparts. However, the implementation of this is delayed until a report is submitted and Congress and the secretary of defense certifies the change won't cause a detrimental effect on the force structure. MOAA will continue to follow this closely to ensure this disparity is finally closed.

[RELATED: [More About Reserve Component Benefits](#)]

[MOAA - Reserve Component Benefits Are at Risk. Ask Your House Member to Act Now](#)

Temporary one-year halt to military medical billet cuts: This NDAA requires a Government Accountability Office (GAO) evaluation on the DoD analyses used to support any reduction or realignment of military medical manning. DoD is also required to report to Congress on the number of uniformed and civilian personnel assigned to a military treatment facility (MTF) as of Oct. 1, 2019, and a comparable accounting as of Sept. 30, 2022. If the number in 2022 is less than the number in 2019, DoD must provide a full explanation for the reduction to demonstrate compliance with past provisions halting medical billet cuts.

Support for mental health appointment scheduling: Consistent with recommendations from the [DoD Inspector General's report on mental health access](#), this provision requires a minimum one-year pilot to provide direct assistance to beneficiaries with mental health appointment scheduling for both direct and purchased care components of the military health system.

Autism care demonstration program: The bill requires DoD to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct an analysis on the effectiveness of the [TRICARE Autism Care Demonstration](#). MOAA believes this is the appropriate next step to help evaluate the significant changes recently implemented to the demonstration.

Suicide prevention: This NDAA seeks to improve the ability for those in uniform to seek mental health support; [580 servicemembers died by suicide](#) in 2020, and the numbers continue to increase each year. The bill includes a self-initiated process enabling a servicemember to request a mental health evaluation by asking for one from a commanding officer or supervisor. Although treatment and access to care is important, Congress and DoD still must tackle the harder problem of improving the quality of life for servicemembers and their families to address the issue using a more complete, effective approach.

Improvement to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) to address sexual harassment and assault: Sexual harassment will become a punishable offense in the UCMJ as DoD seeks to implement the findings of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Harassment and Assault. Adding sexual harassment as a punishable offense, creating specialized military prosecutors, and placing decision authority to refer a case to courts-martial with a military prosecutor are good provisions only if DoD can properly resource the manpower for legal and investigative functions.

[RELATED: [DoD Report Reveals ‘Hard Truths’ on Sexual Harassment, Assault](#)]

Afghanistan study: The bill requires a study on the war in Afghanistan. MOAA will track the progress of this study, which will review the whole-of-government role in this 20-year conflict, to include its tragic end.

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) changes: A House Armed Services Committee (HASC) [report on the NDAA](#) expresses the committee’s concerns regarding proposed eligibility changes and “directed the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit a report to congressional defense committees no later than March 1, 2022, on potential locations of the next national cemetery.”

What’s Not in the Bill?

More forceful ANC language: A [halt to ANC eligibility changes](#) with a directive to designate the next national cemetery that will afford full military honors was not included in the bill, though it was proposed as a Senate amendment. This issue will require continued advocacy as the HASC report is pending.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Preserve the National Cemetery Benefit](#)]

Concurrent receipt: Language from the Major Richard Star Act was not included in the NDAA. It would support over 48,000 combat-injured military retirees with concurrent receipt of medical retired pay and VA disability. These combat-injured (and often seriously disabled) retirees currently are subject to an offset where their medical retirement pay is reduced for every dollar of VA disability received. Retired pay is for completed years of service paid by DoD, while disability compensation is for lifelong injury paid by the VA: Two different payments for two different purposes. To reduce retirement pay because of a disability is an injustice. Support for the Star Act is bipartisan and has grown to 54 Senate co-sponsors and 148 House co-sponsors; the bill has very good potential to reach a tipping point next year. The Star Act is part of MOAA's incremental strategy to achieve concurrent receipt for all retirees.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Support the Major Richard Star Act](#)]

Women for Selective Service: A provision requiring women to register for the Selective Service was omitted from the final NDAA although the language was in both House and Senate versions. The final report from the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service recommended [women should register for Selective Service](#). Although MOAA remains committed to protecting the all-volunteer force and not returning to the draft, the report highlighted many important recruiting challenges. For example, the commission estimated 70% of 18-to-26-year-olds in the U.S. cannot meet the physical and psychological standards for service and provided important perspective to sustain and improve benefits for the all-volunteer force. This issue likely will return as a problem Congress cannot avoid.

TRICARE Young Adult (TYA): Ensuring military kids have the same health care protections as their civilian peers as they transition to adulthood remains a priority for MOAA. Direct spending impacts were the main barrier to getting this bill in the NDAA, and MOAA will not support a solution that raises fees on other beneficiaries. We will continue our efforts to achieve a TYA parity fix next year.



Photo By Staff Sgt. Gabrielle Spalding/Air Force

The Way I See It

By CAPT Bob Heister, USN Ret., PA Council of Chapters President

I am not someone who enjoys wearing a mask. I hate it. I'd rather stay home, but I can't. Helping my wife with her 93-year-old mother (vaccinated) makes me very conscious of the consequences of inadvertently infecting her. Similarly, the almost complete absence of children in my church (who are still not able to get vaccinated) makes the Holidays a little less festive for me. So, I wear a mask, not just to protect me, but **to protect others. It's matter of personal responsibility.**

Long story short: For younger people (under 65), being unvaccinated makes you about 30 to 40 times more likely to die from COVID than people of the same age who are fully vaccinated (the mortality rate from COVID in the latter group is very close to zero).

The protective value of the vaccines among 65–79-year-olds is still extremely high: unvaccinated people in this age cohort are about 15 times more likely to die from COVID than fully vaccinated people of this age.

Among the elderly (80+) the efficacy of the vaccine is still high, but much lower when compared to its protective effects in the rest of the population: Unvaccinated people in this group are about five times more likely to die from COVID than fully vaccinated people of this age.

So basically, the reason for non-geriatric people to get vaccinated is that it reduces your personal risk of dying from COVID to essentially zero, while protecting that portion of the population that still faces a significant risk, despite the vaccine (the very elderly).

And don't forget LONG COVID, the covid symptoms that for some just won't go away even after you are technically "over" the virus: Fatigue, many other symptoms:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Cough
- Joint pain
- Chest pain
- Memory, concentration, or sleep problems
- Muscle pain or headache
- Fast or pounding heartbeat
- Loss of smell or taste
- Depression or anxiety
- Fever
- Dizziness when you stand
- Worsened symptoms after physical or mental activities

And then there is organ damage, not just the lungs, but including the heart, kidneys, and the brain. Organ damage may lead to health complications that linger after COVID-19 illness. In some people, lasting health effects may include long-term breathing problems, heart complications, chronic kidney impairment, stroke and Guillain-Barre syndrome — a condition that causes temporary paralysis. And blood clots,

Some adults and children experience multisystem inflammatory syndrome after they have had COVID-19. In this condition, some organs and tissues become severely inflamed.

Don't take my word for it; all this is from the Mayo Clinic

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-long-term-effects/art-2049035>

With our chapters mightily striving to return to normal operations, we want you to remain an active, healthy, member of MOAA for as long as possible. Please be prudent so that you can enjoy all that life has to offer. **Please wear a mask and get your shots if you are able.** In Clint Eastwood's immortal words, "Do you feel lucky?"

Be safe; I'd like to meet you when I travel to meet the members of all the MOAA chapters in this great Commonwealth as we work to improve the lives of all members of the uniformed services, and the proud veterans who have served this country. We have much to do. Have a blessed Holiday Season.

PA Council Elects New Officers for 2022-2023 Term



From left, President Bob Heister of Pittsburgh Chapter, First Vice President Nichols Taylor of Willow Grove Chapter and Second Vice President Dave Johnston of General Greene Chapter. MOAA Pennsylvania Council of Chapters elected new officers at their November 13, 2021 meeting. Past President Keith Beebe swore in the officers to their new roles for the 2022-2023 term of office.

PA COUNCIL 2022 MEETING DATES

Council meetings will be held quarterly at the US Army Heritage and Education Center next to Carlisle Barracks in Carlisle, PA at 11:00 AM, except for the 14 May meeting which will be held at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg. Directions will be provided prior to the meetings. Council members and chapter members attending are asked to arrive by 10 am for a social time and the meeting will start at 11:00 AM. Details are being worked out for lunch on site or you have the option to pick up something on the way. The social time and meeting will be on the conference line so everyone can participate in the conversation. Call in information is provided in the meeting agenda sent to chapter presidents. All MOAA members are welcome to attend any Council meeting. If you have a question, contact Bob Gray at rl_gray@hotmail.com or (717) 623-8715.

2022 Meeting Dates: 12 February, 06 August, 05 November at the US Army Heritage and Education Center next to in Carlisle Barracks in Carlisle, PA.

14 May at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, PA

The Museum is hosting the PA Council for our May meeting to thank us for donating the funds to purchase the new flag seen in the photo below. An April meeting had been planned in 2020 but was canceled due to COVID-19 spread. A tour of the Museum and lunch from Mission Barbeque is being provided at no cost.



<https://www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org/>

The Military Officers Association of America is a nonpartisan military nonprofit organization that does not engage in partisan politics and works with all political leaders in moving military and veteran's legislation that will help the men and women who currently serve in the active, Guard and Reserve, those who previously served and the retired, their families and survivors. The views presented in the Eagle newsletter are those of the editor and do not represent the opinions of the Pennsylvania Council of Chapters officers, PA Council members or represent the views of MOAA's national officers, staff or Board of Directors.

COLA to Increase 5.9% for Retirees, Disabled Veterans in 2022

Updated on October 28th, 2021



Robert Haynes for My Military Benefits

The annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) will increase by 5.9% on January 1, 2022. This means that many retired and disabled veterans will receive a bump in pay between \$10 to \$90 per month.

What is COLA?

The COLA adjustment is determined based on inflation and is authorized to preserve the purchasing power of our nation's veterans and those receiving Social Security.

According to KWTX of Temple, Texas, this COLA increase would be the largest pay raise since 1983.

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) hosts a unique [COLA Watch](#), wherein they provide detailed analysis of COLA related data.

How Much is Increase for Military Retirees?

According to the MOAA, retired military members will see a **\$59 increase for every \$1,000 of pension they receive.**

How Much is Increase for Disabled Veterans?

As for our disabled Veterans, they will see their checks raise by an average of **\$8.50 per month for each 10% increment of disability.** So:

- 10% disabled = + \$8.50
- 20% = + \$17.00
- 30% = + \$25.50
- 40% = + \$34.00
- 50% = + \$42.50
- 60% = + \$51.00
- 70% = + \$59.50
- 80% = + \$68.00
- 90% = + \$76.50
- 100% = + \$85.00

Remember, these are approximate and are provided to give a general idea of the expected per-paycheck increase.

RELATED: [Military Benefits Changes in 2021](#)



PENNSYLVANIA LEGISLATURE

Bob Gray – Legislative Chairman

Legislative Information from the General Assembly

web site: <http://www.legis.state.pa.us>

Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption Legislation

The PA War Veterans Council has not backed any one bill as none have addressed all the issues that need to be included. The State Veterans Commission appointed the Disabled Veterans' Real-Estate Tax Exemption Committee to study the needed changes in the law to better support the state's Disabled veterans and review existing legislation to evaluate if it contains the desired changes. The committee recommended that the State Veterans Commission support House Bill 1953 <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/PN/Public/btCheck.cfm?txtType=PDF&sessYr=2021&sessInd=0&billBody=H&billTyp=B&billNbr=1953&pn=2234>

and Senate Bill 578

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/PN/Public/btCheck.cfm?txtType=PDF&sessYr=2021&sessInd=0&billBody=S&billTyp=B&billNbr=0578&pn=0624> as they contained the most changes of the existing bills. The

Commission voted to approve that recommendation and referred it to the Commission's Legislative Committee. That Committee will review the legislation and coordinate with the Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs Policy Office, that reviews and recommends legislation from the Department to the legislature and the Governor's office. The Legislative Committee will provide a report to the Commission at the January 7, 2022 meeting.

Any legislation changing the current 100 percent disabled requirement of the Veterans Disabled Real Estate Tax Exemption or changes to other eligibility criteria will require a change in the state Constitution. That requires the bill to be passed by the House and Senate two years in a row before it can be put on the ballot for a statewide vote.

Senate Bill 976 Senator Regan

Veteran's courts: The Bill passed and is now Act 111 Link to law: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2020&sessInd=0&act=111>

The bill will provide counties the option to combine with surrounding counties to form a veteran's court or special court with a veteran's track. This will allow counties to combine funds to start a veteran's court. It also permits veterans to request to use veteran's courts in a nearby county. This permits county district attorneys to make agreements with another county with a veteran's court. The bill contains no additional funding to start a veteran's court.

Senate Bill 952 Senator Regan

The bill passed and is now Act 102

Veterans Preference Link to law: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2020&sessInd=0&act=102>

This legislation will establish a Pennsylvania veteran's preference law to provide a hiring advantage based on military service to the state and nation for members of the Guard and Reserve and veterans living in the state. Additional points or credit would be given

on tests and applications when hiring state and local employees. This would be in addition to the current federal military service requirement of 180 continuous days on active duty to be eligible for veteran's preference points. It is intended to help Pennsylvania Guard and Reserve soldiers get better jobs and increase recruiting and retention.

This legislation would amend our Veterans Preference Law in Title 51 (Military Affairs) by: *Clarifying the Definition of "Veteran" – re-naming it from "Soldier."

*Clarifying that an individual would have to complete their initial contractual military obligation to be eligible.

House Bill 1868 Representative Mako

Professional Licensing Reform for Veterans, Service Members & Spouses Link to bill: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?chamber=H&SPick=20210&cosponId=36137>

This bill passed the House November 10, 2021 and was sent to the Senate Consumer and Professional Licensure Committee on November 18, 2021.

To ease these struggles and remove barriers to licensing and employment, we intend to introduce a proposal to accomplish the following:

- Increase presence of veterans and military spouses on licensing boards and commissions.
- Expedited application review for veterans and military spouses, and initial licensure fee waiver for military spouses when traveling to Pennsylvania.

- Consideration of military experience acquired when determining if a military person meets the qualification for licensure.
- Use of the Military Occupational Codes Crosswalk to help translate the military experience into civilian licensure requirements.
- Early submission for licensure renewals of those military persons being deployed to allow them to immediately return to employment upon return.

House Bill 995 Representative Kaufer

Establishing the Veterans' Outreach and Support Network Link to bill:

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/PN/Public/btCheck.cfm?txtType=PDF&sessYr=2021&sessInd=0&billBody=H&billTyp=B&billNbr=0995&pn=2381>

This bill passed the House on June 9, 2021. It was referred to the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee June 11, 2021. It was reported from committee on November 9th and passed on its First consideration vote by the House. Hopefully this bill will move through the Senate by spring.

This bill assigns the following duties to the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs:

1. Coordinate with network partners, which include other state agencies, county directors of veterans' affairs, veterans service organizations, the healthcare provider community, and non-profits identified by the department, that provide programs and

services to veterans and their families.

2. Provide information regarding programs, resources, and services available to be utilized by network participants, which include family, friends, loved ones, and neighbors, who can regularly interact and offer outreach and support for veterans.

House Bill 1050 Representative Burns

Guaranteeing In-State Tuition for Reassigned Military Families

Link to bill:

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?chamber=H&SPick=20190&cosponId=28768>

The bill passed the House and referred to the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee and was report out of Committee. The bill was referred to the Appropriations Committee and has been reported out of the Appropriations Committee. It just needs to be brought up for a third consideration vote to pass. The bill was laid on the table on September 8, 2021. Leadership must decide when they will pass the bill.

Dependents of military personnel who enroll at a public college or university in Pennsylvania are charged in-state tuition rates under current law. However, the U.S. Department of Defense has found that some students lose their in-state tuition rate if their military parent is reassigned to another state between the day they are accepted to a Pennsylvania college and the first day of the semester.

My legislation will correct this oversight by ensuring that military families are guaranteed the in-state tuition as soon as a student submits the enrollment deposit. A student should not be penalized with years of higher college tuition because their military parent's reassignment happens to fall at just the wrong time.

Federal Legislation

Bob Gray, PA Council Legislative Chairman

Star Act Support: More Lawmakers Join the Fight for Concurrent Receipt



Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

By: Mark Belinsky December 21, 2021

The Major Richard Star Act – a bill that would end an unjust offset faced by tens of thousands of combat-injured veterans – has grown co-sponsors in recent weeks as staffers have time to access constituent requests and engage with elected officials.

Co-sponsors for The Major Richard Star Act recently grew to 55 in the Senate and 151 in the House. You can check to see whether your lawmakers support the House or Senate versions at these links: [S. 344 link:https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/s344/BILLS-117s344rcs.pdf](https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/s344/BILLS-117s344rcs.pdf) [H.R. 1282 link:https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr1282/BILLS-117hr1282ih.pdf](https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr1282/BILLS-117hr1282ih.pdf). Thanks to engagement from MOAA members and [The Military Coalition](#) (TMC) – a group of military and veterans organizations with a combined membership of nearly 5.5 million members of the uniformed services community – support for the Star Act is bipartisan and has good potential to reach a tipping point next year.

This holiday season is a very good time to reach out and ask for your representative and senators to co-sponsor the Star Act as they develop 2022 goals and prepare for midterm elections.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Support the Major Richard Star Act](#)]

According to the DoD Office of the Actuary, the Star Act would support over 48,000 combat-injured veterans with concurrent receipt of medical retired pay and VA disability. These individuals, often seriously disabled, are subject to an offset where their medical retirement pay is reduced for every dollar of VA disability received. In some cases, their retirement pay is completely reduced.

Retired pay is for completed years of service paid by DoD, while disability compensation is for lifelong injury paid by the VA. Two different payments for two

different purposes. To reduce retired pay because of a disability is an injustice.

What Happened With the Bill in 2021?

Although cosponsors grew significantly for the Star Act, a supermajority of support is required for this legislation to get this through Congress due to the cost of the bill. The bill was introduced as an amendment in this year's House version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), but the House Rules Committee was unable to waive NDAA budgetary rules, preventing further movement on the amendment.

Unfortunately, the Senate limited voting on amendments. Securing more co-sponsors in both chambers can help overcome these procedural hurdles.

[RELATED: [Pay Raise, TRICARE Changes, and More: What Made the Cut in This Year's NDAA](#)]

Advocacy for concurrent receipt and the Star Act is part of a larger campaign MOAA has pursued for many years. In 2004, MOAA and TMC secured concurrent receipt for retirees who served at least 20 years and have a VA disability rating at 50% or higher. Left behind after that 2004 change are 20-year retirees with a 40% disability rating and below, and those who were medically retired under [Chapter 61](#) with less than 20 years of service.

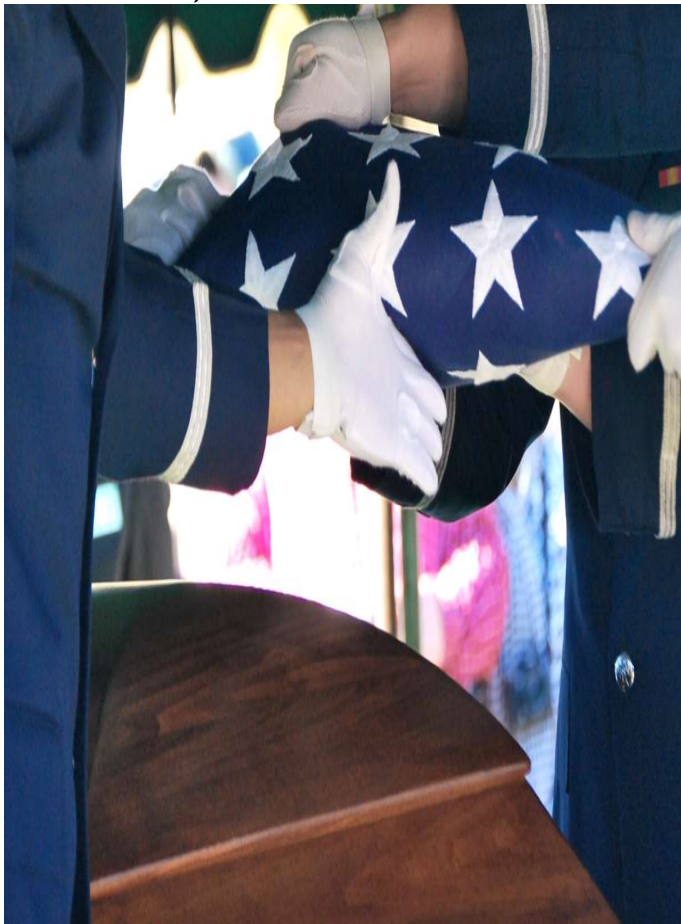
MOAA and TMC advocate for concurrent receipt for all, and the Star Act is part of an incremental strategy. The total cost for concurrent receipt for those left behind was previously estimated at more than \$33 billion over 10 years. The Star Act is a

much smaller segment of our combat injured, and the bill must get out of committee to receive an official cost estimate.

Our combat injured are a compelling group to support in the year that witnessed the tragic exit from Afghanistan, leaving many with moral injury, and the year Maj. Richard Star, USAR, [lost his battle with cancer](#). [Reach out to your lawmakers today.](#)

Ask Your Lawmakers to Make Sure Survivors Have the Benefits They Deserve

By: Mark Belinsky
DECEMBER 14, 2021



Van Williams/Air Force

With midterm elections already on the minds of our elected officials, timing for advocacy for the Caring for Survivors Act could not be better. This bipartisan legislation would make much-needed improvements to Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), and all co-sponsors we gain now will carry over to the next legislative session.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Elected Officials to Co-Sponsor the Caring for Survivors Act](https://takeaction.moaa.org/moaa/app/write-aletter?0&engagementId=51347)]
<https://takeaction.moaa.org/moaa/app/write-aletter?0&engagementId=51347>

This important legislation would raise DIC to the same levels as other federal survivor programs. It would boost DIC to 55% of the compensation of a 100% disabled veteran, up from the current 43%; correcting this injustice is long overdue.

The bill would also reform the so-called “10-year rule,” which currently prohibits survivors from receiving DIC benefits if a 100% disabled servicemember dies of a non-service-connected injury less than 10 years after receiving that disability rating. The law allows beneficiaries to receive a portion of DIC beginning at five years, with that amount gradually rising until full compensation at the 10-year mark.

Securing passage of the bill is the No. 1 goal for [The Military Coalition’s Survivor Programs Committee](#). The coalition, which represents nearly 5.5 million members of the uniformed services community, has long fought for survivor benefits; MOAA is proud to play a leadership role within and throughout the coalition.

The legislation is championed in the Senate (S. 976) by Sens. Jon Tester (D-Mont) and John Boozman (R-Ark.), and in the House (H.R. 3402) by Rep. Jahana Hayes (D. Conn).

[MORE SURVIVORS

LEGISLATION: [Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act](#) | [Tell Congress to Ensure SGLI, VGLI Keep Up With Inflation](#)] **Link: [MOAA - Join MOAA and Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act](#)**

“Families who lost their loved ones in the line of duty or from a service-related injury shouldn’t have to worry about their economic security,” said Tester, chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. “Our bipartisan bill will fix outdated policies, bringing surviving spouses and family members’ earned benefits in line with other federal programs. And it’ll reduce bureaucratic red tape to ensure no survivor is unfairly kept from the benefits they need in the future.”

Boozman said the legislation to bring DIC benefits in line with other federal survivor programs “will help us continue to honor the promise we made to servicemembers and their families. Our bill will allow us to better care for the loved ones of troops who have made the ultimate sacrifice.”

Hayes said she introduced the House version of the bill “to ensure survivors get the benefits their loved ones have earned. We owe it to the brave men and women who put their lives on the line to take care of their families and get them the support they need. I thank my colleague Chairman Tester for his continued partnership on behalf of service members

and their families and hope to see this bill advance in the near future.”

[RELATED FROM 2020: [Separating Myth from Fact in the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Act](#)]

Link: [MOAA - Separating Myth from Fact in the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Act](#)

Unfortunately, the unofficial cost estimate for this legislation is very high – roughly \$20 billion over 10 years. This means MOAA needs your dedicated advocacy to help build a majority of co-sponsors for S.976 and H.R.3402. Get fired up and activate your networks across friends, family, and social media to encourage legislators to join the ranks; check these links for lists of co-sponsors for the [House](#) and [Senate](#) bills.

Send a letter to your legislators [at this link](#), [Send a Message \(moaa.org\)](#) or consider using MOAA’s toll-free line to the U.S.

Capitol switchboard – 866-272-MOAA (6622) – to connect with your legislators’ offices. Be sure to use your own words and experiences when speaking with staffers and asking for their support; this [DIC Fact Sheet](#) from The Military Coalition on the Caring for Survivors Act is useful when reaching out to your elected officials.

Follow [MOAA news sources](#) to track updates on this and other legislative goals for the new year. Link: [MOAA - News Listing](#)



Perks Marketplace

**To log in to Perks Marketplace, [click here](#).
First visit? Read the details below.**

You Tube Video instruction link:
<https://youtu.be/e63I7YIPdNg>

Paid MOAA members have access to a wide array of entertainment, lodging, and rental car deals through Member Deals:

- **Up to 40 percent off top theme park tickets nationwide.**
- **Up to 40 percent off movie tickets nationwide.**
- **Up to 40 percent off top Las Vegas and Broadway shows.**
- **Up to 60 percent off of hotels.**
- **Up to 25 percent off on rental cars; and**
- **Great savings on Disney and Universal Studios tickets**

Through Perks Marketplace, PREMIUM and LIFE members can also unlock additional discounts:

- **50 percent off express shipping, 30 percent off ground shipping, and other members-only savings with UPS.**
- **Up to 25 percent off GE Appliances top brands**

To access the MOAA Perks Marketplace, you must first register and create an account. This log-in is separate from your MOAA Login, as information and discounts will be sent to your email inbox. If you do not receive an email after registering, please check your spam or junk folder. You will

need to confirm your email address through the link provided in the email.

Once you have confirmed your email address, you will be able to access all benefits on the Perks Marketplace platform. Benefits are accessed from the "Benefits" tab on the left-hand side of the platform.

(Please note: Some vendors may prompt you to create an account directly on their website before completing your purchase).

[Click here](#) to access the Perks Marketplace page and start saving!

Having problems logging in, or have other questions? Email msc@moaa.org or call our Member Service Center at 800-234-6622.

How to Access the MOAA UPS Discount

By: Amber Monks December 14, 2021



Photo by Mint Images/Getty Images

(Already familiar with the benefit? Log in to MOAA's Perks Marketplace on this page and start saving! Not a PREMIUM or LIFE member? [Log in to MOAA.org](#) for upgrade options.)

If you are looking for a way to connect with friends and family from a distance, look no

further than UPS – and the discounted shipping rates available to MOAA PREMIUM and LIFE members.

The discount, one of several exclusive member deals, is available through MOAA's Perks Marketplace.

"We had no difficulty linking our existing UPS account with the MOAA discount," said Rear Adm. Clare Helminiak, USPHS (Ret), a former [MOAA Board Member](#). "We were able to ship eight boxes from Texas to Nebraska for just over \$100 with the MOAA discount. The cost at the U.S. Postal Service would have been three times that, given that some of the boxes were large. We will definitely use the MOAA discount with UPS frequently."

Perks Marketplace acts as a separate site and purchase point, offering deals for rental cars, theme parks, hotels, movie theaters, and more. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about the benefit, and instructions on how to access it:

Q. What is the UPS shipping benefit for MOAA members?

A. The UPS benefit will allow MOAA PREMIUM and LIFE Members to receive a flat 50% off express shipping and a flat 30% off for ground shipping. These are just two examples of nearly a dozen UPS discounts.

Q. How do I access the benefit?

A. MOAA members will have to first sign into the MOAA website, then create a log in to Perks Marketplace ([get details here](#)), click the UPS logo, then create an account

on the UPS website.

Q. Once I'm on the UPS website, what do I do?

A. Once set up, members may use the "Quick Start" menu to begin taking action to ship a package. In order to learn how to navigate to the site, please take a moment to watch our step-by-step video on the process.

Q. How may I link the deal with my own UPS account for future use? Will I have to set up a UPS account?

A. If you would like to link the MOAA deal to your UPS profile, you must also create a UPS account. You will then receive a unique account number that will link you to the MOAA discount online. This is free and only takes a few minutes.

Q. What information or materials will I need?

A. You'll need to know the weight or cubic inches of the package. You'll also need a printer set up to print a label, or materials to affix a printout to your package.

Q. Can I use the benefit at my local UPS Store?

A. The discount is an online-only discount. But you can drop the packages off at a UPS Store after you've printed out the label. Members may also request a pickup.



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‘There’s nothing wrong with you that reincarnation won’t cure.’

– Jack E. Leonard

PA MOAA chapters have 1,400 members and another 10,591 MOAA national members live in PA and are not in chapters. That means our total PA membership is 11,991 and climbing. Thank you for staying involved!

Never Stop Serving

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