



THE EAGLE



THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

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AUGUST 2026

Summer AiA In Pennsylvania



This Year's Three Issues

These aren't the only issues MOAA is engaged on, but they're three where there's real momentum and a genuine chance to move the needle before the end of this Congress. Full talking points for each are in the one-page issue papers (see Attached Resources) and were covered in depth at the July 30 Topic Training Webinar, a recording can be found online.

Issue Legislation - The Ask

I. Major Richard Star Act

Star Act H.R. 2102 / S. 1032 Eliminate the VA disability offset for combat-disabled military retirees, who currently forfeit a dollar of retirement pay for every dollar of VA disability compensation. Affects nearly 59,000 combat-disabled veterans; the bill carries 400+ combined cosponsors and is moving on multiple legislative vehicles.

2. Improve and Enhance Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

Act H.R. 6231 / S. 3265 Reauthorize the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, which expired at the end of 2025, and expand eligibility to military spouses, whose unemployment rate remains roughly five times the national average, driven largely by frequent PCS moves.

3. GLP-I Coverage

Parity for TFL. No legislation yet. Restore TRICARE For Life coverage of GLP-I medications for obesity-related conditions ended in August 2025. That created a two-tier coverage system based on beneficiary category rather than medical need. More than 800 beneficiaries have contacted MOAA about losing this benefit.

ACTION: Congress will be in Recess for the month of August and come back to their home district. The easiest way to carry out this year's legislative action is to use the MOAA Legislative Action Center on the MOAA website. Don't forget to register in the top right corner of the site as a MOAA chapter member and list your chapter. You can select one topic to send a letter on and then return to the list to select the next topic to send a letter. You may call your congressional district office and ask to speak to the representative or a staffer to talk about your three issues. You may want to arrange a visit to the office to speak to the representative or staffer about the three issues. The MOAA website and August MOAA magazine also have information on the three issues for you to read about before your meeting. Three issue papers have been sent to your chapter leaders so they can send them to you for your meeting. Those papers have the MOAA staffer contact information at the bottom so they can call to discuss the topic further with an expert. This is the link to the MOAA Legislative Action Center: [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#) or type <https://moaa.quorum.us/> in your browser if the link does not work.

If you have a meeting or phone conversation with your congressional office, please let your chapter president or legislative liaison know so they can report it to the Council President. Sending a letter on the MOAA Legislative Action center will be recorded by MOAA. Thank you for Acting on these three national issues.

Bob Gray, Legislative Chairman, MOAA PA Council of Chapters

PA COUNCIL 2026 – 2027 MEETING DATES

The next Council meeting date is August 29, 2026, at the Carlisle County Club, 1242 Harrisburg Pike, Carlisle, PA 17013. Directions will be sent out prior to the meeting with the agenda. Future meeting dates are December 5, 2026, March 6, 2027, June 5, 2027, September 11, 2027, and December 4, 2027. A Legislative meeting is held at 10:00 am and the general meeting is at 11:00 am. A Zoom connection will be available for those who want to attend virtually and will be sent out prior to the meeting. All MOAA members are welcome to attend any Council meeting in person or virtually. Lunch is available at the club at your own expense and the food is very good. If you have a question, contact Bob Gray at rl_gray@hotmail.com or (717) 623-8715.

Find a Chapter: www.pa-coc.org or through the national MOAA web site, www.moaa.org.

Non-Partisan Statement: 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. Pennsylvania Council of Chapters is a nonpartisan military organization that does not engage in partisan politics. The views presented in the Eagle newsletter are those of the editor, not those of the Council officers and Council's Chapters or represent the views of MOAA's national officers, staff, or Board of Directors.

PENNSYLVANIA LEGISLATURE

Bob Gray – Legislative Chairman

MOAA PA Council of Chapters

Legislative Information from the General Assembly web site: <http://www.legis.state.pa.us>

The MOAA Pennsylvania Council of Chapters is conducting its first State Advocacy in Action campaign to contact state legislators and request that they support veterans' legislation that will support Pennsylvania's veterans. The Pennsylvania Council of Chapters is a member of the Pennsylvania War Veterans Council, Pennsylvania's military coalition, comprised of eleven congressionally chartered veterans' organizations and the Pennsylvania County Directors of Veterans Affairs Association. The PA War Veterans Council has a legislative committee that reviews all veterans' legislation and presents legislation for a vote of support or not to support. There is a letter sent to the legislative committee when the bill is assigned. The Pennsylvania Council has selected the bills that were determined to be the most beneficial to veterans for this Advocacy in Action. Now you will be able to Take Direct Action on legislation that will help Pennsylvania veterans by contacting your state legislators to support this legislation. MOAA has unveiled a new State Legislative Action Center that enables you to send a prewritten letter to your state legislator by email. **However, You must add your name and address at the bottom of the letter in the email.**

PENNSYLVANIA STATE ADVOCACY in ACTION



Pennsylvania State Capitol Photo by Google.com free photos

Bob Gray – Legislative Chairman

MOAA PA Council of Chapters

Legislative Information from the General Assembly web site: <http://www.legis.state.pa.us>

The Council has selected four bills to support for this campaign: Fix the Act 66 of 2007 Contracting Cycle HB 2349, Protect Veterans Against Claims Sharks Using State Legislation HBI918, Expand the Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption HBI257, and Extending State Tax Relief to all Uniformed Services HBI177. A summary of the legislation is listed below so you know what the issues are and why we want to move the legislation out of committee and to a floor vote in the House and with HBI257 in the Senate.

Fix the Act 66 of 2007 Contracting Cycle

Course of Action: Push for legislation or an administrative executive order that the appropriation amount available is known before award of the grant contracts; and pursue multi-year grants.

Rationale: The DMVA is awarding grant contracts with clauses entirely to its own advantage to detriment of its Act 66 awardees. One clause reads:

... The Department reserves the right to adjust the Grant Award and the payments thereof based upon the actual appropriation received for the FY__-__VSO grants.

The consequence has been perennially put the VSOs into unreimbursed debt situations to keep their operations on behalf of the state going until actually well after an annual appropriation bill is enacted because the DMVA is unable to hasten other state agencies' reviews toward approving the final contracts and the release of funding.

This is not good business considering that the awardees are providing an invaluable service to state government that ultimately brings substantial cost savings by connecting veterans to their federal benefits, especially health, educational, and disability benefits. One should not award unless one has the funds on hand, in the first place. Nor does this seem to be done by the other Administration departments as a routine.

The award delays also cause another unnecessary complication. Veterans service organizations already contend with losing paid, experienced service officers to government agencies due to wage and benefit advantages. This state of affairs also adds perceived job stability to the equation.

Pursuing multi-year grants is allowed by management directive, but the DMVA has been unsuccessful in convincing the Administration to allow it to do so. It would also help reduce employee turnovers through strengthening wage reliability and job stability. In addition, it would reduce the state's administrative costs for the program. **The PA War Veterans Council Supports HB 2439 by Rep. Markoski, House District 25 Allegheny County. Changing the program start date from Fiscal (July) to annual (January). A letter of support is being sent to the sponsor and House Veterans Affairs Committee.**

To summarize, after approximately four years of effort, the DMVA has been unable to secure the necessary funding needed to shift the award cycle or to enter into multi-year grant contracts. It is time for the PWVC to try to resolve the matter for the benefit of all but particularly towards reliable and consistent service to our veterans and their families.

Protect Veterans Against Claims Sharks Using State Legislation

Course of Action: Prevent any business, for-profit or nonprofit, offering VA benefits counseling and initial claims application services to veterans for a fee through an amendment of Pennsylvania's consumer protection statute.

Rationale: Of late there has been an increase of businesses not approved by the VA offering claims counseling and initial filings for a fee – essentially financially preying upon those veterans. While technically not allowed by federal law, there is also no penalty currently when they violate it – making a mockery of the law. All the more pity, since veterans can receive these same services free from VA-authorized VSO service officers, agents, and attorneys.

The previous VA penalty legislation has not been reapproved for violators since the expiration of previous legislation about three years ago.

The abuse includes both organizations charging veterans for information on veterans benefits and advising veterans on how to submit claims and those which also offer to file a claim. They have the veterans sign a contract agreement which charges high fees. Some have alleged arranged for medical professionals to support false claims of service-connected disability.

Previous federal enforcement, even when penalties existed, was weak.

At least four states have introduced legislation, but only two have passed legislation criminalizing actions by law firms or other organizations when assisting or filing claims for veterans in a manner not approved by federal law under Title 38. The two states which passed laws providing for enforceable penalties did so by modifying their Consumer Protection Laws.

State legislation is particularly required as Congress has not reinstituted penalties; and enforcement by the state on the behalf of veterans as consumers seems needed even if a federal law exists to increase enforcement. Senate Bill 1209 Senator Pennycuick Senate District 24, Berks and Montgomery Counties, was introduced to provide authorization for Veterans Guardians and other groups or individuals to charge veterans for assisting and filing claims for them. The bill does not require them to become VA accredited. The bill was written to place guardrails on the business as the feeling was that Veterans Guardians would sue the state if it tried to

enforce federal law. There is no requirement in the bill to require VA accreditation. The PA War Veterans Council does not support this bill and sent a letter to the Seante rejecting it.

However, while **HB 1918** Rep. Delozier, Cumberland County, was introduced in October 2025 is a start in the right direction, but limiting punishment to misdemeanor of the third degree is far too low considering the historical record of sums involved and this is not a practice of individuals as much as organized businesses. Furthermore, placement under 51 Pa. C.S., if with the intent of DMVA enforcement (it is not specified), burdens the DMVA with a duty it is not capable of properly enforcing. This is Attorney General territory. The PA War Veterans voted to support HB 1918. A letter of support for the bill with suggested changes will be sent from the PA War Veterans Council to Rep. Delozier and the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

Expand the Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption

Course of Action: Press for a state constitutional amendment to expand the Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption (RETX) provision by including these changes: (1) delete the war clause, (2) add veterans with a permanent, individual unemployability rating; (3) add un-remarried spouses of servicemembers either killed in the Line of Duty, missing in action (MIA), or made prisoners of war (POW); and (4) the exemption applies even if the veteran is living in a long-term care facility if his dependents are occupying the home.

Rationale: The RETX program currently provides for an exemption from the payment of all real estate taxes on the primary residence only for:

- honorably discharged or released veterans who served during war or armed conflict and are deemed 100 percent service-connected disabled (total and permanent disability) and
- any unmarried surviving spouse residing in the commonwealth who demonstrates a financial need.

However, the current constitutional provision has forgotten those who sacrificed the most by giving their lives.

Any change definitely requires a change to the Constitution of Pennsylvania (Article VIII, Section 2(c)) being put forth to the people. It will take two legislative sessions to accomplish. Progress on this issue is years behind schedule. Outside influences have created problems for progress on this issue.

HB 1257 (Probst), introduced in April 2025, was a clean and simple plain-English bill which we supported in its original form but was unexpectedly amended in June to mandate that those with 50% disability or higher shall be exempt in proportion to their disability. Our letter of 15 July 2025 to the Majority and Minority Chairs of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee clearly stated our resulting concerns. Bill was held in the Veterans Affairs Committee until the bill was amended again. The bill is close to the original bill providing County and Municipal governments the option to give disabled veterans less than 100 percent disable a tax exemption. The PA War Veterans Council sent a letter of support to the House Veterans Affairs Committee requesting it be passed out of committee. The bill was voted out of committee and passed in the House. It has been in the Seante State Government Committee since March 30, 2026.

The PWVC has continued to counsel against this type of thinking to prevent opposition by county commissioners, municipalities and school districts which rely upon property tax revenues in large measure, especially as income and VA disability rating do not necessarily have direct correlation in all cases. Nor has a compensation scheme been offered to these entities, since the proposal would dramatically increase the number or participants. However, ultimately it is a matter for the legislature to decide. The most important thing is to have them address our Course of Action above, finally and conclusively.

SB 1006 (Miller), introduced in September has the same verbiage as HB 1257. It sits in the State Government Committee. In essence, it is a companion bill.

SB 133 (Bartolotta), introduced eight months prior, tweaks the eligibility to allow inclusion of those killed in action and their surviving spouses alone. It also sits in the State Government Committee.

Extending State Tax Relief to all Uniformed Services

House Bill HB 1177

Representative Nancy Guent - 152 District - Montgomery County

Memo

Currently in Pennsylvania, state tax relief is extended to only the four uniformed services contained within the Department of Defense (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines), as well as to the US Coast Guard contained within the Department of Homeland Security. However, the uniformed services of the US Public Health Service (USPHS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are excluded from this benefit. As a veteran, I understand the hard work and sacrifices of all uniformed armed forces members, and I believe they should be treated fairly and equally regarding income tax exemption.

My legislation would expand state tax relief to now include USPHS and NOAA members while they are on active duty (or active-duty orders) outside Pennsylvania. Both USPHA and NOAA serve vital roles for our nation's health and well-being and have brave and honorable officers who routinely go "into harm's way" in service to our country. For example, one Pennsylvania USPHA officer who lives in my district was deployed to Liberia to help coordinate the response to the Ebola outbreak. While there, he served alongside members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines who were responding to this public health crisis – but his income was taxable in Pennsylvania, while their income was not.

As part of the Council State Advocacy in Action, I will be sending out a separate email that has a link to a legislative action service from the US Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Association. It has a letter that supports HB 1177 and works like the MOAA site, you enter your name, zip code and then your address to find your legislator. That will provide additional letters to legislators to help get the bill out of the House Appropriations Committee.

Here is the link to the MOAA State Legislative Action Center:

Click here: [State Legislative Action Center \(SLAC\)](#) or type this in your browser if the link does not work : www.slef-moaa.org/slac

NDAA Clears House: What's Next for the Must-Pass Defense Bill

By: Kevin Lilley, MOAA Staff
JULY 29, 2026

The annual defense policy bill [passed the House by a four-vote margin](#) July 22, the latest step forward for the \$1.15 trillion legislation amid many competing congressional priorities.

The chamber's version of the FY 2027 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) would:

- Authorize a [tiered pay raise](#), with servicemembers E-5 and below receiving a 7% increase, E-6 to O-3 getting a 6% boost, and O-4 and above earning a 5% raise.
- Address [several MOAA priorities](#), to include duty status reform and military child care improvements.
- Reverse planned cuts to [more than 40 military hospitals and clinics](#), while addressing [other health care issues](#) such as access to care barriers and requiring an audit of the TRICARE Pharmacy Program.

What's Next

It's unlikely the Senate will consider the House version, as that chamber has its own draft ([S. 4784](#)) with a similar topline authorization figure. It includes an across-the-board 3.6% pay raise, among other differences from the House version.

It is unclear whether the Senate version will reach that chamber's floor for a vote before Aug. 7, when members are scheduled to leave Washington for their state work period. The Senate isn't scheduled to reconvene until Aug. 31.

Once the Senate passes its NDAA draft, a joint conference committee usually negotiates a final version of the bill that must be passed by both chambers. The process usually lasts most of the calendar year – the last five NDAA's have been signed into law in December, while the FY 2021 NDAA took even longer: The Senate overrode a presidential veto on Jan. 1, 2021, for that bill to take effect.

MOAA will continue to engage with lawmakers and their staff on key provisions of the NDAA as the legislative process moves forward. Keep up with the latest on this legislation and other MOAA advocacy priorities at our [advocacy news page](#), and learn how you can reach out to your lawmakers via our [Legislative Action Center](#).



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September 14-25, 2027	Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise	11-nights from \$8,999
Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027	Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour	10 days from \$6,495

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PODS discount to rent a PODS container to store furniture during floor refinishing. There are many benefits waiting to be discovered such as MOAA Perks, like discounts on GE appliances and much more. Go to the MOAA website, www.moaa.org, and click on Benefits.



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GLORIOUS QUOTES

“He can compress the most words into the smallest idea of any man I know.” – Abraham Lincoln

PA MOAA chapters have 1,400 members and another 31,100 MOAA national members live in PA and are not in chapters. That means our total PA membership is 32,500 and climbing. Thank you for staying involved!

To find a Chapter or view Council newsletters go to our website:

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Never Stop Serving

The Eagle is published quarterly by the Pennsylvania Council of Chapters, Military Officers Association of America. Its content does not reflect the official position of the DoD, any branch of the US Armed Forces, NOAA, USPHS, nor MOAA National. Please send chapter articles and audio-visual submissions to the Editor, Bob Gray, at rl_gray@hotmail.com or pacocnewsletter@gmail.com.