

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Over the past 18 years of war, service members and their families never failed to answer the call, proudly sacrificing in order to protect our Nation. They made these sacrifices trusting that our government would provide them with resources to keep them ready. National fiscal challenges have left military families confused and concerned about whether the programs, resources, and benefits contributing to their strength, resilience, and readiness will remain available to support them and be flexible enough to address emerging needs.

The Department of Defense (DoD) must provide the level of programs and resources to meet this standard. Service members and their families have kept trust with America with multiple deployments and separations. Unfortunately, that trust is being tested.

During the 116th Congress, our Association will fight to ensure military families have the tools they need to meet the challenges ahead.

Pay, Compensation & Commissary

- Fight for annual pay raises tied to the Employment Cost Index (ECI) as prescribed by law; protect the pillars of compensation, such as the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH), that were designed to partially offset the extraordinary conditions of military service.
- Oppose any change to the defense resale system that would lead to increased prices or reduced support for military family quality of life programs. Urge that any reforms are conducted transparently and with Congressional oversight.
- Address the issue of food insecurity among military families. Work to ensure every military family can afford to put nutritious meals on the table.

Health Care

- Modify TRICARE Qualifying Life Events (QLEs) to allow military families to switch to TRICARE Select if Military Treatment Facility (MTF) care does not meet their needs.
- Close the TRICARE coverage gap for chiropractic care and acupuncture to ensure military families have access to non-pharmaceutical pain management treatments.
- Reverse TRICARE copay increases for mental health visits and physical/speech/occupational therapies to a more appropriate cost share aligned with private sector cost sharing constructs in high quality employer sponsored plans, including FEHBP.

Housing

- Press DoD, the Services and the privatized housing companies to properly address any health and safety hazards in military family housing. Urge Congress and DoD to conduct adequate oversight of privatized housing companies to ensure military families are provided safe, high quality housing.

Child Care

- Oppose any funding cuts to military child care, including the fee assistance program.

Spouse Employment and Education

- Pursue a tax credit for spouses who need to obtain a new professional license or certification following a PCS move.
- Prevent any degradation to loan forgiveness programs for the military-connected community.

Education

- Urge Congress to fully fund Department of Education Impact Aid and increase funding provided through DoD Impact Aid, to ensure public schools serving military children have adequate resources.

Financial Protections

- Prevent erosion of the Military Lending Act.

Family Members with Special Needs

- Pursue a TRICARE policy change to allow valid TRICARE Prime specialty care referrals to transfer to the new duty station during a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move to facilitate care transitions, particularly important for families with extensive specialty care requirements.

Caregivers

- Demand greater transparency, standardization and accountability in the eligibility and tier determinations for the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

Survivors

- Pursue the elimination of the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) Offset.