Legislative Advocacy
January 10-11, 2020

Southeast Council-Chapters Leadership Workshop
Orlando, Florida

CDR René A. Campos (USN-Ret.)
Senior Director, Government Relations
for Veterans-Wounded Warrior Care

MOAA
Military Officers Association of America
Agenda

• National Legislative Overview
• 2019 Legislative Gains
• 2020 Legislative Goals
• Complementary Efforts
• Grassroots - Local Advocacy
• MOAA National Initiatives to Support State Advocacy
National Legislative Overview

Meet Your Headquarters Team:

Dan Merry  
Danm@moaa.org  703-838-8103
Vice President

Mark Belinsky  
Markb@moaa.org  703-838-8123
Compensation  
Active Duty/Retiree

Karen Ruedisueli  
Karenr@moaa.org  703-838-8164
TRICARE & Medicare

Eryn Wagnon  
Erynw@moaa.org  703-838-8141
Military Family Issues

René Campos  
Renec@moaa.org  703-838-8134
Wounded Warrior/VA Care

Cory Titus  
coryt@moaa.org  703-838-8123
Guard/Reserve/Veterans

Amanda Meyers  
amandam@moaa.org  703-838-0534
Research and Analysis

Jamie Naughton  
jamien@moaa.org  703-838-5807
Legislative/Content Manager

Caitlin Hamon  
caitlinh@moaa.org  703-838-8113
Legislative Analyst
National Legislative Overview

Storming the Hill (April 10, 2019) Topics:

• Military Pay Raise at 3.1 percent
• End the Widows’ Tax: H.R. 553 and S. 622
• Stabilize TRICARE Fees and Copays

Storming the Hill (March 25, 2020): TBD

Challenges Ahead:

• Impeachment proceedings
• Government funding
• Political divisiveness leading up to 2020 elections
• Turnover in Congress
• Environmental uncertainties
2019 Legislative Gains

- 3.1% active duty pay raise
- Halted military medical billet reductions
- No new TRICARE fees or pharmacy increases
- Eliminated the Widows Tax
- Change in calculating Guard-Reserve active duty time
- Protected BAH from arbitrary cuts
- Comprehensive military housing reform
- Expanded military spouse education and employment benefits (MyCAA and licensure reimbursement)
- Blue Water Navy signed into law
2020 Legislative Goals

- Ensure any changes to the Military Health System sustain military-medical readiness and beneficiary access to top-quality care
- Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector and block erosion of compensation and non-pay quality of life benefits
- Protect family support programs, and ensure military-provided services (housing, PCS, childcare) are affordable, readily available, and meet quality standards
- End financial penalties for military survivors
- End concurrent receipt penalties for military retirees
- Achieve equity of benefits, protections and administrative support for Guard/Reserve members consistent with their active duty counterparts
- Ensure timely access to service-earned benefits, and resist proposals to erode foundational services delivered through VA and DoD
- Support legislation, policies, and programs to enable the seven uniformed services’ to recruit, retain, and manage personnel
Complementary Efforts

- Never Stop Serving
- Bridge Military-Civilian Divide
- Grow your pool of prospects

- Legislators listen to you first
- Community ambassadors
- Elevates MOAA's standing

Capitol Hill ➔ Grassroots
Council Role in Advancing the MOAA Legislative Agenda

Council President/Team Leader for Storming the Hill – *March 2020*

Schedule Appointments (29 potential visits in FL)
Coordinate team members’ assignments
Provide feedback on the receptiveness of their visits

Area VPs

Coordinate Coverage amongst the 44(?) chapters for the 27 Congressional Districts and their 50+ District Offices

FCOC Legislative Chair

Provide Updates to FCoC Column in Council Newsletter (6 a Year)
*Monitor & report on voting and co-sponsorship*
Issue Special Calls for Action
Provide guidance and assistance to Chapter Legislative Liaisons
Council’s Role in Advancing State Legislation to Support DSLO Military Family Issues

Formally engage in MOAA’s State Legislative Consortium
Establish State Legislative Team
Identify DSLO Issues appropriate to Florida
Establish Partnership with DSLO; Eric Simpson
Implement Advocacy Campaign –
  Collaborate with other VSOs, MSOs, in Florida
  Area VPs work with chapters
  Chapters meet with State Legislators
Chapters’ Role Acting on MOAA’s Legislative Agenda

Update members and Newsletter readers on Legislative Issues
Urge Timely Response to Urgent “Calls to Action”
Establish Grassroots Voice
  Contact with Local Congressional Offices
  Meet with Legislators and/or Staff
Regular Follow-ups
Assist members in conveying our message
Key Events/Opportunities for Engagement

Letter of Introduction to District Office Staff
February “Post Card” Campaign
Calls for Action – Capwiz; follow-up with District Staff
Storming the Hill
  Advance Letter to DC offices addressing *Issues of Importance*
  Follow-up Letter on *Co-sponsorship Status*
Summer Storming (during August Congressional Recess)
  Coordinate Chapter visits (consider joint visits)
  Become familiar with issues
Congressional attendance at Chapter Meetings; invite District Staff
Grassroots – Local Advocacy

Increase HQ support for state-level legislative priorities

Build MOAA brand awareness
Enhance capability and impact on Capitol Hill

Local success / impact

Chapter Growth
Expertise
Momentum
MOAA National Initiatives to Support State Advocacy

• Headquarters point of contact
• Advocacy training
• Opportunities for collaboration
  – Virtual Chapters
• Virtual resources
  – State Report Card
Advocacy: State Report Card

STATE TAX COMPARISON MAP
FOR MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY AND SBP

Click on each state to find detailed, specific state tax information.

Map Legend
- Green: Both military retired pay (MRP) and Survivor Benefit Plan payments (SBP) are fully exempt from state taxation.
- Yellow: MRP and/or SBP receive partial exemption from state taxation.
- Red: Neither MRP nor SBP is exempt from state taxation.

Source: MOAA Transition Services; current as of Aug. 15, 2019

- Dual Maps
- Assess State Taxation and Troop/Family Issues
- Proprietary Analysis
- Member Value
- Marketing Campaign
- [www.moaa.org/stateresportcard](http://www.moaa.org/stateresportcard)
Objective:

- Facilitate the exchange of information across councils
- Federal Legislative process: “Storming the Hill” (at the National-level by MOAA HQ)
- Work with staffers/legislators at local level for state/federal issues. Local constituents
- Sharing of programs, issues and processes at the State level.
- Use virtual communications (conference calls, Skype, Facetime, MOAA Regional Training program) as a means to share information
- Does not replace council/chapter legislative affairs activities
- MOAA Legislative Team provides guidance
- Using Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO) as a resource

Col Tom Robillard, USAF, Ret.
Trobillard@sc.rr.com Mobile (803) 730-6109
VP SC State Council Legislative Affairs

LTC Don Wolfinger, USA, Ret.
don17609@yahoo.com Mobile 636-4848-0248
Greater St. Louis Chapter/MO Council Legislative Affairs
In Summary

• Complementary efforts = mutual benefits
• Identify challenges and priorities
• Share ideas and best practices
• Grassroots matter significantly
  – Make opportunities and create a buzz
  – Make the news (in a good way 😊)
• Provide feedback and areas of need