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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As our Chapter activities begin to pick up in the next few months, allow me to bring up a few items that should be of interest.

First off, I am happy to say that our dues collection program is coming along nicely. We are better off percentage wise in regards to membership compliance than we have been in the last few years. Naturally if you have not renewed yet, please do so at your earliest convenience. (Dues form is on page 4 of this newsletter.)

Grant solicitations have proceeded on a steady course thanks to the continuing efforts of one of our past-presidents, Dick Newman. Both our Chapter bank account and our Military Assistance Fund are healthy and will enable us to continue with our normal Chapter charitable endeavors for the near future.

I would like to acknowledge the excellent presentation by National Park Ranger Rick Collins of the Tumacacori Mission at the January luncheon meeting. The topic "Life and War on the Edge of Spanish Colonial Frontier" gave us a unique insight into the everyday survival challenges of early Arizona pioneers. This is a part of the local history that should not be over looked or taken for granted.

As a matter of interest to most, I will share a synopsis of correspondence received from Lee Lange, Legislative Chair of AZCOC MOAA. As you probably know the state exemption for Military Retirement benefits was increased to \$3,500 (last year). This year State Rep. Gail Griffin has introduced a bill (HB2011) which calls for a total exemption of \$10,000. State Sen David Gowan, the new Chairman of the Arizona Appropriations Committee, is pushing for a full tax exemption. The benefits of said exemptions would make Arizona a "veteran friendly state". We will continue to report on this issue. The MOAA talking points bulletin will be issued in the near future and will be available to all members.

Finally, we are having our Mix and Mingle get together at the Quail Creek Clubhouse lounge on March 19th. The initial purpose of this format is to encourage members to take advantage of this event and get acquainted with your Chapter members. As we have had a number of new members join this year it would be a good time to introduce yourself to some like-minded neighbors. Please note that the March 19th reservation form for the Mix and Mingle is on page 3 of this newsletter.

Thank you for your Chapter support. And remember that I am always available for your feedback and suggestions.

Joseph Longo, 1LT USA (Former)
2019 Chapter President
Green Valley Chapter, MOAA

Never Stop Serving



COMING THIS MONTH

Contributor: Peggy McGee

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, March 19 from 4:30-6:30 in Quail Creek's Madera Clubhouse Gold Room and Lounge. That's when we will host our annual Mix and Mingle to share our successes during the past year and our plans for the remainder of 2019. Cost for the event is \$12. This is also a great time to invite your friends and neighbors who might be eligible to join our ranks.

This year it will truly be a Mix and Mingle event, time to get to know your fellow Chapter members a little better. No entertainment, no games, but rather just time to munch on some deviled eggs, meatballs, mini chimis (and more) and to chat with other members or make new friends. There will also be a cash bar.

Reservations can be made by contacting Peggy McGee no later than March 14 at (520) 207-6188 or positivelypeggy@gmail.com. Reservation form is on page 3 of this newsletter.

But don't forget to bring some cash or your checkbook. We will have a couple raffles and will be taking orders for MOAA polo shirts in styles for both men and women. Depending on how many we order, the cost will be somewhere between \$22 and \$25 and can be ordered in red, white or navy, all with our emblem.

ALERT! ARIZONA STATEHOUSE: State Tax Exemption Military Retirement Pay (2019)

Contributor: John Chernoski

This alert is from Lee Lange, the Legislative Director for the MOAA AZ Council of Chapters:

As you know, the 2019 AZ State Legislative Session kicked off January 14. One of the key issues last year was increasing the state tax exemption for military retired pay from \$2,500 to \$10,000. Despite the Governor's support and help from many of you, the teachers' strike likely diverted attention and the result was an increase to \$3,500. Last year's champion, Sen Gail Griffin reached her term limits for the Senate, ran for a House seat and was elected. She plans to continue working this issue in the House and has introduced **HB2011** which calls for a \$10K exemption.

In the Senate, Sen David Gowan plans to introduce a bill which will call for full exemption. He reached his term limits in the House and ran for Gail Griffin's seat in the Senate and won. Sen Gowan was the House Speaker for 3 years and also reached his term limits before running for Gail Griffin's seat in the Senate. He now chairs the powerful Appropriations Committee and intends to push for full tax exemption. The current \$3,500 exemption is effective for tax year 2019.

I have met with both legislators and they need our help. Both want us to start talking up the issue with members. Their approach is increasing the state tax exemption will help the perception that Arizona is a veteran friendly state and influence more retirees with much needed skill sets and earning power to come to Arizona instead of going to other nearby states, like Texas. Retirees buy homes, pay property taxes and generally do not need costly social services. In the long run Arizona would gain revenue and add to a high-quality work force that would attract more employers. I am working on a set of talking points for your use. Hope to have to you shortly.



March 19, 2019 Reservation Form · Mix & Mingle 4:30-6:30 QUAIL CREEK MADERA CLUBHOUSE

Please make your reservations by March 14th!

Please reserve _____ places.

Cost: \$ _____ (\$12 per person)

A variety of hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Check # _____

Attn: GV MOA Reservation

Mail your check and this reservation form to:

MOA of Green Valley, PO Box 1535 · Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535

Rank: _____

Name: (please print) _____

I am bringing guest(s) whose name(s) is/are:

GUEST 1

GUEST 2

GUEST 3

GUEST 4

If you require a ride to the meeting, program or event, please check here:

✂ ----- CUT HERE -----

If you cannot get your reservation and check mailed timely, or **if you have made a reservation and find you cannot attend PLEASE CALL PEGGY McGEE (520-207-6188). Your chapter is charged for all ordered meals even if they aren't served.** Please bring a check or exact cash amount to the meeting.

Hearing Aid Assist Device at Quail Creek ⇨ If you are a member with Hearing Aids who still has difficulty hearing the speakers at the meal-plated meetings, Quail Creek does offer a Hearing Aid Assist Loop device. The Hearing Aid Assist is a loop system in the meeting room and can be turned on and individuals would wear a device around their neck which helps amplify the sound through their hearing aids. In order for this assist device to work the individual must have a Hearing Aid or Cochlear Implants with TeleCoil (T-Coil) capability. This device only works with hearing aids with this capability and will not work on individuals with no hearing aid at all.

If you or a guest would like to utilize this service at Quail Creek for future meetings, I ask that you notify us in advance so we can have it available for you. You can notify us by writing your request on your meeting reservation form or contact Peggy McGee **207-6188** or **positivelypeggy@gmail.com**.



CHAPTER DUES ARE DUE

Please get your 2019 dues to Myra McCune as soon as possible, or you may pay your dues at the March Mix and Mingle.



Military Officers Association of America
Green Valley, Arizona Chapter
P.O. Box 1535
Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535

2019 Chapter Membership Dues

Chapter Dues: (Regular-\$25; Auxiliary-\$15)

Membership Dues \$ _____

Make check payable to: Military Officers Association of Green Valley or GV MOAA.

PLEASE PROVIDE THE INFORMATION BELOW:

Name: _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Rank: _____ Branch of Service: _____ National # _____

Auxiliary _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

DOB _____ (Month/Day/Year)

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Scholarship & Military Assistance Fund \$ _____ Donation.

Make check payable to: Green Valley MOAA Scholarship and Military Assistance Fund or
GV MOAA S&MA Fund.

**Dues may be paid at any meeting or mailed to Military Officers Association of
America, Green Valley, Arizona Chapter, P.O. Box 1535, Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535.**

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Get to Know Your Members

Contributor: Peggy McGee



Bob and Patty enjoyed some relaxation time in February 2017 in Maui after his American Airlines retirement flight from DFW Airport to Maui.

LtCol (Ret) Bob Little grew up in a military family and attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute from 1970-1975 where he earned his bachelor's degree, master's degree, and a commission in the USAF. He graduated from USAF Pilot Training at Craig AFB in 1976.

Bob's first assignment was to Guam flying the WC-130 with the 54th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron "Typhoon Chasers" at Anderson AFB. He flew numerous data-gathering flights into tropical storms, including 39 penetrations into the eyes of fully-developed typhoons and was awarded two Air Medals. Other humanitarian missions included Search and Rescue at sea, and the annual *Operation Christmas Drop* in the neighboring Mariana Islands.

Bob served as Aircraft Commander on the AC-130 "Spectre" Gunship in the 16th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Florida during the Iranian Hostage Crisis. During his tenure as Squadron Safety Officer, he acquired the honorary title of "Dr. Heedlock", a name that follows him even today. He was then assigned to Mather AFB as an Instructor Pilot in the T-37. Bob spent the last 10 years of his career as an IMA Reservist in NAVAIDS Engineering at McClellan AFB.

In 1986, Bob hired on with American Airlines for a 31-year career in commercial aviation. He became a Check Airman on the Boeing 757/767 at DFW International Airport and his Single-Engine Overweight Emergency Landing can still be seen on YouTube. While at American, Bob flew numerous military charter and volunteer missions in the Boeing 757 in support of *Salute to The Troops* and *Snowball Express*.

Bob and his beautiful bride Patty were married in California 21 years ago and then moved to Texas. Patty worked for her children's school district and owned and operated a small business for 10 years. She was an active volunteer for over 10 years at the USO at DFW Airport. Bob is active in the North DFW MOA and currently serves as 1st Vice President there. In addition to spending as much time as possible in Green Valley, they spend time visiting family in Texas and California.

SPRING CLEANING TIME

Contributor: Peggy McGee

If you are into spring cleaning as the weather warms, please consider the less fortunate. Do you have too many spatulas or measuring spoons? What about incomplete sets of cutlery or dishes? The homeless veterans can put them to good use. They also appreciate napkins, paper towels, toilet paper, plastic utensils and paper plates and cups. Opened packages are A-OK. Bring them to the meeting on March 19 and they will get delivered to the VA. The VA is still accepting 2019 calendars as well as note cards.



If you are a snowbird, check your pantry for canned goods and other foods items to see if there are any that will expire while you are away. The Food Bank can use them. As a matter of fact, they will accept canned goods up to one year beyond their expiration date and packaged foods up to 6 months beyond their expiration date. Food items can be dropped by the Food Bank any time you are in the vicinity before 2 p.m.

Just think, cleaned cabinets and usable items being put to good use rather than just cluttering your kitchen.

THE TAX MAN COMETH

Contributor: Peggy McGee

Last year's Tax Reform Act changed more than just Form 1040's appearance to postcard size. Standard deductions were drastically increased, but personal exemptions were eliminated. These are just two of the examples of the new tax law. The good news is that there are several local area residents who are part of AARP's Tax Aide program who diligently studied and took tests and are ready to tackle tax returns.

Even though more taxpayers will be able to use the standard deduction this year, we ask that taxpayers bring all documentation needed for itemized deductions because it might be advantageous to itemize on the Arizona return. The volunteers will be able to tell tax payers whether the standard deduction or itemizing the Federal return is best for them. AARP volunteers are unable to prepare returns from other states since they are not trained for issues which may be unique to each state.

Tax-Aide cannot prepare tax returns involving business income if the business has an inventory or uses a home office, has farm or rental property income or returns with complicated partnerships (reported on Forms K-1). Also, because Arizona is a community property state, Married Filing Separately tax returns are out of scope for the AZ Tax-Aide program.

There are three locations in the Green Valley area where tax counselors can prepare and print returns and submit them electronically to the IRS and AZ Department of Revenue. Except for the East Center, all sites are walk-in clients only.

Hours for each location are:

1. **St. Francis In-The-Valley Episcopal Church**, 600 South La Canada Drive, open on Mondays and Fridays. Monday hours are 1- 6 PM. On Monday, March 18th, site hours are 9 AM - 6 PM. On Fridays, St. Francis will operate from 10 AM - 3 PM. This tax site will be closed on Friday, March 22nd.
2. **La Posada Recreation Center**, 501 La Posada Circle, open on Wednesdays from 10 AM - 3 PM. Returns will not be started after 1:45 PM.
3. **GVR East Center Lounge**, 7 South Abrego Drive, open on Saturdays from 10 AM - 3 PM. Also, open Sunday, March 24th, 10 AM - 3 PM. Appointments are **required**. Call Mark Haskoe at 520-300-6407.

Please bring the following to the tax preparation site: Picture IDs for the taxpayer & spouse, Social Security (SS) cards or SS statements for everyone on the tax return. Also bring documentation for income and itemized deductions, ACA forms and 2017 tax returns.



MRS. BARBARA GAVRE RETIRES

Contributor: Dick Newman



On February 15th, a retirement ceremony was held at Building 5 at the 162nd Fighter Wing of the Arizona Air National Guard facility in Tucson. BG Andrew McDonald, Commander of the 162nd led the ceremony honoring “Barb” Gavre on her retirement. Barb has served thirteen years as manager of the Airmen and Family Readiness Program, and was recognized for her outstanding service. The audience numbered over three hundred.

The Scholarship and Military Assistance Fund has worked with her over a significant time period with our Turkeys for Troops program, support of the 162nd non-perishable food bank and an emergency assistance project as well as the Food for Troops Program developed by Steve Abel and continued by Peggy McGee.

Dick Newman attended the ceremony representing our Chapter and presented Barb with a check for \$1,500. The money came from a grant provided by the Long Foundation (Long Reality) in support of the Food Bank.

We will miss Barb and wish her a pleasant retirement.

SPONSORS

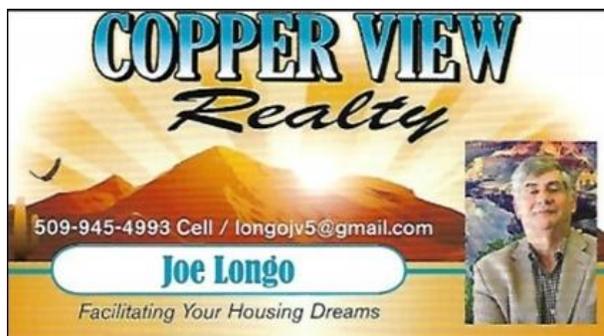
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PHOTO GALLERY

Photos and video clips may be accessed in the Photo Gallery via a link in the website sidebar:

greenvalleymoaa.org

ARCHIVED NEWSLETTERS

Looking for back issues of the chapter's newsletter? Go to the News & Events page on the website:

greenvalleymoaa.org/news-events

2019 EVENTS SCHEDULE

January 16 – Luncheon Meeting: 11:30am Social Luncheon: 12pm. Location: Quail Creek Clubhouse Ballroom #1.

January 18 – Annual Massing of the Colors at 12pm in the Sahuarita Unified School District Auditorium, 350 W. Sahuarita Road

March 19 – “Mix & Mingle”: 4:30-6:30pm. Location: Quail Creek Clubhouse Lounge & Gold Room.

May 1 – JROTC Scholarship Dinner: Social: 5pm · Dinner: 5:30pm. Location: Quail Creek Clubhouse Ballroom 1 & 2.

September 18 – Luncheon Meeting: 11:30am · Social · 12pm. Location: Quail Creek Clubhouse Ballroom #3

November 13 – Dinner Meeting: Social: 5pm · Dinner: 5:30pm. Location: Quail Creek Clubhouse Ballroom #1.

December 10 – Holiday Dinner: Social: 5pm · Dinner: 5:30pm. Location: Quail Creek Clubhouse Ballroom # 1 & 2.



The Board of Directors meeting is the 1st Wednesday of each month 8:30-10am at the Friends in Deed Building, Green Valley.

Members are welcomed to attend... join us!

There will be no Board meetings in June, July or August.

2019 OFFICERS, DIRECTORS & CHAIRS

(Area code is 520 unless otherwise indicated.)

President: 1LT Joseph Longo USA (Fmr) 509-645-4993

First Vice-President and Membership:

1LT Elliott Jones USA (Fmr) (847) 366-6466 (phone# correction)

Second Vice-President and Programs:

COL Peggy McGee, USA (Ret) 207-6188

Secretary: Jadine Hilt (414) 350-7821

Treasurer: CDR Myra McCune, USN (Ret) 399-3326

Immediate Past President, President, 501(c)(3):

LCDR James Knox, USN (Ret) 605-941-0335

National MOAA Board Member, Past President, Legislative Affairs:

CDR John Chernoski, USN, (Ret) 625-3909

ESGR Representative:

Lt Col Dick Kosnick, USAF, (Ret) 399-3310

Surviving Spouse Liaison: Betty Eby-Deardorff 625-3545

Director, Personal Affairs:

CWO3 James Rundlett, USCG (Ret) 509-389-4286

Chaplain: Linda Kosnick 399-3310

Director/JROTC Liaison:

COL Marianne Rogers Faust, USAF (Ret) 210-861-9440

Historian: COL Marianne Rogers Faust, USAF (Ret)

210-861-9440

Transition Liaison:

(OPEN)

Public Relations Officer:

COL Peggy McGee, USA (Ret) 207-6188

Webmaster/Newsletter Editor:

Marianne Cobarrubias, webmaster@greenvalleymoaa.org

FROM NATIONAL MOAA

These Bills Will Help Medical Retirees. Encourage Your Lawmakers to Support Them

Multiple pieces of legislation have been introduced this session to address one of MOAA's key advocacy issues - retirees who are forced to relinquish all or a portion of their retirement pay to receive VA disability compensation. MOAA needs your support to get the House and Senate to make these bills a priority.

MOAA and other advocacy groups have long targeted members of this group and have since 2001 expanded the pool of retirees who are eligible to receive full DoD retirement and VA disability benefits. Current law exempts combat-injured retirees from the offset, for example, as well as those who served more than 20 years and have a disability rating of 50 percent or higher.

That still leaves several groups of veterans who must part with their earned retirement benefit, dollar for dollar, to receive VA compensation. These bills seek to right that wrong:

- The Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act (H.R. 333), introduced by Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-Ga.), addresses retirees with more than 20 years of service and disability ratings of 40 percent or lower, as well as medical retirees with less than 20 years of service - so-called "Chapter 61 retirees."
- The Retired Pay Restoration Act (H.R. 303), introduced by Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.), would eliminate the offset for 20-year retirees with disability ratings at 40 percent or lower, but would not address those with less than 20 years in uniform.
- The Senate version of the Retired Pay Restoration Act (S. 208), introduced by Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.), uses slightly different language to achieve the same ends as the House version with the same name.

Why Back All the Bills?

MOAA supports all three pieces of legislation, and continues to support any effort that would address any group of veterans suffering from this unfair system, which has its roots in 19th-century veterans' legislation.

"The reality is, we have to trust these legislators and their strategy to gain approval for full removal of the offset," said Col. Dan Merry, USAF (Ret), MOAA's vice president of government relations. "We're seeking the restoration of earned benefits, and not on the backs of other beneficiaries. All of these bills in the aggregate achieve that end, and we'll keep fighting until all retirees receive both their service-earned retirement pay from DoD and their Disability Compensation from the VA."

MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), offered similar guidance in a letter to Tester and Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), an original co-sponsor of S. 208.

THESE BILLS WILL HELP MEDICAL RETIREES, continued...

“Expanding eligibility for concurrent receipt of earned retirement and disability compensation is an issue of great importance to our members,” Atkins wrote. “MOAA supports any effort to secure concurrent payment of retirement pay and disability compensation for our disabled servicemen and women, such as the Retired Pay Restoration Act. ... Although I know that full resolution to issues of concurrent receipt may not be achieved by any single bill, I look forward to working alongside you and others in Congress to provide further relief by securing concurrent receipt for all disabled veterans who have lost their retirement benefits.”

Join MOAA's cause by asking your representatives to [support H.R. 333](#), along with [H.R. 303 and S. 208](#).

Here's How the New VA Appeals Process Works

In a recent ceremony at VA Headquarters in Washington, D.C., Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie officially implemented the VA's new appeals process, which is commonly called the Appeals Modernization Act (AMA).

Signed into law Aug. 23, 2017, this overhaul of the cumbersome legacy appeals process was no small undertaking. Led by Cheryl Mason (chair, Board of Veterans' Appeals) and David McLenachen (director, Appeals Management Office), the VA devised a three-tiered approach to tackling appeals, with a goal of completing supplemental claims and higher-level reviews [within 125 days](#). Direct appeals to the board are expected to average 365 days.

“With the implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act, I believe that the department is in the midst of the greatest transformative period in its history,” Wilkie said. “The VA is well on its way to becoming a 21st-century administration.”

MOAA was among the veteran service organization partners that played an influential role in the Act's development and passage; several VSO representatives, as well as members of Congress and staffers from the Senate and House Veterans Affairs committees, attended the ceremony.

The new law is designed to modernize the current system and provide earlier claim resolution, per the VA. It requires improved beneficiary notification of VA decisions, and it offers three review options for beneficiaries who disagree with those decisions:

1. A [Higher-Level Review](#) sends the claim to a senior claims adjudicator with no new evidence allowed. The reviewer can overturn the original ruling based on his or her opinion, or based on a clear and unmistakable error.
2. A [Supplemental Claim](#) lets the veteran submit new, relevant evidence to support the appeal.
3. An [Appeal to the Board](#) gives the veteran the chance to appeal directly to the Board of Veterans' Appeals, either via direct review (no new evidence or hearing, just a new look at the claim); by submitting new evidence without requesting a hearing, or by requesting a full hearing, with new evidence and the chance to testify before a Veterans Law Judge. Under the new system, VA officials “anticipate an uptick in appeals directly to the board, but not a significant one,” Mason said. “The board is ready.”

HOW THE VA APPEALS PROCESS WORKS, continued...

Find additional information on the Appeals Modernization Act through [this VA fact sheet](#) or [this list of frequently asked questions](#). Learn more about how to file and track your appeal [here](#).

The new system takes over for the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP), a pilot program that accepted more than 84,000 claims since its November 2017 launch, [according to Military.com](#). RAMP will continue processing claims submitted under that process, but the program won't accept any new appeals.

What Would Major Cuts to Military Medical Personnel Mean to Your Care?

In July, MOAA first identified [four key and rather worrisome trends](#) we've been closely tracking that are taking place in the military health care system. Now, we can add the [planned reduction in the number of military medical personnel](#) to the list.

If the numbers are as large as we have been led to believe (approximately 17,000 positions), this will exceed and intensify the impact of the other trends, and may have considerable effect on military beneficiaries in significant ways.

We will not be able to assess the impact of these large cuts in the number of practicing military physicians, nurses, medics, and other allied medical personnel until the fiscal year 2020 defense budget request is approved by the White House and sent to Congress in mid-March. If Congress approves the cuts, to be presented billet by billet, they would start to take effect quickly in FY 2021.

Proposed personnel reductions of such magnitude surely will affect military medical training platforms. It takes years to educate physicians, and there are projections of physician shortages: A [recent study](#) released by the Association of American Medical Colleges predicts that by 2030, the United States will face a shortage of between 42,600 and 121,300 physicians. This leads us to our first question: How this will affect the military mission and medical care, and how can leaders expect to have a medically ready force without a ready medical force?

Our second question: What would these cuts mean for beneficiaries? If the plan is just to replace these health care providers with civilians, that's not a reliable strategy. Getting private-sector medical professionals to take jobs near rural bases may not be realistic or feasible.

Beneficiaries, including active duty families who receive care at military treatment facilities, may be forced to seek it in the TRICARE networks. Pediatric and obstetric care - which are now available to these beneficiaries - may vanish from the MTFs. Lab and pharmacy services, along with radiology, may be greatly reduced. We already are starting to see TRICARE Prime retirees being re-enrolled from MTFs into the civilian networks, should be resulting in them being charged with new, and higher, co-payments.

These are major shifts in military medicine. MOAA will watch DoD's proposed FY 2020 budget closely and will assess the impact on military beneficiaries.

Bipartisan House Bill Would End 'Widows Tax'

Legislation introduced by Reps. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) and John Yarmuth (D-Ky.) would end the deduction of Survivor Benefit Plan annuities from Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) paid to survivors of fallen service members, also known as the "Widows Tax."

MOAA has long supported repeal of the Widows Tax, backing similar legislation from Wilson and others. The change would mean that in cases where military service led to the death of a servicemember, DIC would be paid in addition to the SBP annuity.

About 67,000 military survivors would benefit from this legislation, with the current offset costing them about \$12,000 annually.

"The SBP-DIC offset remains grossly unfair to the members of the military community who deserve our support the most," said Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), President and CEO of MOAA. "We thank Reps. Wilson and Yarmuth for their bipartisan leadership on this issue, and we encourage their fellow legislators to join the fight."

"This is uniformly agreed-upon throughout Congress, but they haven't found the political will to resolve it," Atkins said. "The 116th Congress has an opportunity to be known for getting this done."

Wilson introduced the new legislation -- H.R. 553, the Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act -- on Jan. 15, with Yarmuth as the bill's lone listed original co-sponsor. Text of the bill wasn't immediately available, but it's essentially similar to bills Wilson introduced in the last four congressional sessions, with all four bills garnering more than 200 co-sponsors. Despite the support, neither these bills nor similar ones put forward by other legislators in previous sessions were put up for a vote, even by a committee.

"It is unconscionable to think there is a 'Widows Tax' on the surviving family members of our fallen heroes," Wilson said in a release announcing the bill. "We owe it to them to secure stable benefits in the event of their retirement or death."

Yarmuth, the newly installed chairman of the House Budget Committee, echoed that statement saying the bill "corrects a terrible wrong and makes clear that we support members of our military not just when we need them, but when their families need us."

In April, as part of its annual Storming the Hill event, MOAA plans to bring in chapter leaders from across the country to meet with lawmakers to find a permanent end to the Widows Tax.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Peggy McGee · Dick Newman

Proofing: Peggy McGee · Editor: Marianne Cobarrubias

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

greenvalleymoaa.org

May 2019 newsletter deadline: APRIL 11

Submit articles/photos to: webmaster@greenvalleymoaa.org