

2024 OCC Legislative Affairs Report First Quarter

This report is in three parts.

Part 1: Covers the current MOAA supported Legislative Actions before Congress.

<https://moaa.quorum.us/>

Part 2: Topics that relate to military families - DoD-State Issues.

<https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/sitemap>

(Note: We only have one Chapter that has a committee representative that monitors this area. That is Columbus. Recommend each Chapter identify a member to monitor this important area). Further recommend each chapter begins contacting its respective state representatives to either introduce the items of concern or else get onboard and support their passage.

Part 3: General Information –

How to Get or Renew a Military ID Card: for Spouses, Dependents, Veterans and Retirees.

MOAA Videos and Multimedia: <https://www.moaa.org/content/topic-and-landing-pages/videos/>
MOAA produces a variety of video products including pieces that highlight advocacy efforts, explain key issues, or serve to spotlight MOAA members and other members of the wider military community. MOAA also produces regular webinars that offer guidance on issues of concern to our membership. You can access those video archives [here](#).

See more MOAA-produced videos at [MOAA's YouTube channel](#), including our weekly [Advocacy Update](#).

Part 1: 2024 MOAA Active Legislative Campaigns. Currently there are twenty-seven (27) active items that need member support.

Ask Your Lawmakers to Avoid a Government Shutdown and Finish the Appropriations Process

Write

While a continuing resolution will keep the government open, the lack of a full budget means the prospect of a shutdown still looms. This uncertainty places unnecessary stress on those in uniform and their families. Ask your lawmaker to act today.

Urge Your Elected Officials to Pay Servicemembers During a Government Shutdown

Support legislation to ensure members of the uniformed services (active and reserve components) and civilian employees continue to receive pay in the event of a government shutdown.

Write

Urge Your Elected Officials to Fix the TRICARE Young Adult Coverage Gap

This bill would expand TRICARE eligibility to young adult dependents up to age 26, bringing TRICARE in line with commercial plan requirements.

Write

Share Your Story: Impact of TRICARE Pharmacy Network Changes

Will you be impacted when community pharmacies leave the TRICARE network?
Please share your story.

Tell

Protect Veterans from Claims Sharks

Contact your representative and senators and urge them to support H.R. 1139/S. 740, the Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act of 2023. This bill reinstates criminal penalties for representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with disability benefits claims.

Write

Urge Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt

Contact your representative and senators and urge them to support the Major Richard Star Act, which would authorize combat-injured veterans to receive their full DoD retirement pay earned for years of service and their full VA disability compensation for lifelong injury.

Write

Ask Your House Member to Support the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act

Write

Help MOAA stay in the middle of this important conversation – Contact your House member and urge them to support the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act.

Tell Congress You Oppose TRICARE/TRICARE for Life Fee Increases

Urge your Senators to oppose TRICARE fee increases.

Write

Urge Your Legislators to Support the Military Spouse Hiring Act

Contact your representative and senators and urge them to support the Military Spouse Hiring Act to incentivize businesses to hire military spouses.

Write

Urge Your Legislators to Pay Full Housing Costs for Servicemembers

MOAA seeks to restore the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to 100%. Our nation expects 100% from servicemembers and we need to ensure they get 100% of their housing allowance by supporting BAH restoration.

Write

Contact Your Legislators and Urge Them to Improve the Quality of Life for Our Troops

This year is the 50th anniversary of the all-volunteer force (AVF). It should be a time for celebration, not for a recruiting crisis.

Write

Ask Your Member of Congress to Ensure the Coast Guard is Paid During a Government Shutdown

It is critical that members of the U.S. Coast Guard receive treatment equitable to that of other members of the armed forces, specifically protecting their pay in the event of a government shutdown or a lapse in appropriations. Contact your legislators today and ask them to support the Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act of 2023.

Write

Support Health Care for Children of Disabled Veterans or Veterans Who Have Died Due to a Service-Connected Disability

The CHAMPVA Children's Care Protection Act would expand coverage under the VA program for children of eligible veterans so they can have health care until age 26, as afforded to most Americans through private and federal policies.

Write

Help MOAA Reverse Pharmacy Network Cuts

One of MOAA's top priorities is a report requirement to evaluate the impact of recent TRICARE Pharmacy network cuts on beneficiary access to care – such a report will help advance our efforts to reverse the network cuts. Please join MOAA in urging lawmakers to co-sponsor a standalone bill to ensure robust report requirements are included in the FY 2024 NDAA.

Write

Urge Your House Member to Support Much-Needed Improvements to the Basic Needs Allowance

Contact your representative and urge them to support legislation to ensure military families struggling with food insecurity have access to the Basic Needs Allowance.

Write

Share Your Experience with the Barracks or Military Housing

Tell

Share your Barracks or Military Housing Story

Ask Your House Member to Support the READINESS Act

Write

Contact your House member and urge them to support the READINESS Act to enhance policy protections for military spouses employed by the federal government.

Help MTFs Retain Skilled Nurses

Write

Urge your lawmakers to co-sponsor S. 3374/H.R. 6537, the REWARD Experience Act

Act Now to Improve Survivors' Benefits

Write

Bipartisan legislation in the House and Senate (H.R. 1083/S. 414) would align Dependency and Indemnity Compensation payments with other federal survivor benefits. Ask your legislators to show their support and make a long-overdue correction to this injustice.

Ask Your Lawmakers to Support the Retain Skilled Veterans Act

Write

This bipartisan legislation would end the so-called "180-day rule," which imposes a waiting period on those leaving service before they can take on certain types of DoD

civilian employment. Many of these jobs are empty as qualified applicants with security clearances are forced to look elsewhere to start their careers.

Urge Your Legislators to Support the Advancing Toward Impact Aid Full Funding Act

Contact your representative and senators and urge them to support the Advancing Toward Impact Aid Full Funding Act to provide our schools with the resources they need to help military-connected students reach their potential.

Write

Lend Your Support for the MOAA-Backed Bill to Support Military Sexual Trauma Survivors

Contact your representative and senators and urge them to support the Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support (SAVES) Act to improve essential care and services in the Veterans Health Administration and ensure greater assistance when military sexual trauma (MST) survivors are applying for disability benefits through the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Write

Ask Your Legislators to Support Services for Aging and Disabled Veterans

A top MOAA health care priority this Congress is to secure funding, staff, and other resources to accelerate delivery of VA home and community-based services (HCBS), long-term care (LTC), and caregiver support while sustaining VA programs and services to meet current and future needs of veterans, their caregivers, and their families.

Write

Urge Your Legislators to Support Remarriage Legislation for Surviving Spouses

Contact your representative and senators and urge them to support the Love Lives On Act to secure the right for surviving military spouses to remarry at any age and retain their benefits.

Write

Urge Your Legislators to Support the Respect for Grieving Military Families Act

Contact your lawmakers and urge them to support the Respect for Grieving Military Families Act to protect surviving spouses of military retirees from unexpected financial burdens.

Write

Urge Congress to Expand TRICARE Coverage to Certain 'Gray Area' Retirees

The TRICARE Fairness for National Guard and Reserve Retirees Act would ensure "gray area" retirees who qualify for retirement pay before age 60 are eligible for the TRICARE retiree benefit. Under current law, gray area retirees who want TRICARE coverage must purchase TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR), an expensive premium-based plan, even if they are receiving retired pay.

Write

Help MOAA Secure Dental Care for Servicemembers in the Selected Reserve

Please support dental care for Reserve Component servicemembers by contacting your elected officials today.

Powered by Quorum

Write

Part 2: Several Topics on the Support of Military Families at the State Level

The Defense-State Liaison Office provides state policymakers with expert insight on priorities affecting military families and their quality of life. This initiative is part of the Defense Department's efforts to identify and address the most pressing needs of service members and military families.

DoD-State Liaison Group Announces Top Priorities for Military Families in 2024

By: Jen Goodale **OCTOBER 10, 2023**

Continued focus on improving employment opportunities for military spouses and ensuring access to quality child care are among the 2024 policy priorities for the [Defense-State Liaison Office](#) (DSLO), a DoD agency which works with state lawmakers to improve policies impacting military family well-being.

Since 2008, DSLO has helped state policymakers enact more than 1,150 bills covering a variety of issues impacting military families. Each year, the agency publishes a list of legislative priorities.

The 10 key issue areas for 2024:

- Military access to quality family childcare (FCC)
- Military employment and economic opportunities
- Defining armed forces in state policy
- Military community representation on state boards and councils
- State support for military families with special education needs
- Open enrollment flexibility
- Child abuse identification and reporting
- Military family anti-discrimination status
- State response to military interpersonal violence

- Concurrent juvenile jurisdiction

Find out what progress your state has made on the above issues by visiting [MOAA's Military State Report Card and Tax Guide](#), which features a clickable map.

Military Children

Several of DSLO's 2024 priorities focus on protecting and improving quality of life for military children. Conducting a PCS move presents many challenges – finding a new child care provider, enrolling military students in a new school, and, if needed, ensuring those students have continued support for their special education needs.

FCCs are a great resource for military families and a potential career path for military spouses. Unfortunately, the red tape required to establish and transfer an FCC across state lines continues to negatively impact this program that could offer solutions to the unique child care needs of servicemembers.

DSLO urges states to recognize military family child care certifications, in lieu of requiring state licensing. A dozen states had “advanced priorities” in this area as of Oct. 3, [according to DSLO](#), including Alaska and Oklahoma – states that led the way when this was introduced as a DSLO initiative in 2023.

Military families are disadvantaged when it comes to school enrollment options due to short-fuse orders and lack of available, affordable housing. States can provide families with improved schooling options by modifying open enrollment policies with a military clause, placement stability provision, or military priority category. Not only does this impact education options, but it also negatively affects student athletes.

As Partners in PROMISE has identified previously, military families with special education needs experience recurring educational disruptions and challenges related to PCS moves. DSLO urges states

to assist by streamlining processes to ensure timely establishment of comparable services upon relocation to help reduce burdens and provide continuity of support.

[RELATED: [Child Care Fees Plunge for Many Military Families Under New DoD Rate Setup](#)]

Key Federal Hiring Authority for Military Spouses Extended

By: Jen Goodale, NOVEMBER 15, 2023

The recent extension of the federal government's military spouse hiring authority marks a significant step forward in MOAA's ongoing commitment to facilitating job opportunities for military spouses in the federal workforce.

Agencies will have until Dec. 31, 2028, to utilize the flexibilities granted by the military spouse hiring authority, according to an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announcement. This extension was prompted by the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which ensures there will be no lapse in the [Military Spouse Non-Competitive Appointment Authority](#).

The policy grants federal agencies greater flexibility in their recruitment efforts by allowing them to bypass traditional hiring processes and noncompetitively appoint eligible military spouses to specific positions. Those eligible for this hiring authority include spouses of active duty military members and servicemembers with 100% disabilities, as well as un-remarried widows and widowers of servicemembers who made the ultimate sacrifice while on active duty. This authority is applicable to permanent, temporary, or term appointments.

[TAKE ACTION: [Urge Your Legislators to Support the Military Spouse Hiring Act](#)]

It's important to note that despite these flexibilities, the final decision regarding appointments still rests with the individual agencies, which means military spouses do not receive preferential treatment over other applicants.

Around 16,000 military, veteran, and surviving spouses are employed by the federal government. **Nonetheless, a staggering 21% unemployment rate plagues military spouses.** Recognizing these challenges, Congress has incorporated military spouse hiring enhancements into various defense policy bills over the past several years, including the [Military Spouse Career Accelerator Pilot](#).

MOAA continues to advocate for more robust tracking of military spouse employment, which is vital to addressing this persistent issue. Currently, we rely on DoD's biannual surveys of active duty and Guard and Reserve spouses, along with information gleaned from surveys of fellow advocacy organizations like the Military Family Advisory Network and Blue Star Families.

[FREE DOWNLOAD: [MOAA's Military Spouse Employment Guide](#)]

The Biden administration has shown unwavering support for expanding job opportunities for military spouses.

“Expanding access to federal jobs for military spouses allows spouses to grow and succeed in their own careers while also supporting their partners in uniform,” OPM Director Kiran Ahuja said [in his office's announcement](#) of the authority extension. “This policy will assure the federal government's access to a diverse and talented group of applicants across the globe, and we are honored to benefit from their expertise.”

In 2021, OPM further improved the regulations by eliminating geographic restrictions for certain federal positions that are eligible for telework or remote work. Previously, military spouses were limited to federal jobs in the same geographic area as their partners' active duty assignments, necessitating

relocations. The removal of this requirement was intended to broaden the use of telework- and remote work-eligible positions for military spouses.

The extension of the deadline for utilizing the military spouse hiring authority is a result of a [June executive order](#) emphasizing the need for federal agencies to do more to recruit military spouses, acknowledging that spousal employment challenges often factor into the decision to leave active duty service.

[RELATED: [MOAA.org/FedJobs](https://moaa.org/fedjobs)]

Despite the availability of the hiring authority for several years, the Biden administration identified underutilization by federal agencies as a persistent issue. To address this, the executive order directed agencies to attach the military spouse hiring authority to job postings outside of their workforce.

MOAA applauds these efforts to increase job opportunities for military spouses. We will continue supporting ongoing initiatives to provide meaningful employment opportunities for these vital members of our military community.

Military Spouse Employment and Economic Opportunities

Prior to the enactment of the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act, DSLO played an instrumental part in the development of interstate licensing compacts and the expedited enrollment for military spouses passed in more than 35 states. The Licensing Relief Act was signed into law as a provision within the Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act and should reduce barriers for military spouses working in licensed or credentialed fields to find employment when PCSing across state lines. DSLO will strive to ensure licensing agencies make their application processes accessible and known to military spouses.

One of the newly added priorities, military community representation on state boards and councils, will help members of the military community get involved at state and local levels. Adding a military

perspective to these panels is necessary to ensuring mission and family readiness, economic security, and quality of life for military families are part of the conversation.

MOAA members can support DSLO's efforts by joining their [local chapter](#) and urging increased grassroots support for these important quality-of-life issues for the currently serving military community. You can also reach out to your [DSLO regional liaison](#) to find additional ways engage with state policy.

[Video Available on Dependent Hiring Issue](#)

[MOAA Advocacy Update: The Military Spouse Hiring Act](#)

[www.youtube.com > watch](http://www.youtube.com/watch)



Jennifer Goodale and Cory Titus from **MOAA's** Government Relations ... **MOAA's 2024 Legislative Priorities**. The Military Officers Association ...

YouTube · The Military Officers Association of America · Jul 26, 2023

MOAA's Military State Report Card and Tax Guide

[Ohio Military Legislation & Policies | Military State Policy \(militaryonesource.mil\)](#)

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STATE POLICY
SOURCE

MOAA has consolidated the annual State Report Card and State Tax Guide. The color-coded maps below assess each state on the taxability of military retired pay and survivor benefits (top map) and whether states have enacted legislation addressing servicemember and military family issues tracked by the Defense-State Liaison Office (bottom map). Information is current as of the dates noted below; consult state authorities for additional/more current information.

Access to **MOAA's State Report Card** has been temporarily granted to all members. If you are not already a **PREMIUM** or **LIFE** member, [join](#) or [upgrade](#) now to ensure your access to this and other valuable content from MOAA continues.

State Tax Comparison Map for Military Retirement Pay and SBP. Go to State <https://www.moaa.org/content/state-report-card/statereportcard/>

- . Click on **Ohio** 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 Communications; updated June 15, 2023

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 Communications; updated June 15, 2023

Map of Issues Affecting Currently Serving Troops and Families

Click on each state for additional information from the Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO).

Source: MOAA Communications; current as of Oct. 3, 2023

<https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/sitemap>

Ohio

Latest Status:

Defining Armed Forces in State Policy: Ohio Bill Introduced but tabled.

Demographic Data:

State residents include:

- **9,658 active-duty service members**
- **4,525 active-duty spouses**
- **9,835 active-duty children**
- **35,241 National Guard and reserve members**
- **15,159 National Guard and reserve spouses**
- **23,654 National Guard and reserve children**

Data source: DMDC, Dec. 31, 2022.

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, Great Lakes Regional Liaison, Great Lakes Region: IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI

Ohio Policy Priorities 2024: State-Specific Progress on Policy Priorities and Sub-Priorities

- Military Access to Quality Family Childcare – **No Action.**

- Military Spouse Employment and Economic Opportunities 6/15 Sub-priorities passed. - **Priority Advanced.**
- Child Abuse Identification and Reporting – **Policy passed.**
- Concurrent Juvenile Jurisdiction – **No Action**
- State Support for Military Families with Special Education Needs 0/2 Sub-priorities passed. - **No Action.**
- Open Enrollment Flexibility – **No Action.**
- Defining Armed Forces in State Policy. – **Bill introduced.**
- Military Family Anti-Discrimination Status 0/5 Sub-priorities passed. – **Bill Introduced.**
- State Response to Military Interpersonal Violence 0/6 Sub-priorities passed. – **No Action.**
- Military Community Representation on State Boards and Councils 0/6 Sub-priorities passed. **No Action.**

Part 3: How to Get or Renew a Military ID Card: for Spouses, Dependents, Veterans and Retirees **How to Get** or Renew a Military ID Card: for Spouses, Dependents, Veterans and Retirees.

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/military-basics/new-to-the-military/military-id-and-cac-cards-for-military-community/>