

2024 Advocacy in Action Training Session



Agenda

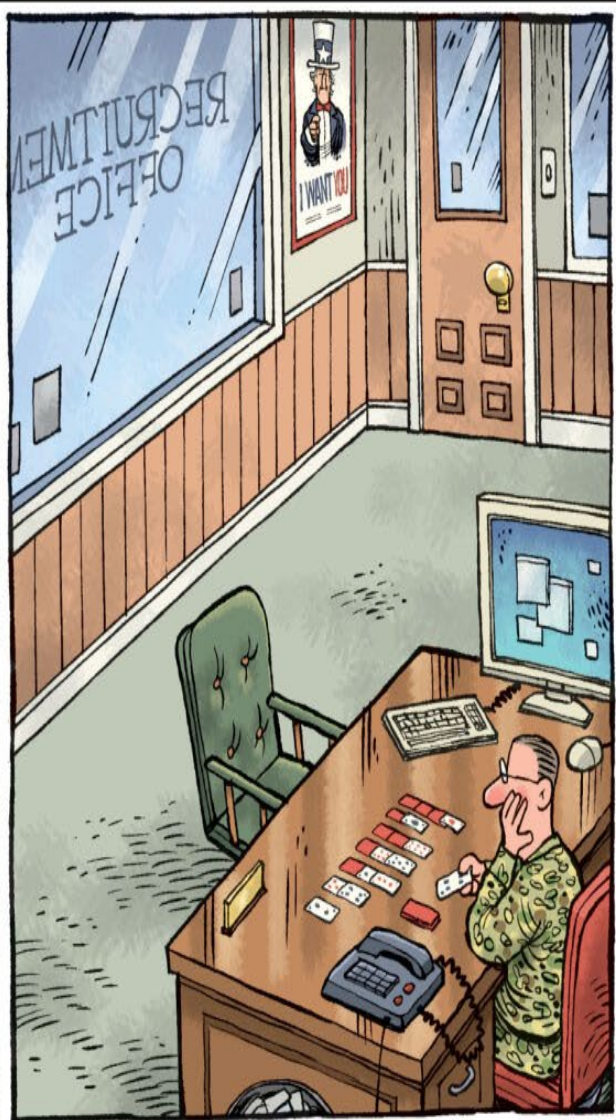
- Welcome
- Legislative Update
- AiA Issues
- Logistics
- Social Media/Pictures
- Questions
- Practice Your Pitch

Legislative Update

- Authorizations and Appropriations
- Compensation and Service-Earned Benefits
- Service Families
- Survivors
- Other Legislative Priorities

Advocacy in Action: Key Issues

- The Major Richard Star Act: Concurrent Receipt for Combat Injured
- Restore Basic Allowance for Housing to 100%
- Protect TRICARE for Life



PASS THE STAR ACT AND KEEP OUR PROMISE FOR THIS GENERATION AND THE NEXT.

Visit <https://www.MOAA.ORG/STARACT> ask Congress to include The Star Act in the FY2025 National Defense Authorization Act.

Star Act H.R.1282/S.344

- Supports our combat injured forced to medically retire before reaching 20 years of service.
- Allows receipt of retirement pay and disability compensation without an offset (reducing retirement pay) – 2 payments/different purposes:
 - Pay for vested service time.
 - Compensation for injury/illness through service.
- 2/3 of Congress supports.
- Injustice to dock retirement pay because of disability.
- Concerns over injury is a significant barrier to recommending service for parents and influencers.
- Ask: Support passage in NDAA.

Cost Concerns and Key Points

- Wrong message to
 - Combat injured who have already paid a very high price.
 - The all-volunteer force during recruiting crisis – why volunteer if combat injured are too expensive?
- Wrong Math
 - CBO's estimate of \$9 billion/over 10 years incomplete.
 - Assumes all 52,304 eligible combat-injured veterans will apply.
 - Did not account for a phased-in approach.
 - Expect about half of the eligible combat-injured veterans to choose this option.
 - Similar cost as SBP-DIC "Widows Tax" repeal.
- Part of a larger coalition effort.

BAH Restoration Act

H.R. 2537/S. 1823

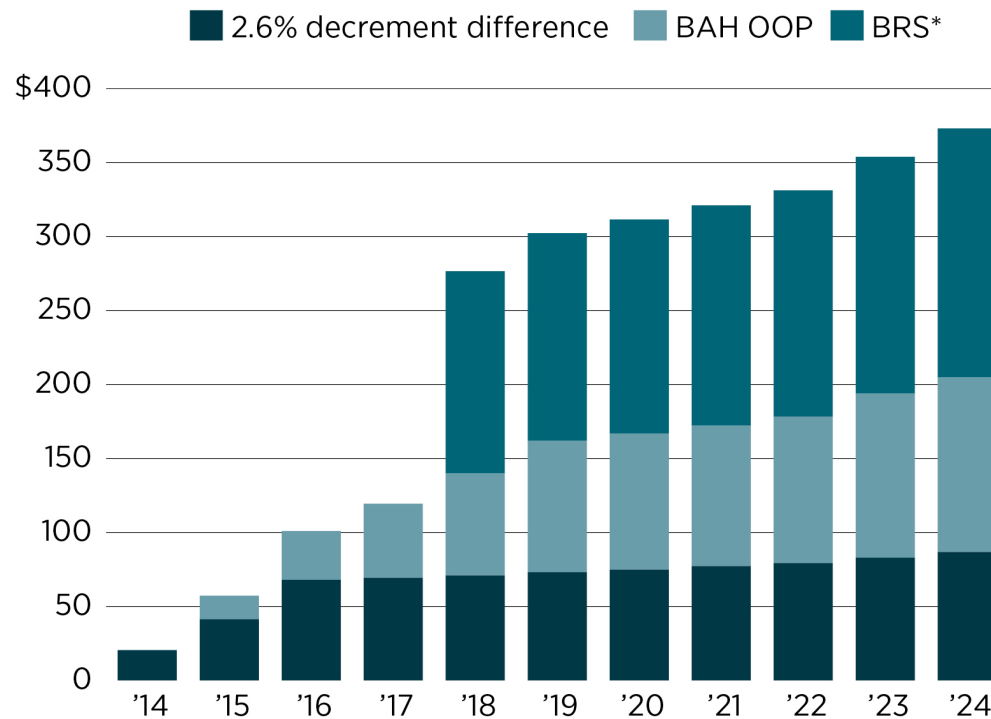
The Issue:

- Needs of the government vs. needs of the military family.
- 70% of families pay over \$200 out of pocket to rent civilian housing.
- Lack of affordable and available rental housing.

Compounding Financial Strain

ADDED FINANCIAL STRAIN TO SERVICEMEMBERS

A married E-5 with dependents may see a \$373-a-month cut in take-home pay due to out-of-pocket (OOP) costs from BAH cost-sharing, compounded by base pay increase decrements and retirement contributions.

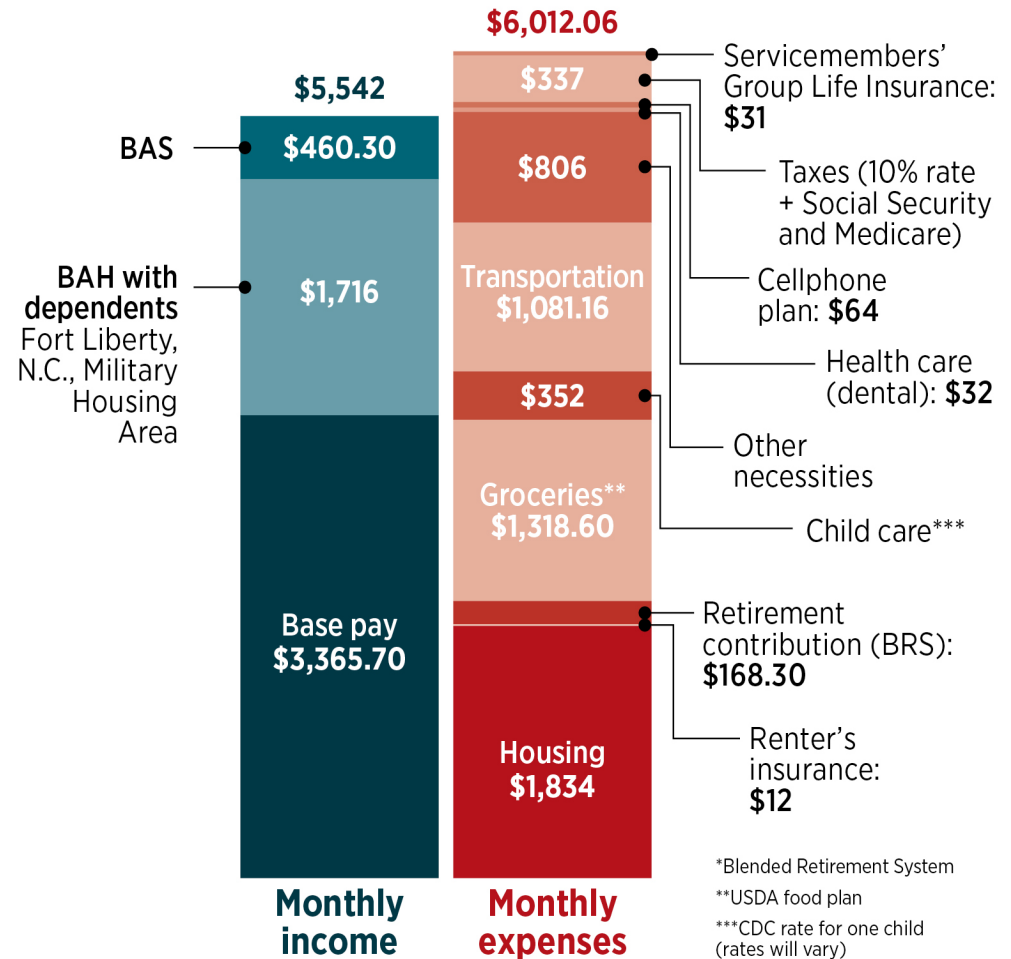


SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY: DOD PAY TABLES; ALL INFORMATION BEHIND 'REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE' FIGURES IS AVAILABLE AT [MOAA.ORG/BAHBUDGET](https://moaa.org/bahbudget)

GRAPHIC BY JOHN HARMAN/MOAA

Real World Example

A married E-5 with 2 children at Fort Liberty, N.C., budgeting like the average American, is **\$470 short of meeting monthly expenses** while paying \$118 a month out of pocket for housing costs not compensated by DoD.



BAH Restoration – The Ask

Our nation expects 100% from servicemembers. Ensure they get 100% of their housing allowance by supporting BAH restoration.

- Co-sponsor H.R. 2537 or S. 1823
- Support an incremental approach through the NDAA

Protect TRICARE for Life (TFL)

Not an “ask” but an educational campaign

No current proposals for TFL fees, but credible threats exist.

Goals

- Counter-messaging.
- Background/History.
- Personalize the issue.

What is TFL?

- Provides Medicare wraparound coverage.
- Medicare covers 80%, and TFL picks up the remaining 20%.
- No TFL enrollment fee, deductible or cost-sharing.
- Beneficiaries must purchase Medicare Part B to get TFL.

TFL Credible Threats

- CBO consistently targets TFL in *Options for Reducing the Deficit* report.
- Past DoD proposals for TFL fee increases (2013-2017).
- Rising military health system (MHS) spending/pressure to reduce MHS budget.

Legislative History of TFL

- Congress created TFL in 2001 to address the loss of military treatment facility (MTF) care.
- Congressional intent was clear – no TFL cost sharing in recognition of Medicare Part B requirement.
- Congress has maintained this stance, repeatedly blocking DoD TFL fee proposals.

MOAA's Position on TRICARE Fees

- MOAA takes a balanced position on TRICARE fees.
- We recognize rising health care costs and do not oppose indexing existing TRICARE fees by military retired pay COLA.
- MOAA opposes changing the terms of TRICARE after it has been earned.

Key Talking Points – Protect TFL

- TFL is a key component of the compensation and benefits package.
- No current proposals to cut TFL, but budget pressures and CBO concepts are concerning.
- We appreciate that Congress rejected 5 consecutive DoD TFL enrollment fee proposals from 2013-2017.

Key Talking Points – Protect TFL (cont.)

- Servicemembers make an open-ended commitment to defend our nation.
- Maintaining the health care benefit is a national obligation to those who spent decades in uniform.
- We must ensure military retirees - key influencers in the recruiting process – are not discouraged from recommending military service.

Hill Day Preparation

Before Meetings:

- Have a pre-meeting with your AiA team.
- Discuss meeting strategy: assign roles, main speaker, and topic briefers.

Hill Day Meetings:

- Be flexible.
- Be prepared for the Hill to be busy.
- Stay on topic.
- Avoid politicizing the issues.
- The 'Silent Staffer'.
- Don't have an appointment? Drop in.
 - "Is your legislative assistant available or legislative director available?"

Hill Day Preparation (cont.)

Hill Day Meetings:

- Team Leaders introduce the team.
- Thank Member of Congress/staff for their time and support.
- Take notes. Write down any questions that your team does not know the answers to. It is okay to say, “I am not sure, but we can find out and follow up with you.”
- Share personal stories related to the topic.

After Meetings:

- Follow up with ‘Thank You’ notes.
- Log meetings on the Meeting Reporting Form (available on the private participant website: www.moaa.org/legisleaders).
- Include critical information that MOAA GR team needs to follow up on in meeting reports.

Map of Capitol Hill



Senate Office Buildings:

- Russell (RSOB)
- Dirksen (DSOB)
- Hart (HSOB)

House Office Buildings:

- Rayburn (RHOB)
- Longworth (LHOB)
- Cannon (CHOB)

- 1 Bus Drop-Off**
Garfield Circle
8 a.m.
- 2 AiA Team Photo**
Ulysses S. Grant Memorial
Wednesday morning, as soon as all advocates are assembled
- 3 Lunch**
Top of the Hill
1 Constitution Ave. NE
Washington, DC 20002
11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.
- 4 Bus Pickup**
Top of the Hill
3:30 p.m.
- 5 Bus Pickup**
Peace Circle
4 p.m.

Lunch and Rest Depot

- Reserve Organization of America
- Fifth Floor, 'Top of the Hill' Club



Other Reminders

- Private website:
www.moaa.org/legisleaders
- Wear comfortable shoes
- Hydrate throughout the day
- Security
- Marix Awards Tonight

Emergency Contact

Suzanne Walker

703-801-5473



Pictures Or It Didn't Happen!



- **Grip 'n grins:** Easiest photo to take - great for Chapter/Council use too.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for a photo:** Lawmakers and staff usually don't mind and may take it for you.
- Take a few pictures to ensure eyes are open and no awkward expressions.

Put the ACTION in AiA

- Pictures of interaction are great but arguably the hardest to take.
- Fill the Frame with Significant Matter
- Move around for a better composition.



Location, Location, Location

- **Sense of place is important:** Try to take a team photo or selfie with the Capitol or other spots that shout Washington D.C. as your backdrop. It lets people know that you are where decisions are made.



The Big Picture



- MOAA staff will organize by height – we will have signs to orient you.
- 3 still photos:
 - Group with space.
 - Group without banner.
 - Group with banner.
- 2 video clips:
 - Group with banner, participants shout **NEVER STOP SERVING.**
 - Gens. Kelly & North step forward, deliver lines, participants shout **PEOPLE MATTER.**

Photo Sharing and Social

- Send photos to moaaimages@moaa.org throughout the day.
- Posting to social? Tag Military Officers Association of America on FB/LinkedIn or @MilitaryOfficer on X.
- Hashtags: #StarAct #RestoreBAH #ProtectTRICARE.

Questions?