



September 22, 2026

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chairman, Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Chairman, Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member, Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member, Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Messrs. Chairmen and Ranking Members:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of uniformed services and veterans' associations representing more than 5.5 million currently serving, retired, former service members, survivors, and their families, thank you and the Committees for your collective work in producing the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Your efforts support our Uniformed Services, protect the interests of service members, their families and survivors, and enhance our nation's security.

We applaud the bipartisan, bicameral work accomplished by lawmakers and staff this year – in partnership with TMC – on important legislation to ensure appropriate pay and benefits. We hope Congress will complete work on both the NDAA and appropriations bills by the end of this fiscal year, so the Department of Defense can continue its work without restrictions on new starts, expired provisions, and other obstacles that occur when these vital bills are put on hold. Moreover, we respectfully offer the following support and recommendations for the NDAA Conference:

Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 2102/S. 1032) – We are disappointed that provisions of this important legislation were again missing from the House and Senate versions of the FY27 NDAA, despite overwhelming bipartisan support from more than three quarters of lawmakers in both chambers. Despite this strong support, repeated efforts to advance the legislation have failed. The NDAA Conference remains a viable path forward, and we respectfully urge the conferees to include the Major Richard Star Act in the final conference report.

Defense Commissary Agency Supply Chain Transformation (House Section 643) – TMC supports the House provision limiting implementation of DeCA's Supply Chain Transformation Initiative until DOD submits the commissary report required by the FY26 NDAA and the required waiting period has elapsed. TMC urges conferees to retain this provision to ensure adequate congressional oversight and protect patron savings, product availability, and the commissary benefit.

Military-to-Civilian Transition Leadership (House Report Section 562/Senate Section 548) – TMC supports the House and Senate proposals directing DOD to designate a senior official responsible for military-to-civilian transition. Such department-wide leadership will strengthen accountability, coordination, and oversight of transition policy and programs.

Transition of Military Medics to Civilian Health Care Occupations (Senate Section 549A) – TMC supports the Senate provision to improve pathways for transitioning military medics and other trained medical personnel to enter civilian health care occupations.

TAP Promotion Act (Senate Amendment 5829) – TMC supports the amendment offered by Senators King and Cramer to incorporate the TAP Promotion Act and urges conferees to include it in the final NDAA. Earlier awareness of TAP resources will provide service members and their families more time to prepare for military-to-civilian transition.

Standardization of Transition Assistance Program Performance Metrics (Senate Report) – TMC supports the Senate report language directing DOD to evaluate and standardize TAP performance and outcome metrics across the military departments and urges its retention. Consistent metrics are necessary to assess program effectiveness and strengthen congressional oversight and accountability.

In-Home Child Care: Inclusion of Au Pairs (House Section 573) – TMC supports the House provision expanding DOD's in-home childcare pilot to include qualified au pairs. This provision supports TMC's priority of expanding public-private partnerships and increasing flexible childcare options for military families.

Minimum Health and Safety Standards for Military Family Housing (Senate Section 2825) – TMC supports the Senate provision establishing minimum health and safety standards for military family housing.

Military Lending Act (House Report) – TMC supports the House direction to evaluate whether Military Lending Act (MLA) regulations continue to meet the needs and preferences of service members and their families, including their access to credit. We urge Congress to ensure that any review of the MLA preserves robust protections for military families.

Reserve Component (RC) Dental Readiness (House Section 701) – TMC supports this provision, as it expands access to dental care to junior enlisted reserve members. Dental readiness is of vital importance to the RC community and ensures reservists will be able to perform active-duty assignments without delay.

National Guard Relief Foundation as a Military Welfare Society (House Section 1052) – TMC supports this provision, because it would benefit Guard members and their families by expanding access to those who need it most and increasing opportunities for donations.

GI Bill Eligibility Expansion (House Amendment 1049) – TMC supports this amendment that would include certain Reserve duty days in calculating a reservist's eligibility towards the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

Repeal of the 180-Day Rule for DoD Civilian Hiring – TMC urges the conferees to include language repealing the 180-day waiting period under 5 U.S.C. § 3326 for newly retired service members seeking DoD civilian positions at GS-13 and below, consistent with language similar to the Retain Skilled Veterans Act carried in the House NDAA in prior years. Following the Department's reduction of its civilian workforce by roughly 78,000 employees in 2025, the Department is delaying access to its most qualified and immediately available talent pool. Removing this barrier strengthens the DoD's civilian workforce at no cost to merit-based hiring principles.

Military Retirement Fund Parity (House Section 656): TMC urges the inclusion of this provision that will expand the Military Retirement Fund to cover all eight uniformed services, including retirees of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, providing a permanent, consistent funding mechanism, protecting retirees from disruptions during government shutdowns.

Military Health System: At a February 2026 hearing, senior enlisted leaders identified access to health care as a top complaint across the force. To address this issue, TMC supports greater transparency on access to care challenges with the goal of driving improvements through accountability; TRICARE policy flexibility to facilitate access to civilian care when military treatment facilities (MTFs) can't meet patient needs; and comprehensive TRICARE coverage policy so cost does not become a barrier to accessing care.

- **Access to Care Improvements (Senate Section 701):** TMC supports this provision to improve transparency by establishing a digital system for beneficiaries to report access barriers at MTFs and

within the TRICARE network. It builds on bipartisan House efforts including H.R. 6796 the Military Care, Access, Reporting, and Evaluation (CARE) Act and House section 742 which directs the Department to improve complaint reporting processes for TRICARE beneficiaries and providers.

- **MTF Restructuring (Senate Section 723/House Sections 704, 705, and 722):** TMC recognizes the direct care system's footprint, capacity, and capabilities must support readiness and medical force generation, while also ensuring any changes to MTFs both preserve beneficiary access to quality care and ensure appropriate support for patients transitioned to civilian providers. These provisions confirm much appreciated, continued congressional oversight of proposed MTF changes.
- **Maternal and Fertility Care (House Sections 758 and 703):** To improve access to prenatal care, TMC supports House 758, which directs a pilot allowing pregnant beneficiaries to change TRICARE plans outside of open season, facilitating access to civilian providers. We also support House 703 that authorizes coverage of assisted reproductive technology, including IVF, for military families and aligns TRICARE with coverage available to Members of Congress and their staff.

Sincerely,



President,
The Military Coalition
cc: Members of House and Senate Armed Services Committees

The Military Coalition:

Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)
AMVETS (American Veterans)
Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA)
Blue Star Families
Chief Warrant Officers Association of the US Coast Guard (CWOA)
Commissioned Officers Association of the US Public Health Service (COA)
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the US (EANGUS)
Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)
Gold Star Spouses
Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV)
K9s for Warriors
Marine Corps League (MCL)
Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA)
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America (MCA)
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)
National Defense Committee (NDC)
National Military Family Association (NMFA)
Non-Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA)
Reserve Organization of America (ROA)
The Independence Fund (TIF)
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)
USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)
Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)