



THE EAGLE



THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

www.pa-coc.org

NEVER STOP SERVING

JANUARY 2026



Valley Forge chapter members stand by ten air conditioners purchased to be given to VA Coatesville. Photo by Valley Forge chapter

Community Outreach Grants

[The MOAA Foundation](#), a 501(c)(3) charitable subsidiary of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), offers grants to MOAA's councils and its chapters in support of community outreach programs and services. The application period runs from Dec. 1 to Feb. 28 each year. For more information or to apply for a grant, [click here](#).

PA COUNCIL 2026 MEETING DATES

The Council meeting dates will be finalized soon with a date for the next meeting at Biddle Hall, Fort Indiantown Gap in April 2026. Directions will be sent out prior to the meeting with the agenda. A Zoom connection will be available for those who want to attend as the meetings are open to all MOAA members to attend in person or online. All MOAA members are welcome to attend any Council meeting. Further dates will be emailed to chapters in by March 2026.. If you have a question, contact Bob Gray at rl_gray@hotmail.com or (717) 623-8715.

Find a Chapter: www.pa-coc.org or through the national MOAA web site, www.moaa.org .

Non-Partisan Statement: The Military Officers Association of America is a nonpartisan military nonprofit organization that does not engage in partisan politics and works with all political leaders in moving military and veteran’s legislation that will help the men and women who currently serve in the active, Guard and Reserve, those who previously served and the retired, their families and survivors. Pennsylvania Council of Chapters is a nonpartisan military organization that does not engage in partisan politics. The views presented in the Eagle newsletter are those of the editor, not those of the Council officers and Council’s Chapters or represent the views of MOAA’s national officers, staff, or Board of Directors.

PENNSYLVANIA LEGISLATURE

Bob Gray – Legislative Chairman
MOAA PA Council of Chapters
Legislative Information from the General Assembly web site: <http://www.legis.state.pa.us>

MOAA PACOC has four members, two voting members and two alternate members, that serve on the PA War Veterans Council, Pennsylvania’s Veterans Coalition. It is comprised of nine congressionally chartered veterans’ organizations in the state. The Legislative Committee is chaired by Bob Gray and past legislative committee chairman Keith Beebe is also a member. The PWVC Legislative Committee started meeting the last quarter

of 2025 with the House Veterans Affairs Committee chairmen and their executive directors to discuss veterans’ issues and related legislation. The PWVC Legislative Committee had its first Zoom meeting of this year with the House Veterans Affairs committee on January 23rd to discuss pending legislation not passed in 2025.

The Committee majority chairman, Representative Soloman, provided the committee with a letter he sent to the House Budget Committee chairman listing three priority programs for funding in the next state budget. Based on current caseloads and benefits set in statute, additional appropriations are necessary to ensure these programs remain fully funded.

Chairman Soloman respectfully request the following increases:

1. \$2.5 billion to the ACT 66 Veterans Service Officer Program. Current program funded after state budget passes, but this forces organizations to borrow money to operate until the payments can be processed by Treasury. These funds will carry them over until new funds are released after the budget is passed and revised extended contracting to eighteen months is completed to span budget gaps.

2. \$1 million annual appropriation to DMVA for the Veterans Temporary Assistance program. Funds are being used from the Veterans Trust Fund, but the balance is dwindling with low contributions. DMVA previously had a line item in their budget for this program, now trying to put it back in the budget.

3. \$1.8 million annual increase for Pensions for Veterans Disabled Through Service— Disabled veterans pension programs provide essential financial support to veterans with severe service-connected disabilities, but the monthly payment has not been increased since 1999. Veterans Blinded Thorough Service-Connected Injuries or Disease: Increase of \$85,000 to \$317,000. I believe this additional \$2.8 million in annual investments and a crucial, one-time \$2.5 million infusion will be one small step in repaying the incredible debts we owe to veterans who have broken their bodies and risked their lives for our well-being.

The PWVC has released its revised legislative goals for 2026. They will be sent

out in a separate email. The topics are summarized here. • Increase the blind and amputee/paralyzed veterans pensions • Protect veterans against claims sharks using state legislation • Make veterans justice fairer • Bring attention to our needs in homelessness prevention • Fix the Act 66 of 2007 contracting cycle • Expedite survivor benefit processing – Pay survivors quicker ... as an opportunity presents itself, advocate on these topics • Increase veterans transportation network funding • Expand the disabled veterans real estate tax exemption • Issue a Global War on Terrorism Bonus • No Change to Pennsylvania's small dollar lending legislation.

The PWVC Legislative Committee is scheduling an office visit with both the House and Senate Budget Committee chairmen to discuss funding these goals. Chapter leaders should encourage their members to contact their state House and Senate members to support this legislative agenda. PA House: House Bill 1177 The legislative chairman will work with Rep. Guenst's office to coordinate when to activate a MOAA statewide legislative campaign to contact legislators to request support of the bill. Efforts will be made to move HB 1177 out of the House Budget Committee. PA House: House Bill 1177 includes our fellow MOAA members of the US Public Health Service (USPHS) and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Commissioned Corps to be included with the other uniformed services to be eligible for a state tax exemption if they reside in Pennsylvania and are assigned to work out of state for

their job during the year. They must live 30 consecutive days in PA each year to quality.

Claims Sharks Bill

Sen. Pennycuick – along with Sen. Mastriano and Sen. Robinson - issued a cosponsor memo addressing claim sharks but no bill introduced to date. House bill from Rep. Delozier was reintroduced in the fall with same language as last session. No further movement to date. PA MOAA will work with PA War Veterans Council to move legislation to protect veterans from for profit groups and individuals charging veterans to file VA claims. Veterans Service Organizations provide the service for fee.

Resolutions PASSED in the PA House and Senate requesting the PA Congressional delegation to Cosponsor and Support Passage of the MAJ Richard Star Act

The Pennsylvania House and Senate have Passed Resolutions urging the PA Delegation of the US House of Representatives and US Senate to support and pass the MAJ Richard Star Act

Both the House and Senate have prepared letters to the Pennsylvania delegation of the US House of Representatives and the two US Senators requesting that they cosponsor the MAJ Richard Stae Act in the House and Senate. Then vote to pass the Act when brought to the floor for a vote.

Expanding the Disabled Veteran Real Estate Tax Exemption

House Bill 1257 has been amended and waiting to be brought to the House floor

for a vote. The amended version changes the eligibility for tax exemption from 100 percent disabled to 50 percent through 100 percent disabled. Veterans would receive a tax exemption equal to their disability percentage. Changes include removing the War Clause, including spouses of eligible veterans, including those who were killed in action, taken prisoner, or went missing in action. Voted out of committee and waiting for a House floor vote before the end of the session.

<https://www.palegis.us/legislation/bills/text/PDF/2025/0/HBI257/PNI383>

There is another bill in the Senate SB189 with a House companion bill introduced in the House keeping the tax exemption at 100 percent while making the changes to remove the war clause and adding eligibility for surviving spouses, including those who were killed in action, taken prisoner, or went missing in action. The House Veterans Affairs Committee has requested comments from veterans' organizations in late November. Hopefully they can get support to either pass the amended bill or move to pass the original bill in discussion on the House floor.

Other legislation:

SB 146 Enhanced Review of Veterans Trust Fund Grants

The Veterans Trust Fund Board is established as an advisory board within the Department of Veterans Affairs. The purpose of the Board is to increase donations to ensure effective management and impactful distribution of money in the Veterans Trust Fund. The Board will have

12 members. The Deputy Adjutant General VA, two representatives from the Commission appointed by the Chairman, representation from one member in the five Vet Connect regions of the state, and one member each from Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The Board will review the yearly grants with the emphasis on getting the most bang for the buck and spreading the grants around the state. Raise public awareness for the Veterans Fund and recommend legislative or policy changes to enhance the Veterans Trust Fund. Passed Senate and is being reviewed in the House to bring to the floor for a vote.



Federal Legislation

MOAA's Goals for the 119th Congress is listed below. MOAA Staff; updated Jan. 23, 2026

Shutdown Fairness Act (S. 3168) What it does: Allows the Pentagon and the Department of Homeland Security to continue paying servicemembers during any

future funding lapse Who it supports: Currently serving, including National Guard and Reserve members. MOAA's take: The best solution remains a timely appropriations process. The bills does NOT include members of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps or the NOAA Commissioned Corps; MOAA continues to advocate for their inclusion. How you can help: Send a letter to your lawmakers now.

Improve and Enhance the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Act (H.R. 6231 | S. 3265) What it does: Modernizes the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), a nonrefundable tax credit employers can take for hiring target group members during the employee's first year on the job, by increasing the amount of the credit and adding military spouses as a target group. The program is intended to reduce the unemployment rate of "job seekers who have consistently faced barriers to employment" by incentivizing employers with a tax credit, according to the Labor Department. Who it supports: Unemployed veterans and military spouses. MOAA's take: MOAA has long championed this program, and the addition of military spouses. Continuing to offer this tax credit to employers while enhancing the program will ensure the veteran unemployment rate remains low. Expanding this benefit to military spouses improves financial stability for the currently serving military family, increasing military readiness and retention rates. How you can help: Send a letter to your lawmakers now. [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#)

Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1732) ***** PA State Legislative Goal. What it does: Reinstates criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with filing a claim for VA disability compensation benefits. Who it supports: Veterans and retirees. MOAA's take: Veterans deserve trusted, ethical, and accountable support when filing disability claims – support that protects their privacy, respects their service, and preserves their earned compensation. The goal is not to limit veterans' ability to seek help, but to guarantee that when they do, the assistance comes from accredited professionals bound by high ethical and professional standards ... and that our veterans will not be forced to surrender a portion of the benefits they earned in service to the nation. How you can help: Keep following MOAA advocacy news. A call to action is coming soon.

Military CARE Act (H.R. 6796) What it does: Requires the Pentagon to establish a digital system designed to improve access to care at military treatment facilities (MTFs) by providing beneficiaries with a standardized platform to report barriers to MTF care and creating a data record that does not exist today to give Defense Health Agency leadership and Congress the insights needed to address systemic access challenges. Who it supports: All TRICARE beneficiaries, but especially military families. MOAA's take: We advocated aggressively for this priority in 2025 as part of our spring Advocacy in Action campaign. Military families must have a more effective option for reporting access problems — an option that also increases transparency to

beneficiary challenges and leads to greater accountability and oversight of the MHS. How you can help: Send a letter to your lawmakers now. [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#)

Better Access to Your Health Care Benefit: A Look at the Military CARE Act] Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement Act (H.R. 2148 | S. 879) What it does: Expands health care coverage and career transition support for caregivers, and would require a study designed to provide caregivers with a path toward financial security in retirement. Who it supports: Millions of caregivers. MOAA's take: "Just as our veterans answered the call to serve our nation, their caregivers also answered the call to step up and serve them," said Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), MOAA's president and CEO. "These dedicated individuals put their own futures on hold — sacrificing financial security, career advancement, and personal well-being — to fulfill the nation's promise to take care of our veterans and provide the care veterans deserve. How you can help: Send a letter to your lawmakers now. [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#)



Legislative Action Center

While anyone can go on the MOAA website and use the MOAA Legislative Action Center, MOAA Chapter members need to register and list what chapter they belong to for tracking. Once you register it is to remember you when you come back.

How do I stay logged in to the Legislative Action Center?

Enable cookies on your browser to stay signed in on your device. Need help? Use these guides for [Internet Explorer](#) or [Edge, Safari, Chrome, and Firefox](#).

Once on the Legislative Action Center home page, look up in the upper right corner, click on **SIGN UP**. Below is the information you need to enter on the sign-up page when you click on Sign Up.

Sign Up

Welcome to MOAA's Legislative Action Center! Please fill out the following information to join our virtual advocacy network. We encourage you to use your MOAA-associated email address, if applicable, to assist with recordkeeping. **And you can stay logged in by allowing cookies on your browser.**

Fields with an asterisk (*) are required.

Population Group * (also lists Former - Veteran, Spouse or Surviving spouse)

option Retiree, selected.

Retiree

First Name *

Last Name *

Full Physical Address *

Email *

Cell Phone Number

Branch of Service *

option USA, selected.

USA

Component *

option Reserve, selected.

Reserve

Grade Level *

option 05, selected.

05

MOAA Chapter Affiliation *

option PA02 - Keystone Capital Chapter, selected.

N/A (Not Applicable)

PA02 - Keystone Capital Chapter

Take action today by visiting [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#) , www.moaa.org/takeaction and joining the movement to create a stronger future for all those who serve.

New Coalition Forms to End Unfair Pay Offset Facing Combat-Injured Veterans



Sean Shanahan/for MOAA
By MOAA Staff JANUARY 21, 2026

MOAA has joined with 14 other advocacy groups to form The Star Act Alliance, a coalition dedicated to ending the unfair pay offset – a “wounded veteran tax” – faced by tens of thousands of combat-injured military retirees.

The alliance allows these groups to coordinate efforts and rally support through grassroots networks. Along with [contacting their lawmakers](#) to urge swift passage of The Major Richard Star Act, supporters can use [ready-made graphics](#) to spread the word on social media, [write a letter to their local newspaper](#) or news site, even [print out a poster](#).

“This partnership alliance puts into perspective how important this legislation is to the total force,” said Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), MOAA’s President and CEO. “It is foremost directly important to the 54,000 wounded warriors who would receive the benefits they’ve earned. But this legislation does even more and serves another important purpose: It also shows future generations that our nation will keep their contracts and honor the sacrifices they make for the nation by supporting them and their families when they need it most.”

Lt. Col. Mark Belinsky, USA (Ret), a former director on MOAA’s Government Relations team, spearheaded this collaborative effort starting in the 117th Congress. Pulling together a number of veteran service organizations, he worked to align messaging and outreach strategies, coordinate Hill days, and boost awareness of the legislation.

Colleagues at Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) picked up the mantle and formalized Mark’s efforts with the creation of The Star Act Alliance.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Support Combat-Injured Veterans](#)]

“Unity of effort is the key reason The Star Alliance was created,” said Charles Choi, deputy director of Government Affairs for WWP. “The alliance, which represents millions of veterans and their families and caregivers, ensures that the veteran community speaks with one voice as we work together to see the Major Richard

Star Act passed by Congress and signed into law.

“The bill’s tremendous support across the veteran space ... is a direct reflection of the power of this issue. It is an incredible injustice that more than 54,000 veterans have had to endure – seeing their retirement pay slashed because they were forced to medically retire from combat-related injuries while serving and sacrificing for their country. The Star Act Alliance can help right this wrong. I’m excited to work with all of the participating organizations and encourage other organizations who aren’t working with us to reach and get involved!”

What’s at Stake

Medically retired servicemembers who serve less than 20 years in uniform lose a dollar of military retirement pay for every dollar of VA disability compensation they receive. Congress eliminated this offset in 2004 for those who retired after 20 years of service; the Major Richard Star Act would eliminate the offset for combat-injured veterans forced to retire early.

The House version of the bill (H.R. 2102) had 313 cosponsors as of Jan. 15; the Senate version (S. 1032) had 77 cosponsors. Despite this level of support through multiple congressional sessions, the legislation has yet to receive a floor vote in either chamber, and procedural rules have thwarted attempts to include the text of the bill as an amendment to other legislation, including the National Defense Authorization Act.

The Star Act Alliance looks to continue the momentum in Congress through wider public outreach and media engagement.

Groups alongside MOAA and WWP that have committed to the alliance include Veterans of Foreign Wars, Air Force Sergeants Association, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Blue Star Families, Non Commissioned Officers Association, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, National Defense Committee, Jewish War Veterans, U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association, Fleet Reserve Association, Reserve Organization of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Silver Star Families Action Group.

[RELATED: [How MOAA Will Continue Fighting for Combat-Injured Veterans](#)]

[Learn more about the alliance](#), and send a message to your lawmakers via [MOAA’s Legislative Action Center](#) asking them to end the wounded veteran tax.





MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

Join MOAA Leadership and your fellow MOAA members on these hosted cruises and land tours.

July 12-21, 2026	Highlights of Eastern Europe River Cruise	9-nights from \$3,999
October 1-10, 2026	Western Europe Yacht Cruise	9-nights from \$4,999
April 25-May 2, 2027	Castles Along the Rhine River Cruise	7-nights from \$4,199
July 19-27, 2027	France & Spain Yacht Cruise	8-nights from \$5,799
September 14-25, 2027	Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise	11-nights from \$8,999
Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027	Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour	10 days from \$6,495

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Don't forget the Member Benefits you have with MOAA membership! Travel worldwide through MOAA Vacations, Insurance and Financial help through MOAA Insurance Plans and USAA, discounted rental on PODS moving and storage containers. A chapter member used the

PODS discount to rent a PODS container to store furniture during floor refinishing. There are many benefits waiting to be discovered such as MOAA Perks, like discounts on GE appliances and much more. Go to the MOAA website, www.moaa.org, and click on Benefits.



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2024-2026 Term**

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GLORIOUS QUOTES

“Wood burns faster when you have to cut and chop it yourself. ~ Harrison Ford

PA MOAA chapters have 1,400 members and another 31,100 MOAA national members live in PA and are not in chapters. That means our total PA membership is 32,500 and climbing. Thank you for staying involved!

To find a Chapter or view Council newsletters go to our website:

www.pa-coc.org

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The Eagle is published quarterly by the Pennsylvania Council of Chapters, Military Officers Association of America. Its content does not reflect the official position of the DoD, any branch of the US Armed Forces, NOAA, USPHS, nor MOAA National. Please send chapter articles and audio-visual submissions to the Editor, Bob Gray, at rl_gray@hotmail.com or pacocnewsletter@gmail.com.