



2023-2024 AFSA TOP

**LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

**OUR 7 MAJOR FOCUS GROUPS**

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**MILITARY HEALTHCARE**

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**VETERAN/RETIREE AFFAIRS**

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**BENEFITS & PROGRAMS**

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**MILITARY FAMILIES**

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**EDUCATION**

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**CARING FOR SURVIVORS**

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- To improve the access to earned military health care benefits enhance existing coverages and services, and resist future fee increase.
- To improve the access to and quality of VA healthcare - thus ensuring the nation fulfills its obligation to care for those "who shall have borne the battle;" to enhance the disability claims and appeals process; reduce claims and appeals backlog; ensure ancillary programs, services, etc. remain fully funded; to extend concurrent receipt to all retirees with disability ratings; to expand and enhance the access to and quality / scope of health care coverage for women veterans; to ensure the delivery of full and timely benefits for Veterans exposed to toxic substances and toxicants IAW Public Law 117-168, the PACT Act.
- To sustain military pay comparability with the private sector via full military pay raises in accordance with current law; to protect or enhance related benefits such as leave, Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH), bonuses and special pays, commissaries, base exchanges, MWR facilities, and Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA). To promote further study and adjustments of pay and allowance to more equitably respond to fluctuating national economic conditions.
- To support the promotion of future success via the use of hard-earned education benefits such as the Military Tuition Assistance (MilTA) program, MyCAA, Montgomery or "Forever" GI Bill - and ensure that these programs remain relevant and fully funded for themselves or any dependents whom their benefits may have been transferred.
- To extend and enhance educational and employment programs for military spouses; to fully fund Impact Aid.
- Duty Status Reform for National Guard to fix the complex reserve duty status system (e.g., 12304b situation) without reducing compensation value; to reduce the Guard & Reserve retirement compensation age from 60 to 55. Further reforms toward benefit equity, including healthcare.



## ON-GOING LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY ITEMS

### Military Healthcare

- To provide for an option of TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) to Air Reserve Technicians (ART)
- To resist TRICARE fee increases, pharmacy co-pays and authorize pre-tax payment of health, dental, and long-term care premiums to include chiropractic care.
- To ensure proposed military medical billet cuts, any other uniformed/civilian/contracted medical personnel reductions and/or military treatment facility downsizing, or closures are not implemented until DoD provides Congress a thorough analysis of civilian care availability, ensuring no benefit reduction for any beneficiaries.

### Veteran/Retiree Benefits

- To provide overseas military retirees with full access to exchange / commissary benefits and postal services.
- To promote and enhance transition programs and employment opportunities for veterans.
- To provide for a full accounting of POW / MIA's from all past and future military actions.
- To reverse trends in (and ultimately end) the national tragedy that is suicide among service members past and present and their families; to expand research into core causes, risk factors, and protective factors for suicide among veterans, caregivers, service members and their families; to pursue further legislation and funding for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) as treatment of persistent post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)/post-traumatic stress injury (PTSI) for veterans through VA.

### Military Benefits and Programs

- To establish a catastrophic leave program; to allow military members the capacity to transfer their annual leave to other military members. Make catastrophic leave program non chargeable leave regarding annual leave balance.
- To repeal or further modify the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act.
- To guard the American flag from purposeful acts of physical desecration.
- To protect the voting rights of military service members.
- To increase USAF and military oversight of privatized and government owned family housing and barracks to ensure quality housing is provided, health and safety hazards are properly addressed, abated, and prevented, and utility rates are equitable. Ensure full implementation of the tenant bill of rights.
- To ensure DoD authorizes increases in BAH for uniformed service members residing in military housing areas who have incurred increased housing costs above their current BAH.

### Military Families

- To promote and enhance training programs / employment opportunities for spouses.
- To improve access to and quality / affordability of childcare; to monitor extension of CDC hours to ensure they reflect operational pace of service members and families using those facilities.
- To encourage payment policies that accommodate military lifestyles (i.e. accommodate periods of leave, tax breaks, etc.)
- To support DoD's encouragement for States and O'conus locations to engage in immediate actions to fully implement military spouse licensure laws; to attain a baseline of getting military spouses a license in 30 days based on minimal documentation; to seek long-term solutions for reciprocity through compacts. Eliminate state relicensing cost for PCSing military dependents.

### Education

- To advocate for standardized prior learning evaluation, clear and maximized transfer credit between accredited colleges and universities.



**Caring for Survivors**

- To allow survivors of military retirees to draw the full, final month's retired pay.
- To advocate for DIC recipients to be able to remarry at age 55 and maintain their benefits.
- To monitor the implementation of the 3-year phased repeal of the VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) / Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) offset of annuities for survivors of service members who died of service-connected causes.

**Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve**

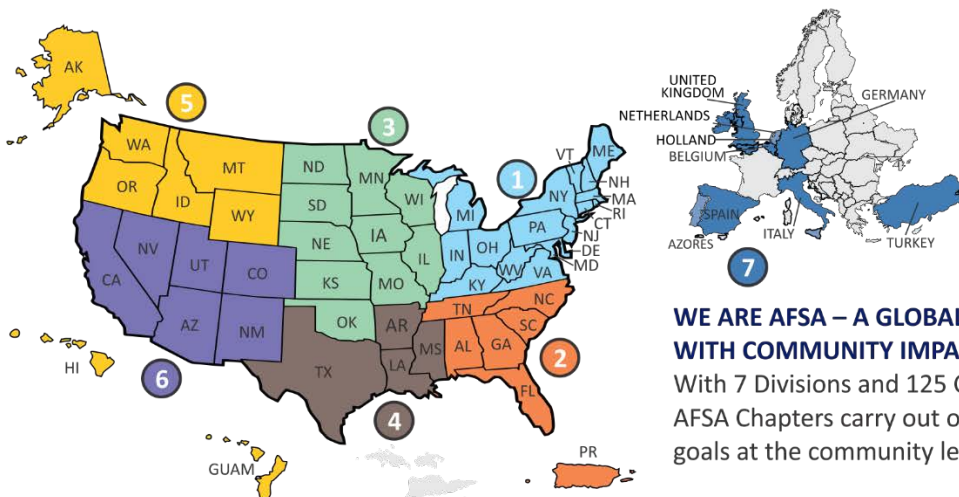
- To credit all post-9/11 active-duty service towards Guard / Reserve early retirement; to remove the annual cap on inactive duty points that can be applied towards retirement.
- To acquire MILTA program benefits for Air National Guardsmen and Dual Status Technicians; to enhance the Selected Reserve Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB-SR) benefits.
- To work toward non-chargeable healthcare for Guard and Reserve.



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