

The Beacon

September 2025



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UPCOMING EVENTS

13 September, 12:00 PM, Chapter Picnic at Ruggles Golf Course. See Flyer attached for details

7 November, 7:00 PM, General Meeting, Poster and Essay Contest Recognition and Election of Officers, American Legion Post 47501 St. John St. Havre de Grace.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It feels like Fall is in the air. Football, falling leaves and cooler temperatures appear to be the order of the day. I want to recognize our Air Force brothers and sisters on the occasion of the Air Force Birthday on 18 September. Happy 78th. Another red-letter day is POW/MIA Recognition Day on 19 September. Lest we forget.

Two events will take place during September that will probably be held before the newsletter get published. Our annual membership outing at the Ruggles Golf Course Club House is on Saturday, 13 September. APG's Retiree Appreciation Day is Thursday, 11 September. I hope to see you at each event.

The fifth annual Susquehanna Chapter "Harford County Schools Veterans Day Poster and Essay Contest" is about to kick off. Students are encouraged to submit their entry up to the deadline of Sunday, 21 October. Please help spread the word. The awards presentation will be during our membership meeting on Friday, 7 November at 6:00 at American Legion Post 47 in Havre de Grace. Please plan to attend. I think you will be pleasantly surprised at the patriotism displayed by these students. Also, at that meeting we will be electing our slate of officers for next year. Bill Whitford, our Chaplain, is Chair of the nominating committee. If you have any interest in filling one of our elected positions, please contact him.

Still serving,

Bob Beahm
BG, USA (Ret)
Chapter President

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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Updates to the latest legislative affairs can be found on the national website noted above or at the Maryland Council of chapters web page at <https://www.mdmoaa.org/>

RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY

APG will be hosting a Retiree Appreciation Day, Thursday, 11 September 9:00 am, at the MWR Recreation Facility. Representatives from Legal, ID services, various vendors and others will be available. See the flyer attached!

2ND ANNUAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY CEREMONY

On 20 September at 5:30pm, Joseph L Davis Post #47 will host the 2nd annual POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony at the Post#47 Banquet Hall. See attached flyer for details.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

WE NEED YOU!

Did you know that your current Regular Annual Member status with The Susquehanna Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America is about to expire? Your support over the past year has been appreciated and we would hate to lose you. Over the past years the Chapter has been instrumental in fighting for your benefits as a service member in Maryland at the legislative, legal, and community levels and indirectly at the national level through MOAA. Susquehanna Chapter of MOAA Membership annual dues (except the first year) are needed to be received by the end of each calendar year. If you have not renewed for 2025, please do so now. Chapter dues for 2026 need to be received by 1 January 2026.

Please visit our website to renew your membership today before it expires. To renew, follow these easy steps: 1. First login using the Member Login button at the top of the page. www.moaasusquehanna.org 2. Once logged in, renew your membership by clicking the Membership or Join button at the top third of the page in the blue bar.

- For those who have forgotten their username and/or password, there is a "Forgot Login?" link on the Login page. *Note: If this is your first login, click "Request Login Information" to get your temporary password.*

Should you not want to renew online you can go to this link and download the membership renewal. Fill out the form, enclose a check for \$20.00 and mail to the address on the form.

National MOAA and local affiliate membership are two distinct memberships. You do not have to be an MOAA member to join the Susquehanna Chapter although membership in both the local and National organizations is

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encouraged. Submitting your dues payment through this online application is for Susquehanna chapter dues (joins/renewals) only. If you are attempting to join/renew for National MOAA, please go to www.moaa.org/join.

If you need any assistance in accessing your account, please email us at info@moaasusquehanna.org

Thank you very much for your continued support of the Susquehanna Chapter of The Military Officers Association of America.

NATIONAL NEWS

NDAAs Tracker: Looking at Key Amendments to the Must-Pass Bill

By Brenden McMahon

Proposals to end an unjust pay offset faced by tens of thousands of combat-injured veterans and to improve access to care at military treatment facilities are among the more than 1,500 amendments lawmakers will consider as part of must-pass defense legislation.

House lawmakers have submitted more than 900 amendments to their version of the FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), while the Senate will need to work through over 600. Not all of these will make it into the final chamber-passed bills – or even receive floor attention – but the sheer volume underscores the magnitude of the task ahead.

The Senate is expected to take up its version of the bill later this week after an 84-14 vote Sept. 2 invoking cloture, which will allow for debate on the legislation. The House likely will begin its NDAA work next week, setting up a busy stretch for both chambers as the bills make their way through the legislative process and move one step closer to being signed into law.

Key Amendments of Interest

MOAA is closely monitoring amendments that directly affect our core mission. Several stand out as particularly significant. Two examples:

- **Supporting Combat-Injured Veterans:** Both chambers will consider an NDAA amendment including the text of the Major Richard Star Act. This enduring priority for MOAA would provide concurrent receipt of retirement pay and VA disability compensation to combat-injured servicemembers who were forced to medically retire before reaching 20 years of service. Its introduction in both chambers underscores the continued momentum and broad support behind this vital reform – the standalone bipartisan legislation had 300 cosponsors in the House and 76 in the Senate as of Sept. 2. [FACT VS. FICTION: Major Richard Star Act]

- **Improving TRICARE Access:** A House amendment offered by Rep. Steven Horsford (D-Nev.) would direct DoD to establish a digital system for TRICARE beneficiaries receiving care at military treatment facilities. This system would allow patients to electronically file and track complaints related to access to care, with each complaint routed to a patient advocate for action. This has been one of MOAA's top priorities for DoD health care since the beginning of the 119th Congress, and we are pleased to see the House take up this important issue.

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These are just two examples of amendments MOAA is watching closely. We also are evaluating a wide range of proposals related to TRICARE reform, issues affecting currently serving servicemembers, support for military families, and provisions impacting veterans.

How You Can Get Involved

As the House and Senate prepare to take up their respective versions of the FY 2026 NDAA, your voice is critical in shaping the final outcome. Lawmakers must hear directly from you about the importance of these amendments and how their inclusion in the NDAA will impact the uniformed services and veteran communities.

Here's how you can take action:

- Engage Through MOAA's Legislative Action Center: Send messages to your elected officials urging their support for amendments like the Major Richard Star Act and improvements to TRICARE access.

- Build Awareness: Share MOAA updates with fellow servicemembers, retirees, and family members to broaden the impact of our collective voice.
- Stay Informed: Follow MOAA's coverage on our website and in our newsletter as the NDAA moves through both chambers and into conference.

Together, through informed and active advocacy, MOAA can help ensure the FY 2026 NDAA protects the service-earned pay and benefits of our nation's past, present, and future uniformed servicemembers, their family members, and their survivors.

From MOAA's President: Help Us Stay Ready by Supporting MOAA's Crisis Relief Program

By Brian T. Kelly

MOAA is seeing an increased demand signal to help those in our uniformed services community facing the aftermath of natural disasters, financial struggles, and health issues they encounter through no fault of their own.

The MOAA Foundation's Crisis Relief Program provides financial grants to military and veteran families when they need it most, often after they've exhausted all other options. These are individuals and families who may not be eligible for support from service relief societies or the VA, whose lives have been upended due to job loss, medical emergencies, and natural disasters.

What we often see is heartbreaking, and it's why this program matters so deeply.

Here's just one story of how your support makes an impact:

D'Juan served six years in the Air Force. He lives in Georgia with his wife, their 13-year-old son who has ADHD, and his 80-year-old mother-in-law. Earlier this year, his wife became disabled and could no longer work. Without her income, their financial situation quickly spiraled as bills piled up, the mortgage fell behind, and a fallen tree led to costly septic repairs.

With the weight of being the sole provider and caregiver for his entire family, D'Juan felt overwhelmed. Thanks to support from MOAA's Crisis Relief Program, he was able to catch up on critical expenses and breathe a little easier while continuing to care for his loved ones.

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September marks National Preparedness Month, so we're asking our community to stand with us and ensure The MOAA Foundation is prepared and ready to respond to the needs of our community.

Every applicant tells a story. A family seeking safe housing after a flood. A wounded warrior with PTSD unexpectedly without a job. A disabled veteran's home and wheelchair ramp damaged in a tornado. MOAA can step in quickly, providing financial relief at just the right time, while also restoring hope and dignity. That's the kind of impact your gift can make.

Your donation to The MOAA Foundation means a military family won't have to wait for help. It means a survivor knows they haven't been forgotten. It means someone who served this country receives the same loyalty they gave in return.

VA Hospital Ratings Show Gains, But Challenges Remain

By: René Campos

The VA is reporting strong results in the latest Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) hospital quality ratings, underscoring the important role the VA direct health care system plays in serving those who have worn the uniform.

More than 75% of VA hospitals earned four or five stars in the top performance categories, according to the Aug. 29 CMS report. No VA hospital received the lowest rating, and over 90% either maintained or improved their score from last year.

"These ratings highlight the excellent care VA hospitals provide," VA Secretary Doug Collins said in the department's announcement of the scores. "Our job is to continue raising the bar for customer service and convenience throughout the department, so VA works better for the veterans, families, caregivers and survivors we are charged with serving." [RELATED: MOAA-Backed Caregiver Aid, Plus Other VA-Focused Legislation, Moves Through Key Committee]

The CMS ratings measure performance across five categories: mortality, safety of care, readmission, patient experience, and timely and effective care.

Progress and Challenges

The VA announcement also pointed to several improvements across the department, including expanding access through the opening of new health care clinics, record processing of disability claims, and increasing investment in infrastructure. The department also continues to accelerate deployment of a modernized electronic health record system to improve care coordination across VA and community providers.

However, important challenges remain. Veterans still face long waits for some specialty care, limited access in rural areas, and persistent staffing shortages across the system.

And while expanding community care options can improve access and convenience, it also raises concerns about how to preserve VA's role as the primary coordinator of veteran-focused health care.

MOAA Priorities

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MOAA applauds the progress reflected in these ratings and VA's commitment to raising the quality of care. But lasting improvements require sustained investment, with support from both the department and lawmakers. MOAA urges lawmakers in the 119th Congress to:

- Provide timely, full-year funding so the VA can carry out its mission without disruptive stopgap measures.
- Invest in the workforce, human resources, and facility infrastructure needed to meet current and future demands.
- Preserve VA's direct care system and specialized services that remain the foundation of veteran-focused health care.

The latest CMS ratings are an encouraging sign that VA health care is on the right track. But progress must be sustained and expanded. MOAA will continue to advocate for policies and resources to ensure the VA remains strong, modern, and capable of delivering the care and support services veterans have earned — today and for generations to come



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CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

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ABOUT MOAA

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization. <http://moaa.org>. The Chapter is an affiliate of the national MOAA. Like MOAA National, the Chapter is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization.

The MOAA Legislative Action Center provides information regarding MOAA's top national legislative priorities for the year and COLA, as well as perspective on issues in the military community that could affect you and your family <http://takeaction.moaa.org>

If you are not a member of MOAA, you can join at <http://bit.ly/JoinMOAA>. Membership in MOAA is separate from membership in the Susquehanna Chapter.

MOAA MISSION

To preserve and protect earned benefits for our uniformed services, veterans, their families, and surviving spouses through:

Advocacy, Leadership, Education, and Service.

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Advocacy Highlights:

Pay Raises for all ranks, Widows Tax repeal, MTF restructuring delays, protecting TRICARE benefits, military housing reforms, PACT Act support, MISSION Act reforming VA programs, GI Bill upgrades, COLA adjustment improvements.

Current Legislative Goals:

Compensations and Service-Earned Benefits, Military Housing, Health Care for currently serving, retirees, and veterans, Survivor families benefits, and improve Guard and Reserves pay and health coverage.

SUSQUEHANNA CHAPTER MOAA:

Susquehanna Chapter, a 501(c)(19) nonprofit organization was affiliated in October 1969 with the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), formerly TROA. Chapter members live in Harford and Cecil Counties. We promote the MOAA purposes and objectives to foster fraternal relations among retired, active and former officers of the eight uniformed services and the Reserve Components.

The chapter has 60 active members, who are currently serving, former, and retired officers, and their spouses and widows/widowers. Working through the Chapter, we provide assistance to our membership, enabling them to continue to serve their nation and communities, maintain contact with the other services, and enjoy social fellowship with people who share common values of patriotism, honor and selflessness.

Our Chapter helps provide critical grassroots support for MOAA's national legislative agenda. Our benefits are under attack, and MOAA is in the fight to preserve them. Chapter members let their legislators know what's on their minds and open doors for MOAA's legislative team in Washington, D.C. In these difficult times, our chapters are the best way we know to do that.

At the local level we successfully advocated for reduction of Harford County property taxes for retired veterans and reductions of MD State taxes on retired pay for military members and first responders. We sponsored scholarships, engaged Harford County Board of Education to establish a JROTC program, and continue to coordinate community outreach to schools for Veteran Poster essay contests. We coordinated COVID 19 grants for qualifying veterans, volunteered with the Susquehanna Habitat for Humanity, and participate in local veteran memorial activities.



Susquehanna Chapter MOAA

Annual Membership Picnic

Saturday, 13 September 2025, 1200 – 1500 hours

Ruggles Golf Course Club House

1st Avenue Bldg 4490, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, 21005

The Susquehanna Chapter will celebrate another successful year at our annual picnic at the APG Ruggles Golf Course Club House.

Food will be catered by First Sergeant's Barbeque.



**Pulled Pork
Pulled Chicken
Green Beans
Cole Slaw
Potato Salad
Rolls**



Drinks will be available from the club house bar

Receive 6 free raffle tickets when you bring an appetizer or desert

\$20 for members and guests over 18

Guests under age 18 are free

RSVP and pre-pay

No Later Than 5 September at

<https://www.moaasusquehanna.org/>



SAVE THE DATE

*Retiree
Appreciation Day*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 9 AM

MWR RECREATION CENTER • ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND

- Retiree & veteran vendors
- ID services
- Commissary (DeCA)
- Kirk US Army Health Clinic
- Legal & more!

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MEMBERSHIP DUES FORM (New & Renewal) **Susquehanna Chapter**

Name _____
Last First MI

Information below is only required if it has changed. ____New ____Renewal

Mailing _____
Address Street City State Zip Code

Home _____
Address* Street City State Zip Code

*If different from mailing address

Home Phone # _____ Cell Phone # _____

Office Phone # _____

e-mail _____ @ _____
address

Annual Membership Fee. New members joining the Chapter during January – June pay no dues for the current year. Those who join in July – December pay no dues during the current year and following year. Annual dues are \$20. Please complete this form and submit it with your check for the appropriate amount, payable to “Susquehanna Chapter, MOAA” or you may pay online at <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx>.

Mail this form to:

Membership Chair

Susquehanna Chapter, MOAA

PO Box 243

Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21005

Dues enclosed are for ____2025 ____2026 ____2027 ____2028 ____2029 ____2030 ____ Lifetime Membership

Lifetime Membership: If you are 70 years of age or older, and not in arrears for dues, you are eligible to become a Lifetime Member of the Susquehanna Chapter. The one-time fee for Lifetime Membership is 80- your age x \$20.00. Lifetime membership cannot be paid online. Lifetime Membership in the Susquehanna Chapter does not convey Lifetime Membership in MOAA. Payment for Lifetime Member status must be paid via check to the address above.

Please contact Ted Newing at ted.newing@gmail.com with questions about your dues status.

Serving the Community and the Nation since 1969

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www.moaausquehanna.org

Joseph L. Davis Post #47 2nd Annual National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony



When: September 20, 2025, 5:30 to 6:30 PM

Where: Post 47 Banquet Hall

Attire: Solemn ceremony, please dress respectfully

Cost: Free, compliments of Post 47

*If you would like to volunteer to help with this event,
contact the Post 47 Chaplain (see RSVP email)*

Please RSVP (need #s for lite fare planning) to:

- Email: Chaplain47md@gmail.com
- In person: Post 47 lounge (sign up sheet on table by door)