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December 2021 Issue – Newsletter to Members

## President's Message...



Greetings Friends,

Season's Greetings to all. The first thing I would like to do is inform the membership of the passing of Captain Kerry Magee, USNR (R). Kerry was our long-standing Chaplain and a Life member of MOAA. Kerry passed away November 25<sup>th</sup> and was laid to rest with full Military honors December 13, 2021 at the Houston National Cemetery. Our prayers and thoughts go out to Ann, Kerry's spouse and their families.



2021 was quite a year for our Chapter coming out of the pandemic. We ended the year with seventeen new members and financially solidly in the black. Additionally, the Chapter received MOAA National's 5 Star Level of Excellence for the second consecutive year. Dan Gutiérrez's excellent TCC Quarterly report in the newsletter elaborates on this in greater detail. Our featured December speaker was Captain Rick Miller, USNR (R). Rick currently is the Executive Director of Impact a Hero and a former member of the Texas Legislature. He gave an outstanding presentation covering IAH, and the Legislature's role in military affairs. Additionally, we, as an added bonus, received a pictorial overview of life aboard the USS Vinson where his son Scott is the Commanding Officer of "America's favorite carrier". Thank you, Rick. We should also note that our wonderful newsletter publisher Kathy Frank became our newest honorary member.

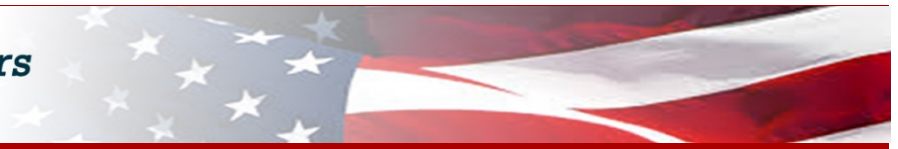
**It is that time of the year (DUES) to remind everyone to send in their dues if applicable. Your dues are our main source of revenue to support the Chapter's programs and of course, additional contributions are always welcome.**

Finally, and most important, I would like to wish everyone a most Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you next year.

Respectfully, Rob  
Robin P. Ritchie, COL, Infantry, USAR (Ret)

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## MOAA Texas Council of Chapters ZOOM Meeting – December 4, 2021

*By Daniel M. Gutierrez, Major, USA (Ret.)*

On Saturday, December 4, the MOAA Texas Council of Chapters (TCC) held its fourth quarterly meeting of 2021. Normally the quarterly meetings are held in conference at a location in Texas. COVID-19 however, has altered normal practice. The meeting was conducted via zoom as has been the case all year.

TCC President Jim Cunningham from the San Antonio chapter, after a long and arduous illness, returned to lead the council and set the agenda. Highlights of the meeting were the reports from the various members of the council concerning activities and events in their chapters over the last three months. I was happy to report that in the Houston area, the chapter had recruited 3 new members (a total of 16 over the course of this year), had published 3 monthly newsletters, and had been recognized by MOAA National as a 5-star Levels of Excellence (LOE) chapter for the second year in a row. Also, the chapter was further recognized by MOAA National by being awarded a cash prize for its community outreach efforts. I reported on the chapter's participation in the Retiree *Appreciation Day* activities in October at Joint Reserve Base Ellington and attended the festivities of the *Impact A Hero Legacy of Freedom Gala* in November. Also, I reported on the chapter's representation to the annual meeting of MOAA National this month attended by our president, Rob Ritchie and our Surviving Spouse Liaison, Judith Thomas. Colonel Ritchie had the honor of receiving the 5 Star Levels of Excellence award on behalf of the chapter. It was the second consecutive 5 Star Award for the chapter.

Of particular importance, I informed the council of the chapter's recruiting and retention activities which had yielded sixteen (16) new or recovered members this year. I was also glad to report that the chapter will have conducted eleven (11) monthly members' meetings with guest speakers and published twelve (12) award winning chapter newsletters by the end of the year.

On future events the remainder of this year, I reported that the chapter will hold its final monthly members' meeting and luncheon on December 11. This meeting will be the chapter's annual members' meeting and will feature the election of officers for 2022 and changes to the bylaws.

The TCC meeting also was the council's annual business meeting in which a new slate of officers for the council was elected. The new president will be Si Simonson of the Dallas Fort Worth chapter. He will assume his duties on January 1, 2022.





## *What Retirees Can Expect in the Year-End Mail from DFAS*

For retirees who still request postal mail from us, each December we mail your 1099-R, which is the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) form for reporting retirement or annuity distributions, along with a special print edition of the Retiree Newsletter with important news you need to know for the coming year.

We also send a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) change Retiree Account Statement (RAS), which shows the change in your gross and net pay that occurs when there is a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to your pay. This RAS also includes other changes, including premium changes for any insurance allotments, such as TRICARE.

It's important to note that the Statement Effective Date on the COLA change RAS is the first of December, so the Year-to-Date Summary figures are only for 11 months (they do not include your December payment). Therefore, the Year-to-Date Summary figures on this RAS will not match the figures on your 1099-R.

If you have opted to receive electronic mail, you will not receive this mailing. Your 1099-R and COLA change RAS are conveniently available to print or download from myPay. ★

## *January 2022...Upcoming Chapter Events:*

**Tuesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 @ noon**

**MOAA HA BOD Meeting**

Rudi Lechner's German Restaurant

2503 S. Gessner Road

Houston, TX 77063

**Saturday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022 @ noon**

**MOAA HA Chapter Meeting**

Location to be announced

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2022

## Tax Season is Here Again



As we enter another tax season, we want to make sure you are aware of all of the options you have for getting your tax documents.

We recommend you take advantage of **myPay**. A myPay account is your one-stop source for all of your most important retired pay information, including your 1099-R.

In fact, likely by the time you read this newsletter, retiree 1099-Rs will be available in myPay (December 17, 2021) and annuitant 1099-Rs will be available soon after (December 21, 2021).

If you have requested your 1099-R to be mailed, it will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service no later than January 31, 2022.

### **Get your 1099-R and pay information 24/7 in myPay**

The fastest and most secure way to obtain a copy of your 1099-R is through myPay. Retirees and annuitants can log in to myPay, and print a 1099-R from the comfort of their home. Instructions are at: <https://myPay.dfas.mil>

If you're not using myPay, now is a great time to get started. myPay is now simpler, streamlined and more mobile-friendly. That means it's easier to manage your pay account using the web browser on your computer or with a connected device, like your smartphone or tablet.

The advantage of using myPay is that your 1099-R tax statement will be available much sooner in myPay than through postal mail. 1099-Rs generally become available in myPay in late December, while paper copies aren't mailed until later in January. In addition, in myPay you can download or print your current year tax statement, as well as prior year 1099-Rs (up to four prior years for retirees and up to two prior years for annuitants).

While you're in myPay, you can also easily check to make sure we have your correct mailing address and email address.

The self-service options available through myPay simplify the management of your military retirement or annuity and give you access to personalized information about your account.

### **It's Easy to Get Started With myPay**

If you've never used myPay, you can request an initial password on the myPay homepage using the "Forgot or Need a Password" link. The password will be mailed to the address you have on file with DFAS and you should receive it in about 10 business days.

Once you receive your password in the mail, you can return to the myPay homepage and log in with your social security number and the password you received in the mail to create your myPay profile.

We have a downloadable step-by-step **Get Started Guide to myPay** on our website and a how-to video on the **DFAS YouTube channel**.

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## News from Our Partners: VA Presumptive Conditions and the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

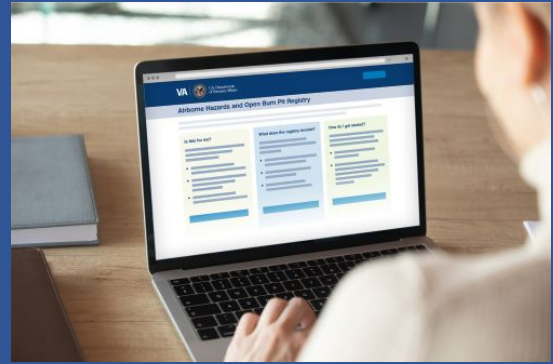
This past summer, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) expanded the list of presumptive conditions for disability claims. Specifically, VA is now processing claims for **asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis** based on presumed exposure to particulate matter for veterans who: 1) served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations from August 2, 1990 – present or 2) served in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Syria, or Djibouti from September 19, 2001 – present, **if conditions presented within 10 years of separation from active service**. VA's decision was, in part, aided by more than 250,000 **Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry** participants. The registry is a secure database of health information voluntarily provided by service members and veterans and, while not related to the claims process, is instrumental in enabling VA to improve care and services for veterans.

### Registry Participation

Registry participation consists of an online questionnaire followed by an optional, but recommended, medical evaluation. The questionnaire helps you document your deployments and exposures to airborne hazards (which can include sand, dust, smoke from oil well fires, and more—not just burn pits) to create a snapshot of your health. Upon completing the questionnaire, you are encouraged to discuss your exposure history and health with a VA provider in a free, optional medical evaluation. Participants also receive information from VA about registry updates.

### Registry Eligibility

Service members and veterans who were deployed in the Southwest Asia theater of operations on or after August 2, 1990, or who were stationed in Afghanistan or Djibouti on or after September 11, 2001, are eligible to sign up for the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry.



If you meet the registry eligibility criteria, please consider **joining the registry** to document your exposure and health information and support the health of other service members and veterans.

### Filing a VA Claim

If, within 10 years of separation/retirement, you have symptoms suggestive of any of the three conditions listed above (asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis), such as chronic cough or ongoing runny nose and sinus congestion, please consider requesting an evaluation by a health care professional to make a diagnosis. If your condition fits with the presumptive conditions, you can file a claim by filling out **VA Form 21-526EZ** (for first time applicants), or **VA Form 20-0995** (for individuals reapplying for these conditions). You can also file a claim if you have another health condition that you feel is related to your military service.

### Additional Information

Visit **Health.mil/AHBurnPitRegistry** for helpful Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry materials. You do not need to be enrolled in VA health care to participate, and the **registry does not affect access to VA health care or compensation benefits**.

For additional information regarding presumptive conditions and applying for VA benefits, visit **VA.gov** or call Veterans Benefits Administration Support toll-free at 800-827-1000. ★

# Honoring Bob Dole: He Fought in World War II and Never Stopped Serving

*By: Amanda Dolasinski  
DECEMBER 05, 2021*

Bob Dole, a decorated World War II veteran, Republican presidential nominee, and public servant of more than four decades, died Dec. 5 at age 98, less than a year [after announcing](#) he'd been diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer.

Dole, an Army veteran and Bronze Star recipient who served six years as an officer, devoted his entire professional and retired life to serving the country. He served in Congress for more than three decades, representing Kansas in the House of Representatives from 1960 until joining the Senate in 1969. Dole served there until 1996, resigning his seat and his majority leadership position that year during an unsuccessful White House bid.

“Senator Dole supported U.S. servicemembers and veterans during his political career, but also made it a mission later in life,” MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins said. “His regular appearances at the World War II Memorial, to greet his fellow comrades, were an inspiration. Senator Dole never stopped serving.”

Dole served as the national chairman for the World War II Memorial Campaign, which raised funds for the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. He was known for making appearances at the memorial, greeting veterans from around the country visiting the memorial through the nonprofit [Honor Flight Network](#).

Dole's service extended through his wife, Elizabeth, who in 2012 established the [Elizabeth Dole Foundation](#) to empower and support military caregivers and family members. The foundation formed a partnership with MOAA to produce a [caregiver guide](#) focused on the legal and financial needs of multiple generations of caregivers.

## ***Dole's Military Service***

Dole had been taking classes and playing basketball, track, and football at the University of Kansas when he volunteered for the Army Enlisted Reserve Corps in 1942.

He went on to become a second lieutenant with the acclaimed 10th Mountain Division. During an intense firefight against the Germans in Bologna, Italy, in April 1945, Dole suffered serious gunshot wounds from a German machine gun.

Dole was transported to the U.S. to recover. He overcame blood clots and a life-threatening infection. He underwent more than seven surgeries.

His injuries left him with limited mobility in his right arm and numbness in his left arm.

For his war service, Capt. Dole received two Purple Hearts. For his efforts to assist a downed radioman, he earned the Bronze Star with “V” Device.

He spent years undergoing rehabilitation at a military hospital.

In March 2019, the U.S. Congress unanimously [passed a bill](#) to promote Dole from a captain to a colonel. President Trump signed the bill into law the next month.

In his political career, Dole was known as a strong partisan debater and tough negotiator, while also excelling at forging bipartisan alliances to enact legislation, according to his Senate biography.

He demonstrated his ability to work with Democrats when he joined then-Sen. George McGovern to reform the federal food stamp program in 1977.

He served as the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee from 1981 to 1985 and the Republican floor leader from 1985 to 1996. ★



*Bob Dole regularly visited the World War II memorial in Washington, D.C. to greet Honor Flight participants. (Photo by Tom Williams CQ/Roll Call via Getty Images)*

# A Reboot for VA's Electronic Health Record Rollout

By: René Campos  
DECEMBER 08, 2021

Photo by Sean Anthony Eddy/Getty Images

The VA publicly announced Dec. 1 the release of a comprehensive review and plans for moving forward with its electronic health record (EHR) program. The move came just ahead of a Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing, where VA Secretary Denis McDonough gave testimony on the current state of the VA.

Shortly after taking office earlier this year, McDonough ordered a strategic review of the EHR. The new governance and organizational structural changes outlined in the report reflect the rigorous approach the VA is taking to mitigate problems rising from its initial deployment of the

EHR at Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center (VAMC) in Spokane, Wash., last year. The plan positions the department for future deployments through early 2024.



## **[RELATED: [What's Next for VA's Troubled Electronic Health Records Program?](#)]**

“We will do everything we can to get electronic health records right for veterans and our health care staff, with patient safety being the key driver and non-negotiable,” said VA Deputy Secretary Donald M. Remy. “Under my direction, VA is refining EHR governance and management structures to establish additional rigor and oversight. VA, in coordination with our partners, the Department of Defense and EHR vendor Cerner, will continue to update and refine the EHR implementation process to ensure it delivers the excellence veterans expect and deserve from VA.”

### **New Position, New Council**

The new management structure includes a program executive director (PED), a position reporting directly to Remy. **Dr. Terry Adirim**, who currently serves as the acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, will soon assume the duties of the new position. The position will provide effective management and program oversight to improve project integration, communications, and clarity of roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders engaged with the program.

The strategic review identified an urgent need for channeling data-driven decisions through a single governance body for incorporating stakeholder inputs and ensuring increased transparency and risk-management in the program.

A new governance structure establishes an EHRM (electronic health record modernization) Integration Council led by the PED. The council includes representatives from across the VA. The PED also will work with the Federal Electronic Health Record Modernization office to ensure interoperability between DoD and the VA with the Cerner system.

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**[RELATED: [State of the VA: McDonough Offers Outlook on Improvements, Challenges](#)]**

Additionally, the VA has put in place mechanisms to mitigate problems like the ones experienced at VAMC Mann-Grandstaff. A site readiness checklist and operational metrics will help the VA evaluate access times, appointment information, prescription data, revenue collection, clinical productivity, care coordination, system and network performance, and veteran engagement to effectively evaluate risk, make decisions, and determine the success of future deployments.

Congress and media reports have been critical of the \$16 billion project because of its hefty price tag and unknown life-cycle costs, calling for the department to implement more management, oversight, and metrics. During the Dec. 1 hearing, McDonough reaffirmed his commitment to lawmakers in keeping them informed on EHRM progress and program milestones.

“While the strategic review highlighted many challenges, it also identified opportunities to build upon, such as the standardization of clinical content developed by the national councils, which included local and national participants,” McDonough stated in written testimony, calling the system a “first for VA in moving toward standardization across VAMCs.”

McDonough intends for the VA to use the momentum of the strategic review to shift toward a veteran-centered approach, continue to find opportunities, and make improvements at Mann-Grandstaff VAMC as well as future sites.

### **A ‘Game Changer’**

VA’s modernization of its EHR system is one of the most complex and transformational undertakings in its history — an enormous project by any health care system standard.

In a briefing to veteran service organizations prior to the release of the report, MOAA asked Guy Kiyokawa, VA’s new assistant secretary for enterprise integration and a former deputy director at the Defense Health Agency, what puts the VA on the right trajectory with this new EHRM approach based on his experience with DoD EHRM?

“Accountability was central,” he said, adding that “the main game changer for DoD was establishing a EHRM Integration Council — something the VA did not have but has included in the new governance structure. The council helps to improve communication and puts the right processes and mechanisms in place for holding stakeholders accountable.”

Kiyokawa also made clear the VAMC Mann-Grandstaff problems are not that dissimilar to DoD’s experience early in its EHR rollout.

VA’s tentative EHR deployment schedule is an ambitious one, starting in March 2022 and running through all of 2023. MOAA will provide periodic updates on the EHRM project as the VA restarts; stay tuned for more information in MOAA’s weekly newsletter and at [MOAA.org](https://www.moaa.org). ★



## 2021 Officers

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*We need YOU...  
to remain a  
MOAA HA Member!*



*Debating whether to renew your chapter membership?*

*Talking to a potential new member?*

Benefits to belonging to a chapter:

- Camaraderie and Connections: when you attend chapter functions, actively serve on a committee, or take a prominent leadership role, you forge lasting ties with other MOAA members.
- Community Involvement: Membership provide opportunities to contribute to your community in a variety of ways, from providing scholarships to local students, to supporting causes that support wounded warriors and their families.
- Legislative Advocacy: We advocate for the entire military community-all ranks. Members play a critical role in advancing legislation in both Austin and Washington, D.C. This grassroots advocacy is key to MOAA achieving its legislative goals.

Chapter dues reminders will be emailed/sent out in December to those members needing renewal. We are on a calendar year for our chapter dues.

Annual renewal is \$30 for one year, \$20 for each additional year paid with renewal. Surviving Spouse \$15 initial membership; \$10 annual renewal.

Membership Application on the last page!

## Chaplain's Corner...



Christians are in the middle of the Season of Advent. This is the celebration of anticipation of the arrival of the Christ Child. The Gospel of Luke describes how the 3 kings (Magi) followed the star to the manger to bring their gifts to Jesus. Some scholars believe the journey may have taken a year or more.

For those of us in the military, travel has been a way of life. Our personal journeys may have taken us around the country or around the world. We may have had only one or multiple deployments and changes of station. I first enlisted in 1968 to fly helicopters (I knew I'd be going to Vietnam as a pilot if I passed training). I had no idea that I would spend 31 of the past 53 years in the Active and Army Reserve. Also, as a teacher and a reservist, I always taught my students to follow their dreams.

My first dream was to be a pilot. I believe that God honored that dream...although there were times when I did not honor God. God says that at those times we are "missing the mark". He calls it sin. There were times as a pilot, a father, husband, chaplain and teacher when I missed the mark. God's Word tells us that sin brought death, that we are all sinners and that we'll all face death and God's judgement for our sin. It also tells us that our sin will separate us from God for eternity. But that God has a better plan.

Christmas is our celebration of God's Gift to us. God's love and our sin brought Jesus Christ into the world as part of God's Plan. The Magi were basically astrologers, following an anomaly in the heavens. Yes, their journey was ordained by God and recorded by the prophets. That was part of the miracle of Christ's advent and their journey. That's part of prophecies and miracles. John 3:16-17 describes God's love and the reason for Christ's advent:

"For God so loved the world that He gave  
his only son, that whoever believes  
in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.

For God did not send His son into the world  
to condemn the world but that the  
world might be saved."

The fact is that we are all here on a journey that we call life. Just like in our military journey there were parts that we liked and parts that were more difficult than we could ever imagine. Whether we believe God was guiding us or not is part of our personal belief system. We can choose whether or not to believe in God's direction and involvement in our lives. That doesn't alter His involvement in our lives. The fact is, however, that we are both physical and spiritual beings. We will never be able to prove that fact until after our death.

The Magi followed the star having an idea of where they were going but not knowing exactly where their journey would lead them. They didn't know their destination until they got there, at the manger, in the presence of the Christ Child, Mary, Joseph and the animals. It was a noble goal to follow the star, and with a humble destination. But they knew they were in the presence of the King.

Faith is understanding and believing in that which we cannot see. As I get older, my faith gets more understandable and my sight becomes more clear. We may not know exactly where we are on the journey but Christmas tells me that God is with me on that journey. Christmas is the celebration that God gives eternal life to anyone who asks Him for it. It will cost us our life but He gives us that life.

~ David Essells, USAF, MAJ, RET



## **Tax Season is Here Again...** *Continued from Page 4...*

### **Reactivating Your myPay Account**

We know that some of you only use myPay once a year to get your 1099-R during tax season. Then, when you do try to access your account, you discover that your password is expired, lost or forgotten. If this sounds like something that has happened to you, please update your password now.

Waiting to update your password might mean longer wait times and potential delays in receiving your tax documents.

If your myPay account is in an inactive status because your password has expired, you can follow the simple steps below to reactivate your account.

1. Go to <https://mypay.dfas.mil> in your web browser on a computer or connected device
2. Click on the "Forgot or Need a Password?" link and enter your Login ID or Social Security Number
3. Choose to send a temporary password to your email or mailing address of record
4. When you receive the temporary password, go back to myPay and log in to reactivate your account.

### **Additional Ways to Get Your 1099-R**

If you are not using myPay, we offer other convenient options to get or replace an IRS Form 1099-R.

For retirees, if your mailing address on file with DFAS is current, you can get a copy of your 1099-R through our telephone self-service option. To use telephone self-service:

- Call 800-321-1080
- Select option "1" for Self-Serve
- Select option "1"
- Enter your Social Security Number when prompted

Your 1099-R should be in the mail within 7-10 business days to the address we have on record. Please note that 1099-R reissues requested through the telephone self-service option cannot be mailed prior to February 10, 2022.

If the address you have on file with DFAS is out of date and you are not a myPay user, you (both retirees and annuitants) can get your 1099-R sent to a one-time, temporary mailing address or to your mailing address on record by submitting your request online.

Plus, you can request prior year 1099-Rs. Your 1099-R should be in the mail within 7-10 business days. *Please note that 2021 1099-R reissues requested through askDFAS cannot be mailed prior to February 10, 2022.* Find instructions at (this link is case-sensitive): <http://go.usa.gov/xPh7H>

If you prefer traditional mail, you can send us a written request by fax or mail, but please make sure you leave time for processing. It can take up to 30 days to process requests received by fax or mail. *Please note that 1099-R reissues requested via written request cannot be mailed prior to February 10, 2022.* Find instructions at (this link is case-sensitive): <http://go.usa.gov/xAYCe>

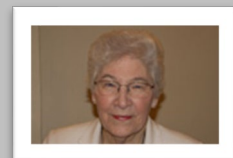
Members with unique situations can speak directly to one of our customer care representatives. Depending on call volume, you may have to wait on hold while we assist other customers. *Please note that 1099-R reissues requested from our customer care center cannot be mailed prior to February 10, 2022.* For more information, go to (this link is case-sensitive): <http://go.usa.gov/xAYrC>

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# Ask Your Lawmakers to Make Sure Survivors Have the Benefits They Deserve

## Surviving Spouse Corner

Judith Thomas  
Surviving Spouse MOAA Liaison  
jthomas482@aol.com



By: Mark Belinsky  
DECEMBER 14, 2021  
Van Williams/Air Force

With midterm elections already on the minds of our elected officials, timing for advocacy for the Caring for Survivors Act could not be better. This bipartisan legislation would make much-needed improvements to Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), and all co-sponsors we gain now will carry over to the next legislative session.



### **[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Elected Officials to Co-Sponsor the Caring for Survivors Act](#)]**

This important legislation would raise DIC to the same levels as other federal survivor programs. It would boost DIC to 55% of the compensation of a 100% disabled veteran, up from the current 43%; correcting this injustice is long overdue.

The bill would also reform the so-called “10-year rule,” which currently prohibits survivors from receiving DIC benefits if a 100% disabled servicemember dies of a non-service connected injury less than 10 years after receiving that disability rating. The law allows beneficiaries to receive a portion of DIC beginning at five years, with that amount gradually rising until full compensation at the 10-year mark.

Securing passage of the bill is the No. 1 goal for [The Military Coalition’s Survivor Programs Committee](#). The coalition, which represents nearly 5.5 million members of the uniformed services community, has long fought for survivor benefits; MOAA is proud to play a leadership role within and throughout the coalition.

The legislation is championed in the Senate (S. 976) by Sens. Jon Tester (D-Mont) and John Boozman (R-Ark.), and in the House (H.R. 3402) by Rep. Jahana Hayes (D. Conn).

### **[MORE SURVIVORS LEGISLATION: [Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act](#) | [Tell Congress to Ensure SGLI, VGLI Keep Up With Inflation](#)]**

“Families who lost their loved ones in the line of duty or from a service-related injury shouldn’t have to worry about their economic security,” said Tester, chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. “Our bipartisan bill will fix outdated policies, bringing surviving spouses and family members’ earned benefits in line with other federal programs. And it’ll reduce bureaucratic red tape to ensure no survivor is unfairly kept from the benefits they need in the future.”

*Continued on Next Page...*

## Tax Season is Here Again... *Continued from Page 11...*

### **Changing Your Federal Tax Withholding**

If you need to change your withholding, you can do it easily in myPay. Or you can fill out and mail an IRS Form W-4 if you are a military retiree or an IRS Form W-4P if you are an SBP annuitant. Be sure to use the 2021 forms if you are sending the form before **January 1, 2022**. The forms are available on the IRS website and are also linked from our Forms page.

Please note: You are not required to file a new Form W-4 unless you claim exemption from federal taxes. If you claim exemption, the **IRS requires you file a new W-4 each year**.

DFAS customer service representatives cannot provide tax advice or recommendations about withholding. Please consult a tax professional if you have questions about your taxes.

### **The IRS Tax Withholding Estimator**

The IRS has an online Tax Withholding Estimator to help you determine how much tax you need to have withheld. The calculator helps taxpayers estimate if the right amount is being withheld from their income to cover their tax liability. The estimator uses a simple, six-step question-and-answer format using information like marital or filing status, income, withholding, adjustments, deductions and credits.

The mobile-friendly estimator is available at: [www.irs.gov/individuals/tax-withholding-estimator](https://www.irs.gov/individuals/tax-withholding-estimator). ★

## Ask Your Lawmakers to Make Sure Survivors Have the Benefits They Deserve... *Continued from Previous Page...*

Boozman said the legislation to bring DIC benefits in line with other federal survivor programs “will help us continue to honor the promise we made to servicemembers and their families. Our bill will allow us to better care for the loved ones of troops who have made the ultimate sacrifice.”

Hayes said she introduced the House version of the bill “to ensure survivors get the benefits their loved ones have earned. We owe it to the brave men and women who put their lives on the line to take care of their families and get them the support they need. I thank my colleague Chairman Tester for his continued partnership on behalf of service members and their families and hope to see this bill advance in the near future.”

### **[RELATED FROM 2020: [Separating Myth from Fact in the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Act](#)]**

Unfortunately, the unofficial cost estimate for this legislation is very high – roughly \$20 billion over 10 years. This means MOAA needs your dedicated advocacy to help build a majority of co-sponsors for S.976 and H.R.3402. Get fired up and activate your networks across friends, family, and social media to encourage legislators to join the ranks; check these links for lists of co-sponsors for the [House](#) and [Senate](#) bills.

Send a letter to your legislators [at this link](#), or consider using MOAA’s toll-free line to the U.S. Capitol switchboard – 866-272-MOAA (6622) – to connect with your legislators’ offices. Be sure to use your own words and experiences when speaking with staffers and asking for their support; this [DIC Fact Sheet](#) from The Military Coalition on the Caring for Survivors Act is useful when reaching out to your elected officials. ★

**Chapter Annual Meeting  
December 11, 2021**



**2022 Officers Elected:**  
Rob Ritchie, President  
Dan Gutierrez, Vice President  
Frank Tricomi, Treasurer and Secretary

Kathy Frank, the Chapter's newsletter publisher was unanimously elected to be an honorary Chapter member



**Rob Ritchie**



**Dan Gutierrez**



**Red O'Laughlin**



**Mike Martin**



**Dan Clinton**



**Rick Miller**



**Kathy Frank**



**Frank Tricomi**



**Rollins and Pat Collins**



**Judith Thomas**



**Larry and Carolyn  
Schmidt**



**Barbara Tricomi**



**Dave Essels**



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

### Military Officers Association of America – Houston Area

Membership is available to Officers who have held a Federal Warrant or Commission in any of the seven uniformed services of the United States or to the surviving spouse of such a person. Please use this form for application for membership, renewal or changes to the current directory of members. Additionally, The Chapter always welcomes donations to assist the Chapter's operating expenses and supporting our ROTC and JROTC programs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)                      Last                                      First                                      Initial                                      Rank

Branch \_\_\_\_\_ Status \_\_\_\_\_ MOAA Nat'l ID \_\_\_\_\_ \*

Spouse's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. for Directory \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues:** Regular Membership – \$30 first year; annual renewal \$30 (Discount for multiple years if paid with renewal: \$20 for each add'l. year **paid with renewal**)

Surviving Spouse – \$15 first year; annual renewal \$10 (same discount for multiple years)

#### Chapter Assistance Fund

\$100.00     \$50.00     \$25.00     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to MOAA-HA and mail to:

MOAA-HA  
PO Box 18372  
Sugar Land, TX 77496



For more information, call COL Robin Ritchie, 713-818-0408

*\*If not a MOAA national member, another benefit of chapter membership is the opportunity to become a national MOAA member at the BASIC LEVEL for free! If you would like to do so, please indicate here:*

YES       NO

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_