



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Surviving Spouse Corner: Add Your Voice on These Legislative Priorities

By Pat Green



National MOAA's Legislative Action Center is a valuable resource for the surviving spouse community. This online tool provides intent and particulars of MOAA-support bills as well as the opportunity to contact your elected officials on the legislation.

While all bills listed in the Legislative Action Center are important, a number of them deserve the attention of the surviving spouse community. Here are a few:

Strengthening Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for Surviving Families: Under the proposed provision authored by Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson, DIC would increase by 1% each year in addition to the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for three years, to a total of 3%. This incremental step toward parity with other federal DIC beneficiaries can help veteran families manage rising costs for basic necessities.

Allowing Survivors to Move Forward: The Love Lives On Act addresses the remarriage penalty burdening survivors. Currently, surviving spouses who remarry before reaching age 55 lose important benefits, such as DIC and survivor benefits.

The Love Lives On Act would allow surviving spouses to retain these benefits regardless of remarriage at any age. TRICARE eligibility would be restored if a subsequent marriage ends in death, divorce, or annulment. The choice to rebuild a life and a family should not have these financial consequences. The veteran's sacrifice should be met with the nation's commitment to care for the family left behind.

Recognizing the Reality of ALS: The VA recognizes amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, ALS, as a presumptive service-connected condition for certain veterans that results in a 100% disability rating. Current law requires

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Surviving Spouse Corner (Cont.)

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a veteran to have been totally disabled for eight continuous years prior to death for a surviving spouse to receive enhanced DIC. The average life expectancy of someone with ALS is two to five years after diagnosis. This is problematic — most sufferers with this disease don't live long enough to meet the eight-year requirement. The Justice for ALS Veterans Act is a remedy. It would allow eligible surviving spouses to receive increased DIC regardless how long the veteran lived with the disease.

Legislation is a fluid process, bills are written, amended, and recombined. At this time, the

Take Care of America's Veterans Act combines the three acts mentioned above and gives Congress the opportunity to improve these programs at once. As surviving spouses, we understand that no benefit can ever replace the person we lost, however, families and surviving spouses depend on this assistance. It is our duty to remind Congress that these benefits are part of the promise our nation makes to those who serve and the spouses and families who stand beside them.

Contact your lawmakers about the Take Care of America's Veterans Act.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 29 September at 8pm Eastern/ 7pm Central

Please join us on Tuesday, September 29 at 8pm Eastern/ 7pm Central/ 6pm Mountain/ 5pm Pacific as we welcome the Honorable Joseph M. Teefey, Jr. District Court Judge. Judge Teefey spent over 20 years as a trial attorney in criminal defense and numerous other legal matters before being elected to the 11th Judicial Circuit covering Amelia, Dinwiddie, Nottoway and Powhatan Counties and the city of Petersburg, Virginia. We are very grateful for Judge Teefey's time and remarks on his views from the bench, decades of trial practice, and his pathway to becoming a judge.

Please join us on Zoom at:

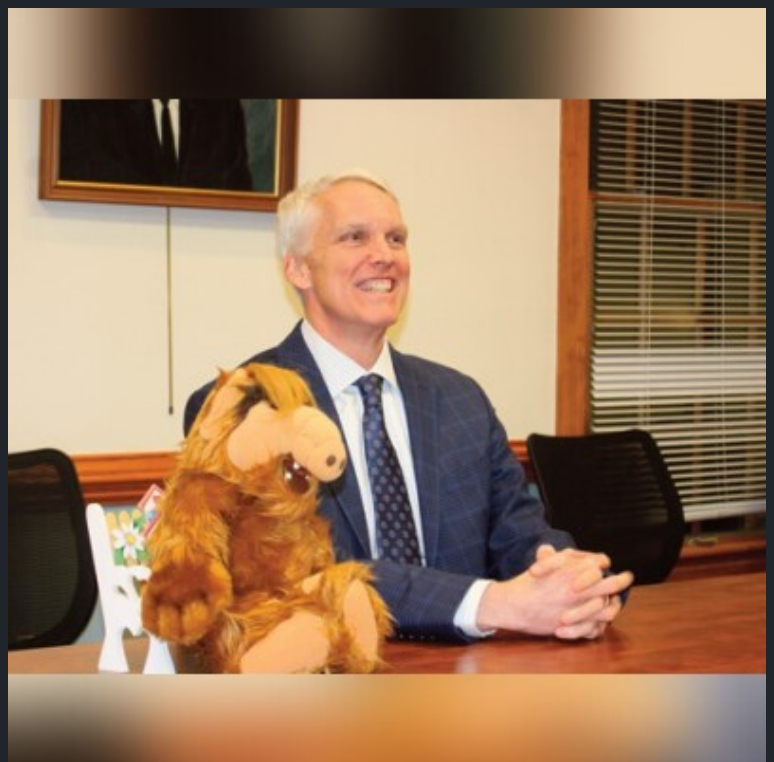
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87832593237?pwd=Ec46uXGbeWmY9r8u5HPFmOhrUfbvza.1>

Meeting chat link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/jc/87832593237>

Meeting ID: 878 3259 3237

Passcode: 458679



Around the Field: JAGC/MOAA/Legal Community

TotalForce+ 1-3 February 2027, Gaylord National Washington D.C.

MOAA, the largest and most trusted military officers' association in the nation, is dedicated to turning words into action with the launch of TotalForce+. Bringing together more than 4,000 participants — active duty personnel, Guard and Reserve members, veterans, caregivers, DoW and VA leaders, and industry professionals — this conference addresses critical issues such as benefits, health care, military recruiting, and pay.

Together, we'll explore new solutions to:

Modernize Talent Management & Innovation

Optimize Leadership Development & Performance

Advance Quality of Life

Amplify the Veteran & Retiree Experience

Register: totalforceplus.moaa.org/

MOAAJAVC Leadership Elections November 2026 Worldwide

Our MOAAJAVC officer terms are nearing the end and elections are approaching. Our chapter leadership team consists of four officer positions and four committee chair/liaison positions.

The following chapter positions will be available for nominations 1-31 October 2026:

President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Surviving Spouse Liaison, Legislative Liaison, Bylaws Chair, Chapter Relations Chair

For more information on each role or to submit a nomination starting October 1, please reach out to:

moaajavc@gmail.com

A voting announcement will be sent to all members on 1 November 2026 and voting will end 30 November 2026. Our chapter leaders will be announced in December and begin their two year terms on 1 January 2027.

Upcoming Podcasts

After The JAG Corps: Navigating Your Career Progression, is a podcast for separating and retiring Judge Advocates. CAPT Tom Welsh talks to former Judge Advocates and others to learn about their respective career journeys after military service and gain insights into marketing the skills developed while in uniform. The Podcast is available on Apple, Google, and Spotify and is published each Saturday morning. In this episode, we hear from Marcus Duffy who shares his journey from Ireland to the U.S. Air Force to a civilian practice in Florida.

After The JAG Corps: Navigating Your Career Progression can be found at Apple and Spotify



Who is MOAA and why should you join us?

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the country's leading nonpartisan organization protecting the rights of military servicemembers and their families.

To them, we have made the same promise that they have made to their country:

Never Stop Serving.

Join MOAA at:

<https://www.moaa.org>

Want to take action? Do it with a mouse click at:

www.moaa.org/takeaction

MOAAJAVC 2024-2026 Board of Directors

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CAPT Chris Mora, USN (Ret.) Legislative Liaison

Check out our Chapter Website at <https://moaajavc.org>

Who We Are

We provide opportunities for career networking, professional education, and advocacy. Our organization is non-geographic and can go with you worldwide anywhere you are stationed.

The Military Officers Association of America Judge Advocate Virtual Chapter is here for you. Membership is free and is open to current and former judge advocates on Active Duty, Reserve, Guard, Retired, or Honorably Separated.

As an affiliate of the nationwide MOAA organization, we actively participate in non-partisan advocacy on issues of key importance to military members, veterans, and their families.

Join us at:

MOAAJAVC@gmail.com