



Talking Points

MOAA NC Council of Chapters

Issues/Bills advocated by MOAA NC Council of Chapters

1. Enhanced Military Spouse Licensure Portability (formerly HB 717; HB 902; HB 1053)

Key Message

- State-specific laws are important to reducing the burden associated with the occupational relicensing of military spouses.
- From 2011-16, states enacted legislation to modify licensing for military spouses. But many of these new laws did not do enough. Many provisions included “substantial equivalency” evaluations that require military spouses to continue to submit transcripts, test scores and training hours along with previous licenses and work experience.
- North Carolina is encouraged in continuing to make improvements to achieve reciprocity using a variety of approaches, which can be considered on a continuum.

2. In-State Tuition Continuity (formerly HB 896)

Key Message

- Allow a spouse or child of an active-duty service member, if they have been accepted at an institution of higher learning but their sponsor is transferred to another state, to be deemed an in-state resident as long as they remain continuously enrolled at the school.
- Out-of-state or nonresident tuition is often two to three times that of in-state tuition. And a change in status before enrollment puts the student in a situation where they must find another college at the last minute or pay higher tuition.
- States can remedy this by allowing a spouse or child of an active-duty service member who is assigned out of state — if they have received a letter of acceptance — to be deemed an in-state resident for the purposes of determining tuition and fees at all state institutions of higher learning as long as they remain continuously enrolled.

3. Blue/Gold Star Mothers Appreciation Day (formerly HB 64)

Key Message

The proposed bill will designate the last Monday in September of each year as Blue and Gold Star Mothers’ Appreciation Day.

- The proclamation would read as follows:
Whereas, a Blue Star Mother has a child who is currently serving in the military or 4 has served in the past; and Whereas, a Gold Star Mother or a Gold Star Family member has a son, daughter, spouse, father, or mother that has been killed during any war of conflict, died from sustained injuries, or committed suicide while on active duty; and Whereas, on June 23, 1936, Congress, by joint resolution, designated the last Sunday in September as Gold Star Mothers' Day, to be observed each year by Presidential Proclamation. Despite this joint resolution, not much has been done to encourage observation of this day; and



Whereas, currently there are only several states that recognize Gold Star Mothers' Day; and Whereas, North Carolina prides itself as being the nation's "Most Military-Friendly State"; and Whereas, it is important to support the families of the members of the military; and Whereas, it is fitting to designate the last Monday in September of each year as Blue and Gold Star Mothers' Appreciation Day in North Carolina.

4. Combat Injured Veterans Tax Fairness (formerly HB 767)

Key Message

The bill will extend the period for filing a amended return for income tax liability affected by the combat-injured.

- The purpose of this bill is to extend the statute of limitations for requesting a refund of State income taxes to conform to federal tax treatment of certain disability severance payments that were not considered gross income to veterans with combat-related injuries and from which the Department of Defense withheld amounts for tax purposes.
- Extension of time to file claim for refund, notwithstanding the general statute of limitations for obtaining a refund of an overpayment of tax a taxpayer who (i) is a veteran that was provided notice of an amount of improperly withheld severance payments and (ii) filed an amended federal individual income tax return to recover the amount improperly withheld may apply to the Department of Revenue for a refund of the State individual income tax paid on the amount improperly withheld.

5. Licensing Compacts (no former Bill)

Key Message

- Occupational licensure compacts provide consistent rules for licensed members to work in other states. The military provisions added to these compacts assist service members and their spouses in participating through “privilege to practice policies” or to more easily transfer their license to a new state.
- The North Carolina Medical Board provides guidance regarding the following:
 - ✓ Obtaining an emergency disaster license
 - ✓ Physician applications
 - ✓ Physician assistant applications

6. Veterans Post-Traumatic Stress/Mitigation (formerly HB 804)

Key Message

- This proposed bill is intended to provide that a court may consider post-traumatic stress disorder as a mitigating factor when sentencing a person who is a veteran.
- The defendant has been diagnosed as suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder resulting from the defendant's military service and is undergoing professional treatment for that condition. As used in this section, "posttraumatic stress disorder" is defined in the same manner as in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM-5, or subsequent editions published by the



American Psychiatric Association, that occurred as a result of the defendant's service in one or more military combat zones. The defendant shall provide to the court documentary evidence that the defendant has done all of the following:

- ✓ Served in the Armed Forces of the United States in a combat zone. Proof of service shall consist of either a certification by the Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs or a United States Department of Defense Form DD-214.
- ✓ Been diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder connected to the defendant's service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

7. Ask the Question

Key Message

- Service providers in various state agencies can have a profound impact on Service members, veterans, and families by connecting them to services and care through asking the simple question: “Have you or a family member ever served in the military?”
- ✓ Agency service providers can be trained to improve their understanding of veterans and their family members and how to meet their needs by engaging the right agency.
- ✓ Connecting service members/families with federal services reduces the burden on state and local resources and brings federal resources into the state in the form of benefits and funding.
- ✓ North Carolina is contemplating to engage veterans and family members to connect them with services.
- ✓ The initiative encourages North Carolina to engage all assisting agencies (including health care, social services and education) to: Ask the question, “Have you or a family member ever served in the military?” and have the question on all intake forms.
- ✓ Offer information and assistance to providers regarding what to do when the answer is “Yes.”
- ✓ Through increased awareness and understanding, providers from all sectors can make a real difference.