



Defense Authorization Bill Is Now Up!

LCol John Feldmann, USAF (Ret)
Legislative Chairman

The Senate version of the FY2008 National Defense Authorization Act is undergoing final Senate voting on amendments and passage as this is written. The outcome on our primary concerns appears almost universally favorable. The following results of adopted amendments were reported by MOAA on September 28th:

- ◆ Majority Leader Harry Reid's (D-NV) amendment that would provide full, immediate concurrent receipt to disabled retirees deemed "unemployable" by the VA retroactive to January 1, 2005.
- ◆ Sen. Bill Nelson's (D-FL) amendment that would accelerate 30-year paid-up Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) coverage to October 1, 2007 and bar deduction of VA survivor benefits from SBP annuities.
- ◆ Sen. Frank Lautenberg's (D-NJ) and Sen. Chuck Hagel's (R-NE) amendment that would bar any increases in TRICARE fees for FY2008 and articulate the sense of Congress that military health care is a crucial offset to the adverse conditions of service and that military people pay substantial premiums up-front in extended service and sacrifice over and above any cash fees.
- ◆ Sen. Saxby Chambliss's (R-GA) amendment that would reduce the Reserve retirement age by three months for each 90 days served on active duty since 9/11/01.
- ◆ Sen. John McCain's (R-AZ) amendment that

would increase the maximum annual points creditable for Reserve component retirement to 130 points (vs. 90) for 2007 and subsequent years.

- ◆ Sen. Norm Coleman's (R-MN) amendment that would authorize paying increased reimbursements for mental health care if required to meet needs, and requiring a Pentagon report on military beneficiaries' adequacy of access to mental health services.
- ◆ Sen. Blanche Lincoln's (D-AR) amendment that would authorize Guard or reserve members to use their mobilization GI Bill benefits up to 10 years after separating from the selected reserve.

Hq. MOAA leadership and testimony before various commissions and to Congress was vital. Your strong support in contacting senators was and is absolutely crucial. Congratulations!

Soon the bill (S. 1547) will emerge and go to conference with the house to reconcile with their version (H.R. 1585). Pages 34 and 35 of your "Military Officer" magazine for July 2007 summarized the MOAA position on resolution of issues between the bills as they then stood. Please go to the MOAA Web site (<http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/bills/>) if you no longer have that issue to review where we stand on each topic.

Both the House and Senate now oppose TRICARE fee increases. We favor the Senate position to fully remove the SBP/DIC offset and ending premiums after 30 years now. Both houses are now in agreement on rationalizing the Montgomery GI Bill statutes for both active duty and reserve. A very important item is to ensure the active duty military pay raise for the coming year is 3.5 percent instead of just 3 percent.

Please review the latest Legislative Alerts from MOAA at: <http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/?style=D> to stay abreast of the current status on these issues and send a message to our legislators. (Continued on Page 3)

FLORIDA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS, MOAA

OFFICERS:

President.....CAPT William W. Monk, USN
(727) 943-9414 **bilmonk@aol.com**

Vice President.....COL Troy Scott, USA
(941) 379-3023 **Entscott@comcast.net**

Northeast Area Vice President.....COL Bob Bachmann, USA
(904) 737-0568 **bn0884@yahoo.com**

Northwest Area Vice President.....COL Allen DeGraw, USA
(850) 893-6181 **adegraw@comcast.net**

East Central Area Vice President.....Col Bob Kronebusch, USAF
(321) 777-2492 **Scramble@aol.com**

West Central Area Vice President.....CDR Victor Wood, USN
(727) 593-3573 **Evhwood@aol.com**

Southeast Area Vice President...COL William H. Danzeisen, USA
(561) 747-0109 **whdanzjr@adelphia.net**

Southwest Area Vice President.....COL Bill Deile, USA
(239) 574-6718 **seehof@earthlink.net**

Secretary.....LtCol Jim Conners, USAF
(239) 542-5627 **jmcfll@comcast.net**

Treasurer.....LtCol Don Knutson, USAF
(351) 686-9379 **drkatty@hotmail.com**

Immediate Past President.....CAPT William E. Knehans, USN
(386) 437-6120 **wejfgk@bellsouth.net**

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

Budget & Finance.....CDR William Pulver, USN
(352) 804-1925 **jbw32605@aol.com**

Bylaw Proposals & Resolutions.....CAPT Owen Englander, USN
(850) 479-1108 **onenglander@earthlink.net**

Communiqué Editor.....Maj Marion L. "Mick" Cotten, USMC
(386) 960-5425 **mpcotten@earthlink.net**

Legislative Affairs.....Lt Col John E. Feldmann, USAF
(850) 651-5228 **jfeldmann@cox.net**

Florida Legislative Affairs.....COL Jere Moore, USA
(850) 385-3527 **jeremoore@earthlink.net**

Personal Affairs.....COL Jon Gordon, USA
(941) 953-5911 **gordonlaw@worldnet.att.net**

Religious Activities.....Ch (COL) Robert Morris, USA (Ret)
(352) 259-9393 **rlsirrom@aol.com**

Web Site Coordinator.....LCDR Mike Magnant, USN
(813) 622-8816 **mikem@myitperson.com**

FMMC/IMMC Editor.....COL Henry W. Ince, USAF
(352) 873-1001 **hwince@cfl.rr.com**

Convention Advisor.....Col Ron Buchert, USAF
(813) 961-4129 **rbuchert@msn.com**

Annual Convention Chair - 2008.....LT William Keeney, USN
(321) 779-2341 **WKeeney822@aol.com**