

2014-2015 AFSA LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

This platform of legislative targets will be used as a "blueprint" for testimony and lobbying efforts, in addition to responses dictated by day-to-day events. Each area designates Association-approved initiatives but this list is not all inclusive. Understanding the Nation's fiscal situation, success in each of these areas will not be defined by what is gained, rather the level of benefit preserved.

HEALTHCARE

Resist TRICARE fee increases and protect military healthcare benefits earned through a career of military service

- Improve access to health care
- Enhance the TRICARE Active Duty Dental and Retiree Dental Plans
- Exempt military retirees who entered service prior to December 7, 1956, from the obligation of Medicare Part B payments
- Authorize pre-tax payment of health, dental and long-term care premiums
- Fix the Medicare/TRICARE reimbursement rate formula ("Doc Fix")

VETERANS/RETIREE BENEFITS

- Protect annual Cost-of-Living Adjustments
- Ensure adequate VA healthcare funding and access to quality care
- Oppose user fees at VA medical facilities
- Expand concurrent receipt legislation to include ALL military retirees
- Support efforts to reduce the VA claims and appeals backlog
- Promote and encourage efforts that enhance transition programs and employment opportunities for Veterans
- Improve military skills transferability for service members
- Extend the VA Caregivers Act to full-time Caregivers of catastrophically disabled veterans of conflicts before September 11, 2001
- Ensure sufficient capacity and full funding at national cemeteries
- Pursue changes in Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs), provide full overseas military retirees with full exchange/commissary benefits and postal services
- Repeal/Modify the Former Spouse Protection Act

CARING FOR SURVIVORS

- Permit the full receipt of DIC and Survivor Benefit Plan without an offset
- Allow Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) recipients to remarry after age 55 without losing their entitlement
- Allow survivors of military retirees to draw the full, final month's retired pay
- Improve education programs for surviving spouses and children

MILITARY BENEFITS & PROGRAMS

- Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector and protect current benefits against significant degradation
- Preserve and/or enhance bonuses and special pays
- Protect funding for commissaries, base exchanges, dependent schools and family support programs
- Improve access to affordable child care and encourage payment policies that accommodate military lifestyles (i.e., accommodate periods of leave, offer tax breaks)
- Seek adjustments to allowances to better reimburse members for expenses they incur for housing and government-directed PCS moves
- Establish a catastrophic leave program; allow military members to transfer their annual leave to other military members
- Reauthorize and fully fund DoD's Homeowners' Assistance Program
- Support educational and employment opportunities for military spouses

NATIONAL GUARD AND AIR FORCE RESERVE

- Streamline the complex reserve duty status system without reducing compensation value
- Improve transition and reintegration support services for G-R families
- Reduce the earliest Guard & Reserve retirement compensation age from 60 to 55
- Credit all post-9/11 active duty service toward Guard/Reserve early retirement
- Remove the annual cap of 130 points on inactive duty points that can be applied towards retirement

- Provide employer and self-employed tax credits and enhance job security
- Support greater transparency in reporting and resolving Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) violations
- Authorize reimbursement for military duty-related travel of at least 50 miles (instead of current 100 miles)
- Enhance Selected Reserve Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB-SR) benefits
- Award Veterans' status to all Guard & Reserve members
- Allow Reserve Component Members use of the USA.GOV Website

EDUCATION

- Support legislation that promotes Veterans success through their use of the Post 9/11 or Montgomery GI Bill programs and ensure these programs remain relevant and are fully funded
- Protect the current military Tuition Assistance program
- Seek transparency of the education programs provided by universities and colleges to military members and their families using TA and/or Post 9/11 and Montgomery GI Bill programs
- Ensure full funding of the Impact Aid Program
- Pursue with all State and US territory legislatures, the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

MISCELLANEOUS

- Provide a full accounting of POW/MIAs from all past and future military actions, and promote international compliance in recovery efforts
- Protect the American flag from purposeful acts of physical desecration
- Work to have the military vote count in Federal elections, especially for those service members voting by absentee ballot