

Inside this issue

March speaker..... 2
 Awards 3
 February speaker report 4
 Legislative Affairs 7
 Calendar 12
 Health news..... 13
 Military news 15
 Veterans Affairs news..... 30
 Finance..... 36
 New Members Application 38

CAPE CORAL COMMUNICATOR

March 2025

Volume 6 • Issue 3

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE:

Col Gary Nolan, USAF (Ret)

March’s breakfast meeting will be on March 8, at 10 a.m., Cape Royal Golf Club.

Our guest speaker will be Mercedes Price-Harry. She is the first woman to be chairman of the



Republican Party of Lee County. Mercedes describes herself as a proud “military brat” having grown up second of four children of a CW05 in the Marine Corps.

Please RSVP to Cindy by March 6 at capecoralmoaa@gmail.com or call 618-580-2368.

“Never Stop Serving”

CCMOAA Monthly Breakfast Meeting

Second Saturday of the Month

January - May

September - December

NEXT MEETING:

Saturday, March 8

10 a.m.

Cape Royal Golf Club

11460 Royal Tee Circle
Cape Coral

Cost \$12

(Prefer exact change please)

Breakfast Reservations to:

Cindy Nolan

capecoralmoaa@gmail.com

618-580-2368

PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAMETAG

(If you need one, contact Gary Nolan)

CAPE CORAL MOAA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES February 8, 2025, Cape Royal Golf Community

President Gary Nolan called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. with 25 present for breakfast.

Our guest speaker for the breakfast was Spencer Roach. Following the invocation and pledge, led by Cindy Nolan, Marilyn Stout introduced the speaker, who spoke to the members for 45 minutes about various pressing city issues and ongoing projects.

After breakfast, President Nolan asked for committee reports. Secretary Gary Peppers, as Finance Committee chair, reported that CCMOAA’s invested funds stood at \$47,716. That reflected a 21 percent return year-over-year with funds received and disbursed.

President Nolan also informed the members present about the Naples chapter’s military ball scheduled for March 7.

Tickets are \$165 (so it must be a fantastic event!).

With no other business issues to discuss, President Nolan adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

*Gary Peppers, Lt Col USAF (ret)
Chapter Secretary*

TREASURER’S REPORT

CAPT Timothy Cook, USN (Ret)

February 1, 2025 – February 25, 2025

Beginning Balance: Feb. 1, 2025:..... \$2,908.81

Deposits:

TOTAL DEPOSITS:.....\$0

Expenses:

Christina Cook\$61.25

(reimbursement Sunbiz annual report)

InPrint.....\$110.00

Gary Nolan (FCoC Conference)\$709.80

Bill Deile (FCoC Conference).....\$500.00

Gary Peppers (FCoC Conference)\$513.00

TOTAL EXPENSES:..... \$1,894.05

Ending Balance: Feb. 25, 2025:..... \$1,014.76



Officers

PRESIDENT:

Col Gary Nolan
US Air Force (Retired)

VICE PRESIDENT:

COL Tom Wagner
USAR (Retired)

SECRETARY:

LtCol Gary Peppers
US Air Force (Retired)

TREASURER:

CAPT Timothy Cook
US Navy (Retired)

BOARD MEMBER:

(at large)

COL Bill Deile
US Army (Retired)

FINANCE:

LtCol Gary Peppers

CHAPLAIN:

Cindy Nolan

WAYS & MEANS:

Col Gary Nolan

SPEAKER PROGRAMS:

Marilyn Stout

WEBMASTER:

COL Tom Wagner
USAR (Retired)

HISTORIANS:

LtCol Gary Peppers

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS:

COL Tom Wagner

PERSONAL AFFAIRS:

(Vacant)

VETERANS AFFAIRS:

(Vacant)

MEMBERSHIP:

Col Gary Nolan

PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

(Vacant)

PARLIAMENTARIAN:

Marilyn Stout

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Capt Larry Atkinson
US Air Force

TOPS:

(Vacant)

SURVIVING SPOUSES:

(Vacant)

FCOC SW AREA VP:

Col Gary Nolan

Lee County GOP chair Price-Harry to speak at Mar. 8 breakfast meeting

Mercedes Price-Harry, the first woman to be chairman of the Republican Party of Lee County, will be the featured speaker at the Saturday, March 8, breakfast meeting of the Cape Coral Military Officers Association of America.

The meeting will be at 10 a.m. at the Cape Royal Golf Club, 1460 Royal Tee Circle in Cape Coral.

Price-Harry describes herself as a proud “military brat” having grown up the second of four children of a CWO5 in the Marine Corps and an “America-loving mother, who emigrated from Costa Rica.”

She “relished life” on or near Camp Pendleton, Cherry Point, MCAS Beaufort and Parris Island before making her way to rural southeast Georgia to attend Georgia Southern University, graduating with a bachelor of science in speech communication.

“When I’m not enjoying paradise with my husband of over 20 years, Brian, our two creative and beautiful children, Adler Gadsden (14) and Anara Joon (10) or Mojo, our seven-year-old German Shepherd, I’m chasing my passion for politics,” she said.

The family still resides in the Southwest Cape Coral home she and Brian bought



shortly after college in 2003. It is the longest she has ever lived in the same home.

Price-Harry has a resume that ranges from medical sales to business ownership to political activism to constituent services, where she is currently employed as a district director for Congressman Byron Donalds (R-FL), her friend and political ally of 15 years.

She also serves as secretary for the Freedom & Virtue Institute and is the newly-elected chair of the Lee County Republican Party.

Inspired by former Congressman Ron Paul (R-TX), Price-Harry said she is devoted to creating a community rooted in freedom, liberty and self-reliance and hopes to inspire others to take their community engagement to the next level.

Cape Coral Communicator Member Profiles

The Cape Coral MOOA newsletter strives to regularly publish a profile on each of our members.

An online Microsoft Word form can be found on the CCMOAA Website at: www.capecoralmoaa.org. Members are encouraged to download the form, fill it out and return it to newsletter editor Larry Atkinson at publisherlarry@gmail.com.

For those who would rather just fill out the form by hand, copies of the questionnaire will be available at each monthly breakfast meeting.

We also request that photos be provided, including a current photo, one in uniform while in the service and any other photos you think other members might enjoy seeing.

Awards



Marvin C. Harris
Newsletter

Communications Award

FIVE STARS

2003, 2018, 2019,
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
& 2024



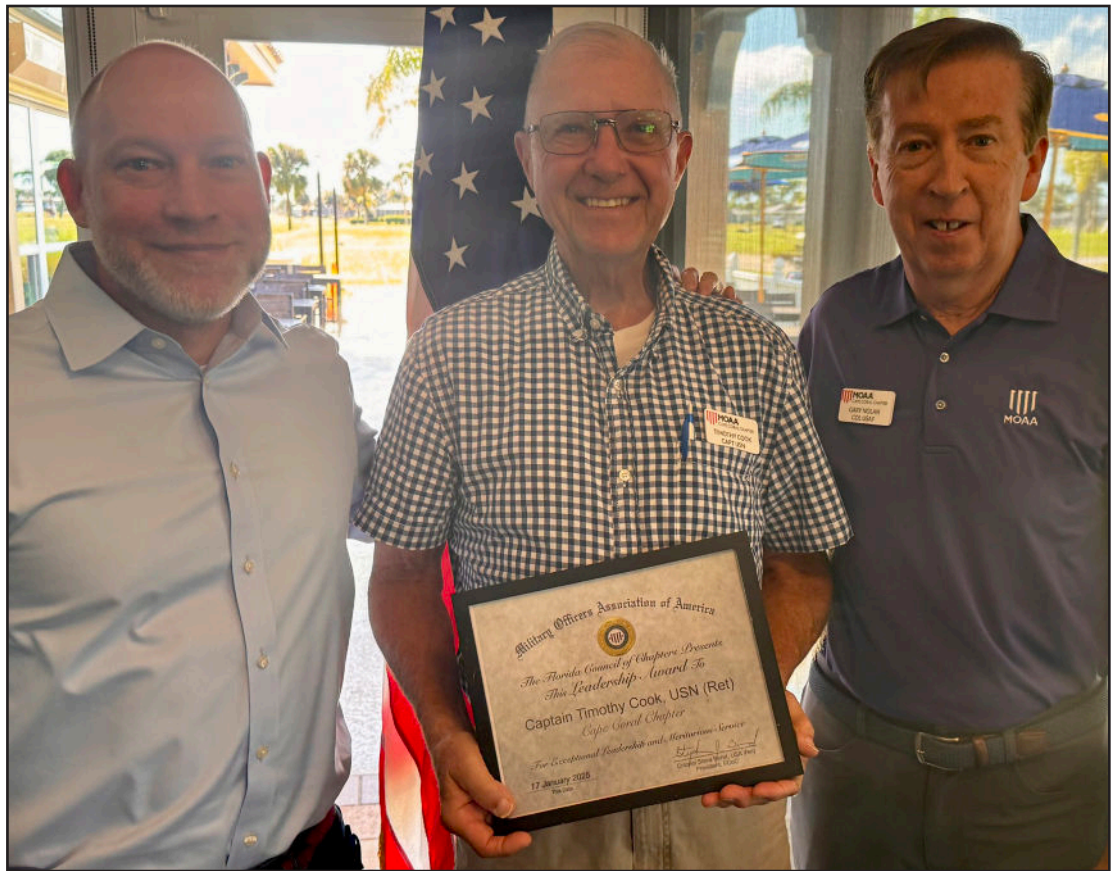
FIVE STARS
Chapter Excellence
Award

2006, 2008, 2009,
2010, 2011, 2012, 2018,
2019, 2020, 2023 &
2024

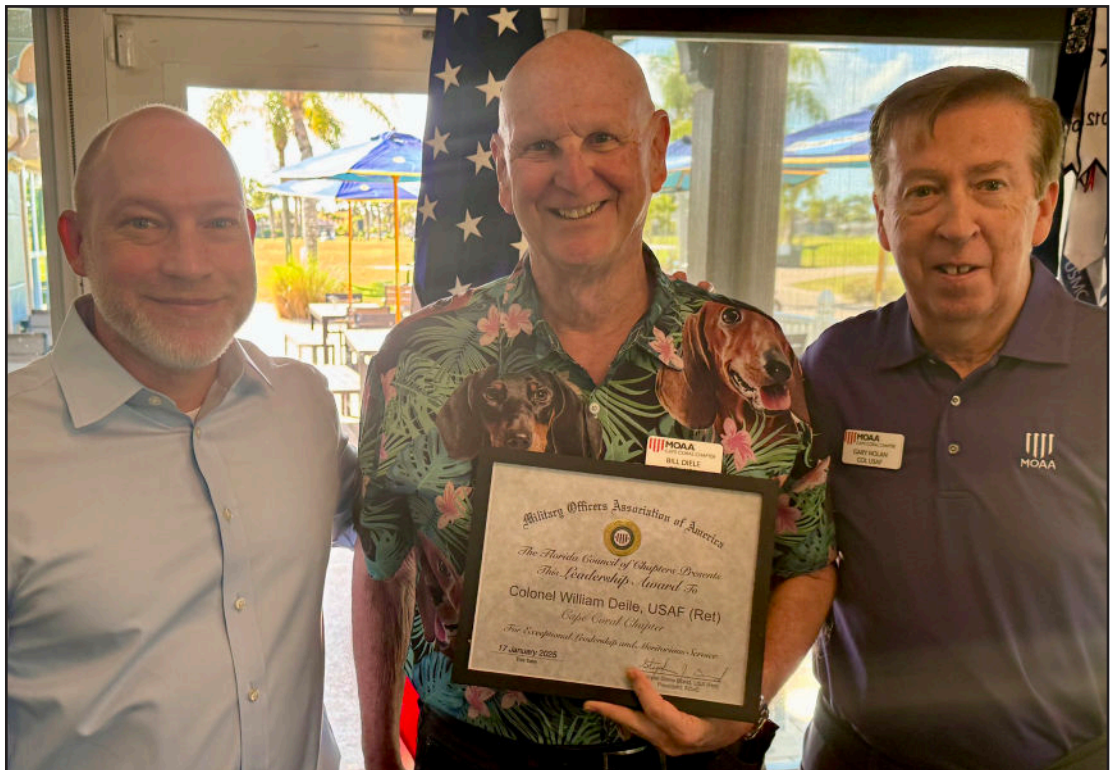


FOUR STARS
Chapter Excellence
Award

2005, 2007, 2013,
2016, 2017 & 2021



Cape Coral MOAA President and Florida Council of Chapters SW Area Vice President Gary Nolan (right) presents a Florida Council of Chapters Leadership Award to CAPT Tim Cook, US Navy (Ret) for exceptional leadership and meritorious Service. At left is Former Florida Rep. Spencer Roach who spoke at the February meeting.



Cape Coral MOAA President and Florida Council of Chapters SW Area Vice President Gary Nolan (right) presents a Florida Council of Chapters Leadership Award to COL Bill Deile, US Army (Ret) for exceptional leadership and meritorious Service. At left is Former Florida Rep. Spencer Roach who spoke at the February meeting.

Former Rep. Spencer Roach tells what to watch for in legislature

After six years in the Florida House of Representatives, outgoing state legislator Spencer Roach spoke to the Cape Coral MOAA members at their Feb. 8 breakfast meeting, reflecting on his political career, discussing key legislative issues, and sharing insights on Florida's evolving political landscape.

In a candid and often humorous address, Roach covered everything from his grassroots campaign experiences to the contentious battle for power between the governor and the state legislature.

A Look Back

Roach, who opted not to seek re-election despite being eligible for another term, spoke about the challenges and accomplishments of his tenure. He highlighted his work on government transparency, higher education reform, and improvements to Florida's foster care system. Over the course of his time in office, Roach passed 19 bills that were signed into law and secured nearly \$40 million in funding for his district.

"I wanted to leave office the same way I came in—with my integrity intact, my conscience clear, and my heart full," Roach said, expressing gratitude for the support he received throughout his time in public service.



He also recounted memorable moments from his early days in politics, including a humorous door-knocking story.

Roach was out knocking on doors, campaigning in Lehigh Acres, and if someone wasn't home, he would leave a card on the doorknob, noting that he had stopped by the house. The card also had his phone number on it if the constituent wanted to talk.

Later, on a rainy Sunday morning, he had settled down for a cup of coffee and to read the newspaper when his phone rang. It was a man in Lehigh who was calling about the card Roach left on his door.

"And he said, 'Mr. Roach, you stopped by my door last week and you left a card. And the way that I'm looking at this is I am your employer and you're asking for a job. You want me

to hire you to be my state representative and I want to conduct an interview of my perspective employee.' And I said, okay, that's fair, when would you like to do that?," Roach said.

"He said, 'Well, let's do it today at 11 o'clock.' I said, okay."

So, Roach said he got dressed and drove about 45 minutes in a monsoon rainstorm out to the man's house in east Lehigh.

"When I got there, I knocked and he comes to the door. He just looked mean. He had his shirt off, massive beer belly, and he

had one of these ZZ Top beards that went down to his belly button . . . and these steely eyes," Roach said. "He looked at me and said, 'Mr. Roach, what time was our meeting?' I said, it was at 11 o'clock, and he said, 'And what time is it now?' I looked at my watch and said, 'it's 11:02.' He then said, 'Well, I'm real sorry, you're late. And he slams the door in my face.'"

"So, I drove all the way home in a rain storm. I was just so ticked off," Roach said "About six weeks later, I get a phone call. And again, it was early in the morning, 'Do you know who this is?' I knew right away. He said, 'Well, I've been following in the news, I've been getting your mail and I've decided that I'm gonna cast my vote for you.' And I said, 'Well, that's great. Thank
(Continued on next page)

Speaker Report (continued)

(Continued from previous page) you. But if you don't mind me asking, given the nature of our first interaction, what was it that helped win you over?" Then he said, "Well, I always like to vote for the common man. And your about as common as they come."

The Future of Florida Politics

Roach devoted a significant portion of his speech to upcoming political battles in Florida, particularly the anticipated 2026 gubernatorial race. He predicted that Congressman Byron Donalds would enter the race, setting off a competitive fight for his congressional seat. He also speculated on the potential candidacy of Casey DeSantis, the wife of Governor Ron DeSantis, and noted how the race could become even more complicated if additional high-profile candidates such as former U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz or Ag Commissioner Wilton Simpson enter the field.

"If Donalds and Gaetz split the MAGA vote, that could create an opening for Casey DeSantis," Roach suggested, emphasizing the political intrigue surrounding the race.

Single member districts

On a local level, Roach stated that one of the hot-topics to watch is the debate over single-member districts for the Lee County Commission, explaining the arguments both for and against on both sides but ultimately stating that if the issue makes it to the ballot, it's an issue for the voters to decide.

"The question is not whether single-member districts are a

good or bad idea," Roach said. "The question is: who gets to decide? I believe Lee County voters should have that opportunity."

"Anywhere in the state that this has been put on the ballot, it has passed overwhelmingly," Roach said. "So, every historical precedent points to the fact the likelihood that if it's on the ballot, it will pass here.

That's not a guarantee, but that's what history shows us."

Roach said the way it is now, someone running for county commission can lose in his or her district, but get enough votes from other districts to win a seat. That might not sit well with the voters in the candidate's home district.

"Opponents of single-member districts argue that if you are taking away someone's right to vote for who they want to, in many ways that seems like an infringement rather than an expansion of your rights," he said. "Right now, you have five commissioners who can vote to tax you. You get to vote for or against every one of them. But if your power is diluted by one-fifth, now you get to vote for only one of the five. Many people are saying that that's a restriction of your rights, not an expansion."

With about 830,000 people living in Lee County, it can also



Cape Coral MOAA President Gary Nolan presents a MOAA Tervis mug to former Rep. Spencer Roach in appreciation for speaking at the February meeting.

be very expensive to run for at-large seats, compared to running only in one's own district, Roach said. "If you are running county-wide, you really need a million dollars at a minimum to be an effective candidate," he added.

A Legislative Fight Over Power

A key point of Roach's discussion centered on the ongoing struggle between the Florida Legislature and Governor Ron DeSantis. According to Roach, the legislature has begun to assert its independence after years of deferring to the governor's authority. He cited the recent veto override by lawmakers—an act of defiance not seen in six years—as a sign of shifting power dynamics.

"This fight is not really about policy; it's about politics and who will control the levers of state power over the next two years," Roach explained. He noted that DeSantis' failed
(Continued on next page)

Speaker Report (continued)

(Continued from previous page) presidential bid has weakened his political standing, making it an opportune moment for legislative leaders to reclaim influence.

Roach advised both sides to focus on policy rather than personal attacks, warning that infighting could harm the party and state governance.

Property Insurance Crisis

One of the issues Roach was most passionate about was Florida's ongoing property insurance crisis. He criticized the state's handling of insurance policies and expressed frustration over the legislature's reluctance to take more aggressive action.

"The average homeowner's insurance premium has increased 103 percent in the last four years—that's insane," Roach said. "The state of Florida has failed you on this issue."

Roach proposed a bipartisan bill that would have allowed all Floridians to purchase windstorm insurance through Citizens Property Insurance, turning it from the "insurer of last resort" to the "insurer of first resort." He cited Texas and California as examples of states that had successfully implemented similar measures.

While the bill did not pass, Roach vowed to continue advocating for reform, calling out what he viewed as an exploitative system where insurance companies take premiums but often fail to pay out claims.

Roach said he had about \$125,000 in damages to his home after Hurricane Ian,

and his insurance company, UPC, went bankrupt. "When I filed a claim with them, they said, 'We're sorry, Mr. Roach, we're going bankrupt; we don't have enough money to pay your claim or those of thousands of others. We're leaving the State of Florida. Good luck, Sir.' So, you know how much they wrote me a check for? \$600. That is wrong. That is criminal," Roach stated emphatically.

Life After Politics

Now that he has stepped away from public office, Roach is focused on writing a book about his political experiences, which will include behind-the-scenes stories on major legislative battles, including the controversy surrounding Disney and Florida's higher education system.

"I originally planned to focus the book just on campaign stories, but now I'm expanding it to include my time in government," he said.

In addition to writing, Roach has been filling in as a guest host on a local talk radio and is actively searching for his next career move. He humorously

recounted how an algorithm on LinkedIn suggested he apply for a position as Director of Public Relations for the Obama Foundation, a job he doubted he was the best fit for.

"I'm keeping an open mind and casting a wide net," he said. "But when I get down to my last pack of ramen noodles, I'll know it's time to take whatever job comes my way."

A Final Thank You

Before concluding his speech, Roach expressed deep appreciation for those who supported him, even those outside his immediate district.

"I want to thank you all—not just those who voted for me, but those who prayed for me, wrote checks for my campaign, and encouraged me every step of the way."

As he moves on from elected office, Roach remains engaged in Florida politics, keeping a close eye on the key battles that will shape the state's future. Whether through radio, writing, or another form of public service, it is clear that Spencer Roach is not stepping away from the conversation anytime soon.



A PATHWAY FOR PATRIOTS

HopeNavigators@fdva.fl.gov

833-GET-HOPE

FDVA Hope Navigators have been deployed in hurricane impacted areas helping to bring normalcy to those in need. Hope Florida brings together the vast resources of our community to create a seamless network of support. When you call (833) GET HOPE, you'll be connected to a caring Hope Navigator, ready to guide you on an individualized pathway to achieve prosperity, economic self-sufficiency and hope. Hope Florida serves our state's Veterans among many others.

How MOAA plans to build momentum in the 119th Congress

By: Brenden McMahon
(A version of this article originally appeared in the February 2025 issue of *Military Officer*, a magazine available to all MOAA Premium and Life members. Learn more about the magazine [here](#); learn more about joining MOAA [here](#).)

MOAA remains poised to advocate for servicemembers, veterans, and retirees and their families and survivors in its work with the 119th Congress over the next two years. This work directly protects benefits that members and their families rely on, from health care coverage to retirement pay and support for military families.

Without strong advocacy, these critical benefits could face reductions or limitations. MOAA's efforts ensure members have a voice on Capitol Hill, influencing lawmakers to prioritize policies that sustain their quality of life.

To build momentum early in the legislative session, MOAA will host a welcome reception in the first quarter of 2025, connecting with new and returning lawmakers to share its priorities. This event is more than a formality — it's the foundation for fostering relationships that will carry our advocacy efforts forward.

Why This Congress Matters

The 119th Congress began with 100 lawmakers holding military experience, the largest number in eight years and an increase of



three members over the previous session. Of these, 32 began their military service after January 2000 (including former Ohio Sen. JD Vance, who resigned his seat Jan. 10 to become vice president), and 37 others spent part of their careers serving after that date (including former Rep. Mike Waltz, who retired from Congress Jan. 20 to serve as President Donald Trump's national security adviser).

This shift underscores a generational change, with more members of Congress bringing post-9/11 military experience to the legislative process. This change is significant for two reasons. First, it indicates that a new wave of leaders with firsthand military experience is shaping the legislative agenda. Second, it highlights how voters increasingly value military service as a qualification for leadership.

These dynamics present opportunities for MOAA to connect with lawmakers who might have a deeper understanding of the challenges

servicemembers and their families face. By working with these legislators, MOAA can better advocate for priorities that resonate with their lived experiences.

The Legislative Landscape

Congress operates in a challenging environment, with an increasing number of bills, fewer floor votes, and a growing reliance on omnibus packages. Hyperpartisan politics and fiscal constraints further complicate the path to meaningful legislation.

For MOAA's members, these trends matter because they affect how and when critical decisions on benefits, pay, and support systems are made. Without vigilance, smaller but impactful changes — like TRICARE fees and pay caps — could erode the benefits members have earned.

MOAA's strategy is built to adapt to this environment. By remaining nonpartisan and focusing on collaboration across party lines, MOAA ensures its priorities are not sidelined by political gridlock. This approach is key to navigating today's legislative hurdles and delivering results for members.

Key Advocacy Topics

Learn More: MOAA's Legislative Priorities for the 119th Congress

MOAA's top-tier priorities for 2025 reflect the pressing needs of its constituencies:

- Currently serving: Improving
- (Continued on next page)

MOAA Legislative Affairs *(continued)*

(Continued from previous page)

military housing to support readiness and quality of life.

- Retirees/veterans: Advancing the MOAA/Disabled American Veterans (DAV)-authored report [Ending the Wait for Toxic-Exposed Veterans](#) to ensure timely delivery of earned benefits.

- Family/survivors: Passing the Military Spouse Hiring Act to expand employment opportunities.

- DoD health care: Enhancing stability and accountability in the military health system.

- VA health care: Improving caregiving support for veterans' families.

These issues directly affect MOAA members and their families, from housing conditions to access to health care. Advocacy on these topics ensures critical support systems remain robust and accessible.

Enduring Priorities and Redline Issues

Enduring priorities are long-term goals that remain important to MOAA's advocacy mission, requiring sustained attention across legislative sessions. Redline issues arise when a service-earned benefit is threatened by actions from Congress, the executive branch, or other federal entities.

In such cases, MOAA immediately shifts focus, elevating the issue to a top-tier priority to ensure swift and effective advocacy that protects servicemembers, retirees, and veterans and their families.

[\[NEW CONGRESS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES: Sign Up for MOAA's Legislative Action Center\]](#)



MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, USAF (Ret), takes part in a visit to Sen. Jerry Moran's office on April 17 during MOAA's Advocacy in Action event. Moran will serve as chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee in the 119th Congress. (Photo by Sean Shanahan/for MOAA)

Adapting to New Leadership

With shifts in chamber control, MOAA's advocacy must remain dynamic. The association will focus on building relationships with key committees:

- House: These include Veterans' Affairs, Armed Services, Appropriations Defense and Military Construction-VA subcommittees, and Ways and Means.

- Senate: Veterans' Affairs, Armed Services, Appropriations Defense and Military Construction-VA subcommittees, and Finance.

These committees play critical roles in advancing MOAA's priorities, from funding key programs to addressing policy changes.

Advocacy Actions

MOAA's early efforts in 2025 will prioritize education and engagement. The welcome reception is designed to provide an opportunity to introduce lawmakers to MOAA's mission

and share materials like the Ending the Wait report.

Initial outreach through letters and meetings will ensure legislators understand the stakes and align with MOAA's priorities.

The Importance of Member Engagement

MOAA's advocacy is only as strong as its members. By staying informed and participating in campaigns in our Legislative Action Center, members amplify MOAA's voice on Capitol Hill. The spring 2025 advocacy event, Advocacy in Action, will be a critical opportunity for members to engage directly with lawmakers and push for progress on key issues.

Protecting benefits is not just MOAA's mission — it's a shared responsibility with its members. Together, this partnership ensures those who serve and their families continue to receive the support they have earned.

Top enlisted Marine talks barracks improvements with MOAA

By MOAA Staff

Much-needed improvements to unaccompanied housing top the list of [MOAA's legislative priorities for the 119th Congress](#) for a reason: Unwelcoming (and unhealthy) conditions in barracks and other single-servicemember housing, thanks largely to underfunded building and maintenance budgets, create serious concerns for the sustainability of the all-volunteer force.

But MOAA is far from the only organization pressing for such improvements and looking to rededicate DoD efforts and reprioritize funds to support junior enlisted members.

“What took us so long to wake up ... to say that things are not OK?” said Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Carlos Ruiz during a recent interview at MOAA headquarters in Alexandria, Va. “I think the years of combat, the years of the back and forth ... we’re not going to apologize for investing in the platforms and things you needed to win in the fight. There were choices made with the budgets that we had then, and then here we are and it’s time to make a choice for the future.

“And the commandant has steadily maintained that his No. 1 priority is the ... individual Marine, and where they live.”

In a wide-ranging interview, Ruiz offered insight into the [Marines' Barracks 2030 initiative](#), outlined some pilot programs underway to improve the unaccompanied housing experience, and discussed other ways the Marine Corps is working “the best we can as fast as we can ... for the generations to

come.”

Along with work to address maintenance backlogs, Ruiz stressed the need to modernize facilities – a difficult assignment when the time between design and build can be a decade or longer. But technological advancements must be factored into these improvements, he noted, to keep pace with the ever-evolving needs of the force. One example: The need for advanced wireless internet capabilities.

“In my day, we used to have huge classrooms with a bunch of computers – you would go and do your courses. ... Those things don’t exist anymore,” Ruiz said. “But we’re still tasking the Marine to do all of those courses.”

Ruiz took over as the top enlisted Marine in August 2023, about 30 years after joining the Corps.

Getting Housing Right

MOAA looks forward to working with stakeholders like Ruiz to coordinate work between the services, lawmakers, and fellow advocacy groups to improve the quality of life for all who serve and their families. Unaccompanied housing has been a concern for decades, but



Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Carlos Ruiz visited MOAA headquarters in Alexandria, Va., on Feb. 11 to discuss the Marine Corps' Barracks 2030 initiative and other people-focused programs. (Photo by Mike Morones/MOAA)

was brought into focus by a [2023 Government Accountability Office report](#) outlining health and safety issues, transparency concerns, and a maintenance backlog of \$137 billion.

In the coming weeks, MOAA will outline its plans for addressing this critical concern as part of our spring Advocacy in Action campaign. Members will be able to raise the issue with their lawmakers, ensuring it does not fall off the radar among competing priorities and that those who serve will see real improvements to housing conditions ... with real accountability to ensure these changes are funded and executed.

Visit MOAA's Advocacy News page for more on this and other top legislative priorities.

2026 retiree pay adjustment trending toward five-year low

By: Kevin Lilley

After near-record raises in the early 2020s, the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) received by military retirees, VA disability and Social Security recipients, and others receiving certain federal compensation is on track to continue a recent downward trend.

An early prediction estimates an increase of 2.1% for the 2026 calendar year – lower than the 2.5% increase for this year and well off the previous two annual adjustments (8.7% and 5.9%), which came in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those figures represented the largest two-year increase in the formula used to calculate Social Security COLA since the early 1980s, when inflation led to double-digit increases. Military retiree COLA was calculated under a different formula at that time and did not reach those levels.

[\[RELATED: MOAA's COLA Watch\]](#)

The calculation relies on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), but only data from the final three months of the fiscal year (July, August, and September) are used – to determine the upcoming increase and to set a baseline for the next year. While this measurement differs from the CPI often cited in media reports, projections for the U.S. inflation rate point to a final figure around 2% over several years.

Why MOAA Tracks COLA

Projected rates may help retirees plan their financial future, but MOAA's main priority regarding



COLA continues to be protecting the value of service-earned benefits. Without this annual increase, retiree pay (and VA disability benefits) would fall behind rising prices – and recipients wouldn't be getting the value they deserve.

This isn't a recent fight for MOAA: The Military Coalition (TMC), a group of advocacy organizations representing about 5.5 million members of the wider uniformed services community, was founded in response to COLA threats in the mid-1980s. More recently, MOAA and TMC successfully overturned the "COLA minus 1 percent" provision passed in a 2013 continuing resolution.

While no active legislation

points to a COLA reduction, a Congressional Budget Office report on reducing the budget released every two years again suggested a new COLA calculation: Using "Chained CPI" would save the government \$278 billion over 10 years, per the report ... which doesn't mention that the money would be taken out of the pockets of military retirees and Social Security recipients, among others.

MOAA will continue to monitor any movement on this budget option or other proposals which would result in a COLA reduction. Keep up with the latest on this and other key advocacy issues via The MOAA Newsletter or by visiting our [advocacy news page](#).

ACCESS Act would expand veterans' community care options

By: *Kevin Lilley*

The Veterans' Assuring Critical Care Expansions to Support Servicemembers (ACCESS) Act of 2025 ([S. 275](#) | [H.R. 740](#)), introduced in the Senate by Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) and in the House by Rep. Mike Bost (R-Ill.), would codify standards for veterans to receive community-based care:

- Veterans who cannot be provided by the VA with a primary care, mental health care, or extended care appointment within a 30-minute drive or within 20 days (or shorter, as prescribed by the VA secretary).
- Veterans who cannot be provided by the VA with a specialty care appointment with an hour's drive or within 28 days (or shorter, per the VA secretary).

The bill also requires the VA to create a "standardized screening process" for veterans to participate in mental health treatment programs, craft a three-year pilot program allowing veterans to access mental health and/or substance abuse programs in the community without a referral, and establish tracking on wait times and care availability for mental health programs, among other improvements.

"MOAA thanks Chairmen Moran and Bost for introducing the Veterans' Assuring Critical Care Expansions to Support Servicemembers (ACCESS) Act at a critical time for veterans'



Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) speaks during a 2022 press conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. (Mike Morones/MOAA)

mental health care," said Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), president and CEO of MOAA. "More work is needed to expand mental health and substance use treatment in communities, especially rural areas where VA services are limited. We look forward to collaborating with the Veterans' Affairs Committees and urge close cooperation with VSOs and stakeholders during the legislative process."

The bill also would require the VA to:

- Prepare a series of reports to Congress regarding community care access, including the appeals process for veterans who are denied community care.
- Coordinate with veterans service organizations and

other stakeholders on possible improvements to the clinical appeals process.

- Make veterans aware of telehealth options, but prevent the department from using telehealth in place of the community care standards outlined above.

The bill is one of many addressing veterans' care and benefits either already introduced in the 119th Congress or under consideration on Capitol Hill. MOAA will continue its work to ensure veterans receive the care they've earned and the VA receives the resources it needs to continue providing that care. Follow and take part in these efforts by registering at MOAA's [Legislative Action Center](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Cape Coral MOAA Board Meeting

10 a.m.
Thursday, March 6
Cape Royal
Golf Club
All members are welcome



About CCMOAA

*Serving All Military,
Veterans, & their families
in the Cape Coral area
... and beyond!*

Members of the Cape Coral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, P.O. Box 100508, Cape Coral, FL 33910-0508, publish the Cape Coral Communicator monthly, except June, July and August. The Chapter is a non-profit, non-partisan, and tax-exempt IRS 501(c)(3) and a 501(c)(19) organization, affiliated with National MOAA and the Florida Chapter of Councils, MOAA, not associated with the Department of Defense. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of MOAA, the Florida Council of Chapters, this Chapter, or DOD.

MARCH Calendar of Events

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3 <i>Navy Reserve Birthday (1915)</i>	4 <i>National Hug A G.I. Day</i>	5 <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	6 <i>CCMOAA Board Meeting</i>	7	8 <i>CCMOAA Breakfast Meeting</i>
9 <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins (Spring Ahead)</i>	10	11	12	13 <i>K-9 Veterans Day</i>	14	15
16	17 <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>	18	19	20 <i>Spring Equinox</i>	21	22
23	24	25 <i>National Medal of Honor Day</i>	26	27	28	29 <i>Vietnam Veterans Day</i>
30	31					

Military Health System beneficiaries urged to download old medical records by April 1

The Department of Defense (DoD) is advising beneficiaries of the Military Health System to download their past medical records before April 1, as the online portal previously used for accessing this information is set to be discontinued.

With the completion of the transition to the MHS Genesis electronic health record system, the Tricare Online Patient Portal will no longer be available after the deadline. Although healthcare providers will still have access to patients' records, individuals will no longer be able to retrieve them online. Military officials are encouraging beneficiaries to secure copies of their personal medical histories before the system is decommissioned.

"All military hospitals and clinics have successfully transitioned to MHS Genesis. We strongly encourage you to save your personal health records before the Tricare Online portal is deactivated," stated Rear Adm. Tracy Farrill, an expert in electronic health records at the Defense Health Agency (DHA).

Patients who receive care at military treatment facilities can download their medical records by logging into www.tricareonline.com using a DS Logon, Common Access Card, or myPay credentials. After signing in, they should navigate to the "Health Record" section, where they can access their data and follow instructions for downloading. The records can be saved as a PDF or XML file, allowing them to be shared with other healthcare providers or institutions.

However, the availability of records may vary. The completeness of a patient's digital medical history depends on when they first joined the military health system and when their assigned facility transitioned to digital recordkeeping. Some records may only be available from the period after their respective treatment center adopted an electronic system.

The migration to MHS Genesis, finalized between 2017 and 2024, does not integrate older electronic or paper records into the new system. However, military healthcare providers will still have access to previous records for patient care, according to DHA spokesperson Brenda Campbell.

The DoD awarded a contract to Cerner, now part of Oracle Health, in 2015 to develop an integrated electronic health records system compatible with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Today, MHS Genesis is operational at 138 military hospitals and clinics, as well as over 3,600 other DoD healthcare facilities worldwide.

The VA adopted a similar system in 2018, later renaming it the Federal Electronic Health Records System. However, the VA required that legacy records be uploaded into its new system, which has led to various technical challenges. To date, the system has only been implemented at six VA facilities, with further rollout efforts expected to resume in the future.

For dependents, parents can still view and download medical records for children under 12. However, for minors aged 12 to 17, only limited information—such as flu and COVID-19 test results, allergies, vital



Service member from the 59th Medical Support Squadron Medical Records Department checks released medical records at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, March 25, 2021. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Melody Bordeaux)

signs, and immunization records—will be accessible online. Teens in this age group can request copies of their medical records directly from their military treatment facility, while parents can obtain printed copies from healthcare providers if needed.

For adult dependents aged 18 and older, parents will not be able to access records on their behalf. These individuals must log into the system themselves using a DS Logon to retrieve their medical history. Alternatively, paper or electronic copies of records can still be requested from military hospitals or clinics.

According to Tricare officials, the portal shutdown will not affect service members' ability to file claims with the VA, as healthcare providers will continue to have full access to medical histories.

To ensure continued access to their medical history, the DHA strongly urges patients to download and securely store their records ahead of the April 1 deadline.

Air Force, Congressional focus grows in ongoing missileer cancer study

Editor's note: This article by Thomas Novelty originally appeared on Military.com, a leading source of news for the military and veteran community.

Investigations into potential toxic exposures of those who work with America's nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles are reaching some of the highest levels of government and the Department of the Air Force, service officials said.

During a town hall meeting updating veterans, family members and current airmen about the ongoing health study into potential links between cancer diagnoses and working with nuclear missiles, Gen. Thomas Bussiere, head of Air Force Global Strike Command, told attendees that acting Air Force Secretary Gary Ashworth and lawmakers have inquired about the investigation.

Ashworth is a former missile combat crew commander for the Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile, or ICBM, according to his service biography.

"The congressional interest and support for this effort has not waned; it's actually increased," Bussiere said. "In fact, on the third day in office as the acting secretary of the Air Force, acting Secretary Ashworth requested an update on this study, literally in his third day in the seat."

"You not only have the interest, continued interest, in the uniformed members in the Department of the Air Force, you have the interest and attention of our senior acting political appointees," Bussiere added.

[\[RELATED: VA Eases Benefits Rules for Cancers From Post-9/11 Service, K2 Tours\]](#)

Lt. Col. John Severns, a spokesperson for Air Force Global Strike Command, told Military.com that delegations from the states that house America's ICBM bases -- Montana, North Dakota and Wyoming -- have also expressed interest in the study.

Thursday's town hall is just the latest during the Air Force's likely yearslong

health and environmental study. The most recent revelations included information from the National Death Index, a centralized database of death records, that "did not identify statistically elevated mortality" among the missile community, a memo summarizing the study said.

Officials said there is still more information to digest. The next phase of the study will evaluate state cancer registries and a larger pool of data from across the country that "may provide deeper insights into the complex relationship between service in the [missile community] and cancer risk," the memo explaining the latest findings detailed.

"Additionally, efforts to promote health and wellness initiatives tailored to the unique needs of the [missile community] remain crucial in mitigating overall health risks, including cancer, within this community," the memo added.

A widespread study into cancer worries among America's nuclear missile service members began in 2023 when a Space Force Guardian and former missileer compiled a report detailing alarming numbers of non-Hodgkin lymphoma cases among those who served at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana.

The first phase of the study, involving initial data from Department of Defense medical records, showed elevated breast and prostate cancer rates, but broadening the investigation with additional data from the mortality index, as well as Department of Veterans Affairs electronic records and cancer registries, began to show lower



Missileers from the 91st Missile Wing perform their duties at Minot Air Force Base, N.D. (Air Force photo)

rates.

Military.com reported on the worries among current and former missileers and maintainers in a series supported by the Pulitzer Center in which the newsroom revealed that small studies in the 2000s did not thoroughly investigate the concerns in that community as members began to worry that the chemicals they had been exposed to in missile silos had resulted in their cancer diagnoses and other illnesses.

Many of those service members and their families have started to fight for VA benefits, and some have been successful in those claims, Military.com reported.

The Air Force has made changes since the study began, including more frequent workplace inspections, better tracking of potentially toxic exposures, and more in-depth cleaning.

Air Force officials said during the town hall Thursday that a cleaning contract related to polychlorinated biphenyls -- carcinogens known as PCBs that are prevalent in the Cold War-era facilities -- that were detected in some of the Air Force facilities would be in place as soon as next week, pending final approval from the Environmental Protection Agency.

"We're not done, but we continue to move forward deliberately in this process," Bussiere said during the town hall

DoD Secretary Hegseth defends budget reforms and staff changes

Hegseth Defends Budget Reforms and Staffing Changes as Military Strengthening Measures

On February 20, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth reaffirmed that planned reductions in staff and adjustments to the defense budget are necessary to refocus military efforts on national security priorities. In a video statement released Thursday evening, he asserted that these changes would ultimately result in the most formidable military force in the world.

Hegseth pushed back against critics who have framed the restructuring as harmful to the military, stating that the initiative is about strategic reinvestment rather than budget cuts. He emphasized that President Donald Trump remains committed to bolstering military resources in alignment with his campaign promises to increase defense funding.

“Starting immediately, we are reallocating approximately 8%, or \$50 billion, from the previous administration’s budget plan,” Hegseth stated. “This is not a cut—it’s a shift away from non-essential programs so that we can direct those funds toward the president’s key defense priorities.”

The announcement follows a statement from acting Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Salesses on February 19, confirming that military agencies had been instructed to reduce their fiscal 2026 budget proposals by 8%. The original defense budget was projected to exceed \$850 billion. Lawmakers have raised concerns that this reduction could extend annually for the next five years.

However, Hegseth reassured

the public that any financial savings from these adjustments would be redirected within the defense budget to ensure that essential programs—such as border security, nuclear modernization, cybersecurity, submarine procurement, and core military training—remain fully funded.

“This is a win for both taxpayers and national security,” Hegseth stated.

Additionally, he acknowledged the involvement of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), which has been leading efforts to streamline federal agencies by reducing workforce redundancies. While Hegseth confirmed that cuts to civilian staff within the Department of Defense are forthcoming, he insisted that these measures would enhance operational efficiency without undermining military readiness.

“Our focus is on ensuring that every role in the department serves a critical function,” Hegseth explained. “The American people deserve accountability in government spending, and we are committed to identifying areas of redundancy while retaining a highly capable workforce.”

Hegseth noted that the initial phase of workforce reductions would target underperforming probationary employees. However,



prior workforce reduction efforts in other federal agencies have emphasized job seniority over performance-based evaluations. He also stressed that the military would continue hiring and rewarding high-performing individuals who contribute directly to mission success.

Although Hegseth did not take questions from the media following the release of his statement, he did not directly address speculation about potential dismissals of senior military officials believed to have ties to the previous administration.

These defense reforms signal a major shift in resource allocation, with the goal of maintaining military superiority while ensuring that taxpayer funds are utilized effectively.

Elon Musk's team begins work at Pentagon amid concerns over access

Elon Musk's government efficiency team has arrived at the Pentagon, marking another step in its widespread involvement across federal agencies. However, as of Feb. 19, the team had yet to gain access to the military's extensive systems and classified data.

According to a defense official speaking on condition of anonymity, members of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) were in the process of onboarding, which included setting up IT access. Musk's team, composed primarily of young technology experts, has already gained entry to federal databases containing sensitive personal data, implemented agency downsizing without congressional approval, and sparked at least 11 lawsuits.

Musk and President Donald Trump have framed these efforts as part of broader cost-cutting measures, but critics have raised concerns over the lack of transparency and oversight, leaving questions about how sensitive information is being protected and whether these actions comply with legal standards. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth expressed optimism about Musk's involvement, stating last week that he believed DOGE could identify "billions of dollars" in savings within the military. Reports from Friday confirmed that DOGE officials had begun their first meetings at the Pentagon.

At this time, it remains unclear what level of access DOGE will be granted within the Department of Defense (DoD). The administration has not disclosed specifics regarding Musk's permissions at other agencies, and President Trump has largely dismissed concerns about potential conflicts of interest related to Musk's business ties to the federal



government.

The DoD, which operates with an annual budget of approximately \$850 billion, is the largest federal agency and oversees some of the most sensitive aspects of U.S. national security. It employs over 2 million service members and manages extensive domestic and overseas military operations, bases, and programs.

Amid the DOGE team's introduction at the Pentagon, The Washington Post reported on Feb. 19 that Hegseth had instructed the department to devise a plan for reducing defense spending by 8% annually over the next five years.

Musk's budget reduction initiatives have already resulted in major agency cutbacks, particularly at organizations such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which were significantly downsized. These drastic measures have led to multiple legal challenges and raised concerns regarding their constitutionality.

Another critical issue surrounding Musk's involvement at the Pentagon is how his team will handle conflicts of interest. Musk's businesses, particularly SpaceX, have received substantial funding

from government contracts.

Since 2015, SpaceX has secured approximately \$17 billion in federal contracts, with more than \$5 billion coming directly from the Defense Department. The Air Force has been a major recipient of SpaceX's services, particularly for space launch missions.

Despite these apparent conflicts, neither Hegseth nor Trump have publicly addressed concerns about Musk's influence over Pentagon operations. The possibility of a major defense contractor being allowed access to military data and budgetary decisions has raised alarms among critics, but the administration has maintained that Musk's involvement does not pose a problem.

In a recent Fox News interview with Sean Hannity, Musk dismissed concerns, simply stating, "I'll recuse myself." Trump reinforced Musk's statement, assuring the public that there would be no conflict of interest, though he did not explain how oversight would be implemented or why Congress was not being consulted.

Neither Musk nor Trump indicated that any independent entity would verify the integrity of these budgetary decisions. However, Trump did allude to potential benefits for Musk's electric vehicle company, Tesla, by mentioning possible reductions in federal subsidies for electric vehicles.

Despite Musk's claims of transparency, the White House confirmed last week that he will not be filing a public financial disclosure. This decision means that the full scope of his financial interests will remain undisclosed, further intensifying scrutiny over his role in shaping government spending decisions.

House Armed Services leaders request military to identify possible budget cuts

The leaders of the House Armed Services Committee have formally asked military branches to review their programs and identify areas where funding reductions could be made as Congress begins drafting its annual defense policy bill.

In a letter sent on February 14, 2025, Committee Chairman Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Ala.) and ranking member Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.) requested that the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Space Force assess which infrastructure, weapons systems, or programs are outdated, redundant, or could be made more efficient. The lawmakers set a deadline of March 1 for the services to present their findings, emphasizing that reallocating resources would help align spending with national defense priorities.

“By identifying these areas, we can ensure that resources are directed toward initiatives that enhance deterrence and support the National Defense Strategy,” Rogers and Smith wrote.

This request aligns with ongoing efforts by President Donald Trump and Elon Musk’s government efficiency team to streamline federal operations and reduce agency budgets. It also coincides with a push by congressional Republicans to increase defense spending by at least \$100 billion over the next decade.

Each year, the House and Senate Armed Services Committees craft the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), a critical piece of legislation that establishes budgetary and policy guidelines for the Department of Defense. With a workforce of approximately 3 million military personnel and civilian employees and an annual budget exceeding \$850 billion, the Pentagon remains a focal point for discussions on financial efficiency



and national security investments.

Rogers and Smith underscored the need to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent effectively, stating, “We remain committed to cutting waste, improving procurement processes, and ensuring that every defense dollar maximizes value for the American people and our military forces.”

Their letter came shortly after the House Budget Committee endorsed a fiscal framework that, if passed by Congress, would direct the House Armed Services Committee to develop legislation increasing defense funding by \$100 billion over the next ten years. Meanwhile, the Senate is advancing its own budget proposal, which calls for an additional \$150 billion in defense spending. Before any new spending measures can be implemented, both

chambers must reach an agreement on a final budget resolution.

Efforts to modify military spending have often met resistance in Congress, particularly when proposals involve phasing out older weapons systems, vehicles, and ships. Lawmakers have previously overridden military requests in favor of sustaining certain programs. For example, in December, Congress approved two Virginia-class attack submarines, despite the Navy’s request for only one, and authorized three Arleigh Burke-class destroyers when only two had been sought.

As the budget discussions continue, the committee’s request signals an effort to reassess military priorities and ensure that future investments align with evolving defense strategies and fiscal responsibility.

Republicans push for major defense spending increase over next decade

Congressional Republicans are advocating for a significant boost in defense spending, proposing at least \$100 billion in additional funding over the next ten years to strengthen the U.S. military and advance President Donald Trump's policy objectives.

Both the House and Senate are developing budget resolutions that would direct their respective Armed Services Committees to craft legislation outlining how the increased funds would be allocated. The Senate's proposal calls for a larger increase—\$150 billion—focusing on expanding naval capabilities, modernizing strategic nuclear forces, enhancing missile defense systems, and fortifying the defense industrial base. Additionally, approximately \$20 billion would be allocated to bolster the Coast Guard. Meanwhile, the House Budget Committee has set a \$100 billion cap for defense spending increases, with deliberations set to continue this week.

These proposals align with broader Republican efforts to implement Trump's agenda, which includes tax cuts, securing the southern border, promoting energy independence, and increasing military strength. While the House aims to incorporate all these initiatives into a single bill, the Senate is considering handling tax cuts separately.

Key congressional leaders, including the chairs of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, have argued that increasing defense spending to 5% of the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) is necessary to counter



threats from China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran.

"We must invest in our national defense to deter, and if needed, defeat, emerging threats," said Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Ala.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. "Right now, defense spending as a share of GDP is at its lowest level since before World War II, and that is not enough to deter our adversaries."

Currently, U.S. military expenditures total more than \$800 billion per year, amounting to roughly 3% of GDP, according to a report from Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee. Wicker emphasized the need to restore military strength, referencing Trump's "peace through strength" philosophy. "We cannot afford to cut corners when it comes to equipping our service members with the resources they need," he stated.

The budget reconciliation process, which begins with these proposed resolutions, could allow Republicans to advance their

defense spending priorities with a simple majority vote in the Senate, bypassing the usual 60-vote threshold.

Democrats have voiced strong opposition, arguing that the proposed increases would significantly raise the national debt while cutting essential social programs. The House budget plan would raise the debt limit by \$4 trillion while aiming to reduce overall spending by \$2 trillion over the next decade. The Senate's approach includes an \$85.5 billion annual reduction in funding for non-defense programs, such as domestic energy initiatives and social

services.

Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.), a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, questioned the necessity of using the budget reconciliation process to raise military spending. "We have historically been able to approve supplemental defense funding on a bipartisan basis—this process is unnecessary," Kaine argued.

In contrast, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, defended the move, insisting that it was time to break the cycle of tying increased military spending to additional funding for non-defense programs. "We face unprecedented threats from China, Russia, and Iran, as well as terrorist organizations. We need to rebuild our military quickly and provide the Defense Department with the funding it needs," Graham said.

As debates continue, these budget proposals highlight the sharp divide in Congress over national security funding, fiscal responsibility, and broader policy priorities.

Dan ‘Razin’ Caine selected for chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

President Donald Trump has selected retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Dan Caine as his nominee for chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Caine, whose military call sign “Razin” first caught Trump’s attention during a meeting in Iraq, has been described by colleagues as a disciplined and apolitical leader.

Trump announced his decision on Feb. 21, sharing the news on social media while simultaneously dismissing Air Force Gen. CQ Brown Jr., who had held the position for 16 months. Brown’s removal, along with other high-ranking officials, is part of a broader effort by Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth to restructure military leadership, prioritizing combat readiness over diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Caine retired from the Air Force in December, raising questions about the process required to recall him to active duty for Senate confirmation. His selection is unconventional, as he does not meet traditional criteria for the role, such as serving as a combatant commander or service chief. However, a 1986 law allows the president to waive these requirements.

Former Acting Defense Secretary Chris Miller, who worked with Caine at the Pentagon, defended the nomination. “He’s not a traditional choice, but that’s exactly the kind of leader this administration values,” Miller said. He highlighted Caine’s broad experience in both the National Guard and private



sector, which he believes will offer a fresh perspective to military leadership.

Trump and Caine’s relationship dates back to Trump’s first term, when they met in Iraq. During a 2019 speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), Trump recalled a conversation where Caine suggested a more aggressive approach to combating the Islamic State. Trump recounted that Caine proposed striking enemy forces from multiple locations instead of relying solely on existing bases in Syria.

Following Brown’s removal, speculation arose that Trump sought a loyalist for the Joint Chiefs’ top position. At an event in Miami, Trump praised Caine while criticizing current military leadership. “General ‘Razin’ Caine—now, he’s a real general,” Trump stated. “We have the best military in the world, but weak leadership at the top has led to

failures like Afghanistan.”

Trump has also implied that Caine shares his political views, referencing a past CPAC speech where he claimed Caine once told him, “I’ll kill for you, sir,” before donning a “Make America Great Again” hat. However, an officer who has worked with Caine refuted that claim, asserting that Caine has never worn such political apparel and remains strictly nonpartisan.

During his time at the Pentagon, Caine led the Special Access Program Central Office, which manages classified information on military technology and international defense partnerships. Miller noted that this role requires navigating congressional oversight and complex security protocols, making it one of the most challenging positions in the Defense Department.

A former F-16 pilot like Brown, Caine has spent decades in the aviation community. He recently completed an assignment with the CIA and discussed his military journey in a January interview on “The Afterburn Podcast.” Reflecting on his career, Caine emphasized the deeper significance of military service beyond flying. “It’s about serving our country and being willing to protect and defend this nation,” he said.

If confirmed, Caine’s appointment would signal a shift in the Joint Chiefs’ leadership under the Trump administration, aligning with efforts to reshape military priorities and strategy.

House lawmakers receive first briefing on Cybercom 2.0 Initiative

Members of the House received a classified briefing on February 11 regarding the Department of Defense's evolving strategy to enhance its cyber warfare capabilities. This session, led by Gen. Timothy Haugh, commander of U.S. Cyber Command (Cybercom), and Ashley Manning, the acting assistant secretary of defense for cyber policy, marked the first time lawmakers were formally introduced to the Cybercom 2.0 framework.

Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.), chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Cyber, Information Technologies, and Innovation, characterized the discussion as “substantive and candid.” He emphasized that Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth and Gen. Haugh both recognize the need for a more robust cyber force structure, stating, “The status quo is not acceptable, and the Department must take further steps to align its cyber capabilities with the modern strategic environment.”

Cybercom 2.0 is an ambitious initiative first conceptualized by former commander Gen. Paul Nakasone and other top Pentagon officials. The program aims to reassess Cybercom's current structure—which has remained largely unchanged since its creation more than a decade ago—by incorporating recommendations that were initially required through multiple congressional reports in recent defense policy legislation.

Former Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin approved the general framework for Cybercom 2.0 in December, which centers around four key areas:

1. A new force generation



- model—redefining how the military services contribute cyber personnel to Cybercom.

2. Talent management improvements—reforming recruitment, training, and retention strategies for cyber forces.

3. An advanced training and education center—ensuring personnel arrive at their units fully prepared with specialized skills.

4. A cyber innovation warfare center—focusing on rapid technological advancements and capability development.

While the broad plan has been endorsed, a dedicated implementation team is currently working on refining and executing the outlined objectives in the coming months.

Cybercom was originally established in an era before many of today's complex cyber threats existed. As adversaries continue to develop advanced digital warfare tactics, the command must evolve to counter these challenges effectively. Last year, Cybercom was granted expanded budget authority, allowing greater control over its

resources and strategic initiatives. The reforms proposed under Cybercom 2.0 aim to accelerate the utilization of these new authorities.

Some lawmakers are optimistic about the initiative, though it is unfolding amid ongoing discussions regarding the potential creation of an independent Cyber Force. Many experts and policymakers argue that the current model—where each military branch provides cyber personnel in addition to their conventional warfighting roles—is inefficient. They propose

establishing a dedicated Cyber Force, similar to how the Space Force operates separately from the Air Force.

Last year, Congress approved an independent assessment of the feasibility of a standalone Cyber Force. However, key provisions, such as a deadline for the study, were later removed, shifting the focus toward evaluating various alternative models for cyber operations instead of exclusively considering the formation of a new branch.

Rep. Morgan Luttrell (R-Texas), a strong advocate for the study, has vowed to push for its completion this year. Several lawmakers have also indicated plans to scrutinize the results of the study once finalized, ensuring that further actions align with the findings.

As Cybercom 2.0 moves forward, the debate over how best to structure the nation's cyber defense capabilities will remain a critical issue for both Congress and the Department of Defense.

Navy on pace to reach highest recruiting numbers in over 2 decades

The U.S. Navy is on track to achieve its strongest recruiting numbers in more than 20 years, according to a social media post from the service on Tuesday. The Navy's recruitment target for both fiscal years 2024 and 2025 is set at 40,600 new sailors—the highest goal in two decades. After exceeding its previous year's goal by bringing in 40,978 recruits, officials expect to hit the target once again.

Between October 1 and January 31, over 14,000 future sailors signed enlistment contracts, with more than 12,750 already reporting to boot camp, according to Navy spokesman Cmdr. Tim Hawkins. Compared to the same period in the prior fiscal year, these numbers represent an increase of 4,000 more contracted sailors and 5,000 additional recruits shipped to training.

This announcement comes shortly after the U.S. Army reported its most successful December recruitment in 15 years, enlisting an average of 346 soldiers per day. Following that news, President Donald Trump and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth attributed the increase in military enlistments to the 2024 election cycle. However, reports indicate that Army recruitment had been improving prior to Trump's return to office, making it unclear what role, if any, the election played in the trend.

When asked about the factors driving the surge in Navy enlistment and whether the recent election contributed to the increase, Hawkins responded, "Our recruiting gains are a direct result of the hard work and commitment of our Navy recruiters, support staff, and leadership." No additional details were provided regarding specific reasons for the increase in enlistment.



U.S. Navy Recruit Training Command's Pass in Review in Great Lakes, Illinois, Apr. 21, 2023. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Christopher M. O'Grady.

One factor that may have contributed to the Navy's recruiting success is the Future Sailor Preparatory Course, designed to help potential recruits meet academic and fitness requirements before beginning boot camp. Those enrolled in the academic track receive instruction in math, reading, and test-taking skills, while recruits in the fitness track undergo structured physical training, nutrition education, and life skills development.

For fiscal year 2024, 1,921 recruits participated in the physical fitness program, while 3,451 completed the academic track. Of those, 90% successfully graduated from boot camp, with six recruits achieving Honor Graduate status. As of early February, 1,220 new recruits had joined the academic track, and 249 had enrolled in the fitness track.

Experts have differing opinions on why more people are enlisting in the Navy. Retired Adm. James Stavridis, former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, suggested that economic uncertainty and

government workforce reductions may be influencing more individuals to seek the stability of military service. "With rising unemployment, the military becomes an attractive option for job security," Stavridis explained.

Meanwhile, retired Navy Capt. Brent Sadler pointed to shifting recruitment strategies that emphasize the Navy's mission and core values. According to Sadler, military branches that focus on patriotism, discipline, and tradition tend to maintain strong recruitment numbers. He noted that the Marine Corps, which did not adjust its advertising approach under the previous administration, remained resilient, while the Army's recent return to traditional messaging has resulted in a significant boost in enlistment.

As the Navy continues its recruiting push, officials remain optimistic that their efforts will sustain this momentum and meet the ambitious enlistment targets set for the coming years.

Air Force needs more fighter pilots for more airpower, report states

This article by Riley Ceder originally appeared on Military Times, the nation's largest independent newsroom dedicated to covering the military and veteran community.

The U.S. Air Force needs to address its dwindling number of fighter pilots if it wants to remain combat ready, according to a recent report by a Washington aerospace think tank.

A Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies report released this month examining the service's "pilot crisis" recommends the Air Force grow and train its active component combat air forces, retain experienced pilots in the Air Force reserve component — such as the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve — and increase the production of fighter aircraft to bolster its battle capabilities.

The think tank warned of a potential future in which the service is unable to meet the demands of warfare due to pilot shortages and airmen's inability to effectively engage in aerial combat.

"Experienced pilots have better survivability rates and mission outcomes in combat and confer those benefits to their less experienced wingmen," the report said. "The Air Force's combat pilot experience levels continue to drop as the service suffers from ongoing budget-driven force cuts and reduces opportunities that are essential to pilot career progression."

One source of the pitfall is the overall divesting of the service's infrastructure and force structure, the report said.

In 2024, the service fell short of its airmen goal by nearly 1,850 pilots. Of those positions that needed to be filled, 1,142 were fighter pilot billets.

Currently, the number of pilot retirements outnumber the number of recruits, according to the report.

However, these manpower struggles aren't new for the Air



An F-35A Lightning II assigned to the F-35A Lightning II Demonstration Team flies in a practice airshow performance at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, on Jan. 11, 2024. Along with the need to add fighter pilots to its ranks, a recent report recommends the Air Force increase production of the F-35A and other fighter aircraft. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Kaitlyn Ergish/Air Force)

Force.

The service has encountered difficulty fulfilling pilot positions over the last few years for a myriad of reasons, including military flight instructor shortages and a reduced fleet, Air Force Times previously reported.

The institute also called for an increase in the production rate of fighter aircraft, such as the F-35A and F-15EX, as an influx of jets means more training opportunities for fighter pilots.

"The U.S. Air Force's combat aircraft inventory is the smallest that it has ever been in its history," the report said.

In 2024, there were roughly 160 bombers and over 2,000 fighter aircraft in the fleet. By comparison, the report states, there were 422 bombers and over 4,000 fighter aircraft during the Cold War. The report attributed the decline to infrastructure divestment.

The service's fleet is also aging, as each aircraft's age averages between

30 and 50 years old, with many lacking the attributes and capabilities necessary for peer-level conflicts, according to the report.

Further, collaborative combat aircraft, or unmanned aerial vehicles that utilize artificial intelligence, have raised questions about what the future of aerial combat will look like, as well as what shifts in technology and resources are necessary to accomplish evolving war fighting goals. But the report argues autonomous capabilities are unproven and cannot replace human fighter pilots in combat situations, even casting doubt on AI's decision-making abilities.

"Despite advances in artificial intelligence, autonomy will continue to have limitations and vulnerabilities that humans do not share — namely, the ability to decide and operate appropriately when presented with novel, unexpected, surprising, or ambiguous data," the report said.

Marines with drones join NATO mission to safeguard Baltic cables

A contingent of approximately 40 U.S. Marines equipped with surveillance drones has arrived in Finland to support NATO's Baltic Sentry mission, aimed at protecting undersea cables amid concerns over possible sabotage. The deployment was confirmed by the Finnish Ministry of Defense and the U.S. Marine

Corps, coinciding with reports of a new cable disruption between Gotland and Germany, which Swedish authorities are currently investigating.

While the U.S. Navy's P-8 surveillance aircraft have previously participated in Baltic Sentry, this marks the first time that American troops have been directly involved in the operation. The multinational initiative was launched last month by ten NATO member states in response to a suspected attack in December that damaged power and communication cables linking Finland and Estonia.

The Marine unit, drawn from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, is using RQ-20 Pumahand-launched surveillance



U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Daniel Enders, a rifleman with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, 3rd Marine Division, launches an RQ-20 Puma during Mission Rehearsal Littoral Exercise 2022 at Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Japan, May 11, 2022. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Sydni Jessee) Lance Cpl. Sydni Jessee

drones to enhance maritime awareness and monitor key infrastructure in the Gulf of Finland. According to Lt. Col. Zach Leuthardt, a spokesperson for U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe, these drones can be operated from both land and sea, with their deployment determined jointly by Finnish and U.S. military personnel.

The Finnish Ministry of Defense stated that the Marines would assist in building a comprehensive maritime security picture, identifying and tracking vessel movements in coordination with the Finnish Navy. The Finnish military emphasized that the Marines' surveillance tools are unarmed and are being used strictly for monitoring activities.

Finnish Defense Minister Antti Häkkinen welcomed

the U.S. Marine Corps' participation, stating that their presence enhances regional security and reinforces Finland's cooperation with NATO allies. The Marines' deployment aligns with ongoing international exercises and efforts to bolster collective defense in the Baltic region.

The Marine unit was initially sent to Europe for training as part of Marine Rotational Force Europe but was reassigned to Baltic Sentry due to its expertise in littoral operations. According to Leuthardt, the Marine Corps' agility and experience in coastal environments make them a valuable asset in securing maritime infrastructure.

"This partnership strengthens NATO's ability to protect vital undersea assets and fosters closer collaboration between U.S. and Finnish forces," said Army Col. Martin O'Donnell. He also noted that the mission provides the Marines an opportunity to refine their cold-weather operational skills, which are crucial given NATO's increasing focus on the Arctic (*Continued on next page*)

Military News (continued)

(Continued from previous page)
region.

Recent incidents in the Baltic Sea have heightened security concerns, with authorities in Sweden investigating a potential new cable break within their economic zone. Swedish officials have launched an inquiry to determine whether the damage is recent or an older issue, though they have yet to identify any suspects.

Reports of sabotage have emerged over the past year, with Russia and China suspected of involvement. In December, Finnish investigators linked the Russian-affiliated Eagle S oil tanker to the severing of the Estlink 2 power cable and multiple communication lines, allegedly using its anchor. Finnish authorities detained the vessel, which was found to contain extensive surveillance equipment.

In a separate case, German officials determined in November that damage to two fiber-optic cables running under the Baltic Sea was likely intentional. One of the cables connected Sweden's Gotland island to Lithuania, while the other linked Finland and Germany. Shortly after, Denmark began tracking

the Yi Peng 3, a Chinese cargo vessel suspected of damaging critical infrastructure. The ship was reportedly near the affected cables when the incidents occurred and had traveled from Russia's Ust-Luga port toward Egypt.

Swedish Defense Minister Carl-Oskar Bohlin later revealed that the Norbalt power cable linking Sweden and Lithuania was also likely targeted by the Yi Peng 3, raising concerns that the vessel was responsible for multiple acts of sabotage.

The deployment of U.S. Marines to Baltic Sentry comes as NATO enhances its readiness in response to Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, which is approaching its third anniversary. Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) Gen. Christopher Cavoli has emphasized NATO's commitment to strengthening its defensive posture, with nearly 100 military exercises

planned for 2025.

During a recent NATO press conference, Cavoli highlighted that Baltic Sentry is primarily a regional initiative led by European allies, stating that the U.S. contribution has been minimal so far. However, the arrival of U.S. Marine units and P-8 surveillance aircraft suggests a growing American role in the operation.

When asked about possible future deployments, NATO spokesperson Arlo Abrahamson reiterated that Baltic Sentry remains focused on regional cooperation but did not rule out additional U.S. involvement.

With continued concerns over undersea infrastructure security, the presence of U.S. Marines and their drone capabilities is expected to play a crucial role in monitoring and deterring potential threats in the Baltic Sea.



The graphic features the FDVA logo on the left, which includes the text "FDVA" in large blue letters, "FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS" in smaller text below it, and "Honoring those who served U.S." at the bottom. A red banner across the logo says "HELPLINE". To the right of the logo is a list of services: "Health Care", "Education", and "Earned Benefits", each preceded by a blue bullet point. At the bottom of the graphic, a red banner contains the contact information: "FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV" and "727-319-7440". Below the graphic, a text box contains the following information: "To contact FDVA from anywhere in the State, call (727) 319-7440 or send an email to FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV. A reminder that all services provided by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs are free to the client."

Marines to buy more carrier-based F-35s, fewer VTOLS

The U.S. Marine Corps has announced plans to shift its procurement strategy for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, increasing its acquisition of the carrier-based F-35C while reducing its order for the short-takeoff-and-vertical-landing (STOVL) F-35B variant. Despite the change, the total number of aircraft the service intends to purchase remains at 420 jets.

Under the revised plan, the Marines will now acquire 140 F-35Cs, a significant increase from the original 67, while scaling back their order for F-35Bs from 353 to 280. This adjustment will result in 12 squadrons operating the F-35B and eight squadrons flying the F-35C. Additionally, the Marine Corps plans to expand squadron size, increasing the number of jets per unit from 10 to 12.

Defense contractor Lockheed Martin, the manufacturer of the F-35, expressed support for the Marine Corps' decision, stating, "We support the U.S. Marine Corps' decision to adjust to an F-35 fleet configuration that best allows them to fulfill their critical missions with the world's most advanced aircraft."

Military analysts suggest this shift reflects a stronger focus on carrier-based air operations, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, where naval aviation plays a critical role in power projection. Jon Hemler, a military aerospace expert with Forecast International, emphasized that increasing the F-35C inventory accelerates the Marine Corps' ability to integrate these fighters into carrier strike group operations.

However, not all experts expected this outcome. Mark Cancian, a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, pointed out that while former Marine Commandant Gen. David Berger previously questioned whether the F-35's cost and survivability fit within the service's Force Design 2030 strategy, the latest plan does not reduce overall aircraft procurement.

Another unexpected aspect of the aviation plan is its lack of increased investment in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). At one point, the Marine Corps suggested that 40% of its aircraft fleet would be composed of unmanned platforms. However, the branch currently operates only 18 MQ-9 Reaper drones, a stark

contrast to the Army's 200 and the Air Force's 250.

The 2025 Marine Aviation Plan is the first public update to the Corps' aviation strategy in three years. It introduces Project Eagle, a 15-year roadmap aimed at enhancing Marine Corps aviation capabilities through fleet modernization and sustainment.

Lt. Gen. Bradford Gering, deputy commandant for aviation, outlined the vision in the document, stating, "Project Eagle marks Marine Aviation's future path, requiring a focus on sustaining and enhancing the aviation capabilities the Marine Corps trusts and relies on. As multiple platforms transition, we will continue to modernize our fixed-wing, rotary-wing, and unmanned fleets to deliver the sustained reach and lethality combatant commanders need."

The Marine Corps' shift in fleet composition and long-term aviation strategy underscores the branch's evolving focus on carrier-based power projection, modernization, and flexibility in contested environments. However, questions remain about how unmanned systems will fit into the Corps' future operational plans.



US Navy hits drone with HELIOS laser in successful test

The U.S. Navy has conducted a successful test of its High-Energy Laser with Integrated Optical Dazzler and Surveillance (HELIOS) system, confirming the weapon's capability to neutralize aerial threats. The test was carried out aboard an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, marking a significant step in the Navy's efforts to enhance ship-based defense with directed-energy weapons.

According to a recently published Office of the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation report, the destroyer USS Preble engaged and disabled a drone using the HELIOS laser during a 2024 weapons trial. The document did not specify the exact location or date of the test but did include a black-and-white image depicting a concentrated beam of light being fired from the ship toward the sky.

The Center for Countermeasures, a Department of Defense program established to evaluate new military technologies, oversaw 32 tests in fiscal year 2024, which included assessments of directed-energy systems like HELIOS. The trial aboard USS Preble was conducted to validate the laser's operational effectiveness and overall performance.

The Navy has not disclosed where the test took place, but records show the USS Preble departed from Naval Base San Diego in September 2024 before arriving in Yokosuka, Japan, the following month.

Developed by Lockheed Martin, HELIOS is a 60-plus-kilowatt laser system designed to counter drones and other airborne threats. It was first delivered to the Navy in August 2022, becoming the first high-powered laser integrated into an active warship.

The increasing use of unmanned



In this undated photo from fiscal 2024, the Preble fires its HELIOS system during weapons testing. (DOT&E)

aerial threats—particularly in regions such as the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, where Navy ships have intercepted drones and missiles launched by Iran-backed Houthi militants—has accelerated the military's focus on laser-based defense systems. In 2024, Vice Adm. Brendan McLane highlighted the Navy's urgent need for deployable laser weapons to strengthen its ability to counter such threats.

The integration of laser systems aboard Navy vessels offers several advantages, including preserving conventional munitions by using directed energy to disable or destroy incoming threats. However, despite the Department of Defense allocating \$1 billion annually toward high-energy lasers and microwave weapons, achieving consistent results has been challenging.

While HELIOS represents a promising advancement, the Navy has encountered multiple hurdles in developing and deploying directed-energy weapons. Among the challenges are:

- Defining operational usage—

Determining how and when to deploy lasers effectively in combat scenarios.

- Power supply concerns— Finding a reliable onboard energy source capable of sustaining high-powered lasers.

- Environmental limitations— Weather conditions such as fog, wind, and humidity can interfere with laser accuracy and effectiveness.

Currently, the Navy has eight Optical Dazzling Interdictor (ODIN) laser systems installed on Arleigh Burke-class destroyers. These dazzlers are designed to disrupt enemy sensors rather than destroy physical targets. Additionally, a 150-kilowatt Laser Weapon System Demonstrator (LWSD) has been deployed on a San Antonio-class amphibious transport ship for further testing.

As the Navy continues refining its laser arsenal, the successful HELIOS test aboard USS Preble signals progress in the push toward integrating directed-energy defenses into modern naval warfare.

Military releases first photo from orbit from its mysterious space plane

The U.S. military has released the first publicly available photograph taken from its X-37B space plane, providing a rare glimpse into its activities while in orbit.

On February 20, the Space Force shared the image through the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service (DVIDS). According to the provided caption, the onboard camera captured the image to monitor the spacecraft's condition and safety. The photograph, taken in 2024 while the X-37B was conducting experiments in a highly elliptical orbit, shows part of the robotic vehicle along with a detailed view of Earth.

Although the picture does not quite match the iconic "Earthrise" image taken by astronaut William Anders during the Apollo 8 mission, it demonstrates the clarity of the X-37B's imaging capabilities and hints at the altitude of its orbit. The precise time and location of the photo remain unspecified beyond its capture in 2024, and its listed location is simply the "Space Force area of responsibility." The current mission began with the spacecraft's launch on December 28, 2023. While the Space Force is transparent about the timing of launches and the overall duration of each mission, specific details regarding the X-37B's in-orbit activities have remained classified. Other than general references to



An X-37B onboard camera, used to ensure the health and safety of the vehicle, captures an image of Earth while conducting experiments in a highly elliptical orbit in 2024. As part of the X-37B's seventh mission, the vehicle executed a series of first-of-its-kind maneuvers, called aerobraking, to safely change its orbit using minimal fuel. Space Force photo.

onboard experiments, this image offers the most direct insight into its operations.

Developed by Boeing, the X-37B has been in service since 2010, primarily conducting orbital test flights. Its previous mission, which concluded on November 12, 2022, lasted 908 days, marking the longest duration for the space plane to date. The ongoing mission, designated OTV-7, includes several experimental objectives. One of its most notable tests was an aerobraking maneuver, carried out in late 2024. This experiment involved using atmospheric drag to modify its trajectory instead of

relying solely on fuel consumption. Additionally, the maneuver allowed the vehicle to release its payload module in a controlled manner, designed to minimize space debris.

While the U.S. military continues to focus on expanding its satellite network to improve communications and missile detection, the X-37B has played a consistent role in testing new technologies for space operations. The program is significant enough that the space plane was even featured in the Space Force's first official portrait, highlighting its importance in the military's evolving role in space.



The X-37B after a successful mission at NASA's Kennedy Space Center Shuttle Landing Facility in Florida on Oct. 27, 2019 (US Air Force photo)

Saronic unveils plans for Port Alpha, an autonomous shipyard

Saronic Technologies, a Texas-based company, announced on Tuesday that it has secured \$600 million in private funding to develop an autonomous shipyard, which it has named Port Alpha.

The facility is intended to expand the company's production of medium- and large-class autonomous surface vessels, aligning with the Pentagon's increasing demand for uncrewed systems, including naval drones.

Company CEO Dino Mavrookas described the project as a groundbreaking effort, stating that the shipyard will be the most advanced of its kind. While a specific location has not yet been chosen, Saronic is in discussions with state governments across the U.S. to determine the best site, with Texas and the Gulf Coast being primary areas of interest. Although the company has not disclosed the total projected cost of the endeavor, it has indicated that the investment will amount to "billions and billions of dollars" over the course of the project.

Mavrookas did not provide a definitive timeline for the shipyard's completion but expressed confidence that it would be operational within five years. He emphasized that the company is committed to moving quickly to establish production lines and begin rolling out vessels into the water as soon as possible. Since its founding in 2022, Saronic has raised more than \$850 million and is currently valued at \$4 billion. In just three years, it has introduced three uncrewed vessel models, including the 24-foot-long Corsair, which was unveiled in



Saronic, which builds autonomous surface vessels like those pictured here, announced Tuesday that it plans to build an autonomous shipyard. (Saronic)

October.

The company views its systems as a key component of the U.S. military's shift toward uncrewed naval capabilities, with Port Alpha positioned to help scale up the Navy's shipbuilding capacity. The Navy's most recent 30-year shipbuilding plan calls for a total of 381 battle force ships, a notable increase from its current fleet of 295. Additionally, the plan includes the introduction of 134 unmanned surface vessels over the coming decades, with 40 of them classified as large-size vessels. The long-term goal is to achieve a fully operational unmanned fleet by the mid-to-late 2030s.

At the same time, traditional shipbuilders are facing difficulties in meeting cost and schedule targets, with production delays

attributed to workforce shortages and supply chain disruptions. When asked whether Port Alpha might further strain the already challenged industrial base, Saronic's Chief Commercial Officer Rob Lehman noted that the company's approach to shipbuilding differs from conventional methods used for crewed vessels. He explained that the company is developing a new category of ships using innovative manufacturing techniques that do not depend on the same workforce, materials, or processes that have contributed to delays in traditional shipbuilding. Rather than waiting for direction from the Navy, Saronic aims to proactively propose new ideas, designs, and capabilities that align with the service's evolving needs.

Space Development Agency launches study on Trump's Iron Dome order

The Space Development Agency has initiated a study examining how its network of satellites could contribute to the Trump administration's proposed missile defense shield. This follows an executive order issued in late January by President Donald Trump, directing the Department of Defense to establish an "Iron Dome for America." Though the name references Israel's Iron Dome, the envisioned system would be designed to counter threats including hypersonic weapons, cruise missiles, and drones.

The proposed multi-layered defense system would incorporate several space-based elements, building on current technologies such as the Missile Defense Agency's Hypersonic and Ballistic Tracking Space Sensor program and the Space Development Agency's Proliferated Warfighter Space Architecture (PWSA). Additionally, the initiative

includes a renewed focus on space-based interceptors, a subject that has historically been controversial due to its technical complexity and political implications.

SDA's existing satellite network consists of hundreds of missile-warning satellites that track threats in orbit. In a recent announcement, the agency detailed its plans to explore how this architecture could be expanded in alignment with the Iron Dome proposal. The agency has also requested technology concept proposals from companies in the industry.

The study is set to assess various aspects related to the executive order, including advanced modeling and simulation to evaluate the capabilities of PWSA in addressing both current and emerging threats. Other focal points include integrating the Missile Defense Agency's space-sensor technology into PWSA, developing

additional missile tracking and custody layer technologies, securing the supply chain, and improving on-orbit sensor data processing and fusion capabilities.

SDA has requested that proposals be submitted by February 28, as the findings from this study will play a crucial role in shaping the Department of Defense's broader plans for missile defense. Meanwhile, the Senate has introduced legislation that would allocate significant funding to the initiative, proposing an additional \$10.4 billion for the Missile Defense Agency's fiscal 2026 budget and another \$19.5 billion in fiscal 2025. This bill, spearheaded by Senators Kevin Cramer of North Dakota and Dan Sullivan of Alaska, seeks to advance Trump's directive and incorporates insights from the Pentagon's 2022 Missile Defense Review, which was finalized under the Biden administration.



VA Secretary Doug Collins issues message to veterans and VA employees

It is my life's honor to serve America's Veterans as secretary of Veterans Affairs, and I thank President Donald J. Trump as well as the U.S. Senate for their confidence in me.

America is the greatest nation on Earth precisely because of the Veterans willing to step forward and defend our freedom. I've witnessed this firsthand throughout my two decades in the military, as I've served with some of the finest men and women our nation has to offer.

In addition to being a Navy Veteran, I am an Air Force Reserve colonel and chaplain. During my time in the military, I've learned that leadership is about listening, serving, motivating and setting a good example for those around you. That is the approach I will bring to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

When President Trump offered me this job, he gave me simple instructions: take great care of America's Veterans. Here is how we're going to accomplish the task the president has set out for us:



- We're going to deliver timely access to care and benefits for every eligible Veteran, family member, caregiver and survivor.
- We're going to put Veterans at the center of everything VA does, focusing relentlessly on customer

service and convenience.

- We're going to challenge the status quo in order to find new and better ways of helping VA beneficiaries.
- We're going to celebrate the vast majority of VA employees who do a great job every day and hold employees accountable when they fall short of the mission.
- We're going to provide Veterans with the health care choices they have earned while maintaining and improving VA's direct health care capabilities.
- * And we're going to do a better job reaching Veterans at risk of homelessness or suicide – especially those who have had no contact with VA.

My commitment to my fellow servicemembers and Veterans will serve as my compass for the way ahead, and I am honored to be working with the men and women of VA to accomplish our noble and vital mission.

Together, we will strengthen VA so it works better for America's heroes. Let's get to work.

VA waiting rooms add Veterans News Network

Hello from your Bay Pines VA Healthcare System,

When Veterans, family members, and caregivers come to our facility we want them to feel welcomed, cared for, and engaged in their health care. Veterans have been asking for Veteran-centric content within VA waiting rooms and Bay Pines VA Healthcare System is delivering! Most of the waiting rooms across our sites of care now have the Veteran News Network (VNN) available for viewing, while Veterans are awaiting their care.

VNN is a television channel for Veterans—produced primarily by Veterans—that offers a fun and

informative mix of specialized programming to honor, entertain, and inform Veterans of the benefits and services they have earned. In the areas where VNN is installed, this network is the only one that will be available on those televisions.

Veterans who watch VNN may experience an improved understanding of VA and the care they're eligible to receive. VNN content is designed to educate, empower, inspire, and improve the patient experience.

In addition to being available in our waiting rooms, VNN is also available through simulcast to

the VHA YouTube page.

In the coming weeks and months, as we start to understand how VNN is being received by Veterans, the VNN Implementation Team will identify specific topics that our Veterans and staff would like to see covered on VNN. As a facility, we can also submit stories of interest to be played nationwide on VNN, so be sure to keep an eye out for stories that educate, inspire, and recognize our patients. If you have any feedback on how VHA can improve VNN, we encourage you to send your input to VNNFeedback@va.gov.

VA Extends deadline for new online login system to March 4

By: Kevin Lilley

Veterans using a My HealtheVet username and password to access records and other VA account information have until March 4 to set up a different login method, the VA announced last week.

All veterans must establish an account with Login.gov or ID.me in the coming months to maintain online access. Initial plans called for those using My HealtheVet to make the changeover by Jan. 31.

Those using DS Logon usernames and passwords still have until Sept. 30 to move to a Login.gov or ID.me account.

How to Make the Change

Veterans may use either of the new systems to maintain account access. Login.gov is a government-provided account which can also be used to log into USAJOBS.gov or the Social Security Administration's online portal. ID.me is a private account provider which works with both government and non-government organizations.

[\[RELATED: VA to Waive Copayments for 'Whole Health' Medical Services\]](#)

Veterans will need to verify their identity with either system to create their account, then establish multifactor

identification (MFA) via an authenticator app or other method. The VA provides step-by-step account creation instructions for both systems at this link.

Most veterans already use either Login.gov or ID.me to access their account information, the VA said when announcing the deadline extension. However, the department said in July 2024 that more than three million veterans and other beneficiaries did not use those systems.

The changeover will allow veterans to "more quickly and securely access information about their VA health care and benefits," the department said.



VA's latest toxic exposure moves show progress, but need changes

By: Kevin Lilley

The VA's recent move easing the path for some Gulf War and Post-9/11 veterans battling certain types of cancers to receive service-earned health benefits continues an encouraging trend ... and shows the importance of the work underway at MOAA and other advocacy groups to speed up this arduous and complicated process.

The department will assume a service connection for veterans facing leukemia, bladder cancer, and other cancers who served in Somalia or Southwest Asia during the Persian Gulf War (on or after Aug. 2, 1990), along with those who served in Afghanistan, Iraq, and seven other nations – including at Karshi-Khanabad (K2) Air Base, Uzbekistan – during that war or after Sept. 11, 2001. These veterans will not need to prove their illness was related to service to receive benefits, and they are immediately eligible for free VA health care connected to these illnesses.

The move comes after a similar expansion of the presumptive list in June 2024 to include male breast cancer and other illnesses. It comes a little more than two years after the signing of the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022, a MOAA-backed law expanding VA care to millions of veterans.

Veterans suffering from these service-connected illnesses have faced decades of delays – Post-9/11 K2 veterans have waited nearly a quarter-century, for example, and Gulf War veterans have waited even longer. Unfortunately, according to research from MOAA and Disabled American Veterans (DAV), these delays are par for the course: The average time from exposure to determination of a presumptive service connection for the first veterans exposed to a toxin is more than 34 years.

This finding highlights the need for the recommendations outlined in Ending the Wait for Toxic-Exposed



C-130 Hercules aircrew members board their aircraft for an Operation Enduring Freedom mission at Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, on April 19, 2005. (Photo by Master Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol/Air Force)

Veterans, a joint MOAA-DAV report which looked at more than a century of treatment for toxin-related illnesses, from World War I gas attacks to the post-World War II “atomic veterans” to Agent Orange to burn pits. While the PACT Act and recent VA presumptive declarations address some illnesses facing some veteran cohorts, there is more work to be done to improve the process not just for veterans, but for those in uniform and future servicemembers.

Among the report's key recommendations:

- A new legal framework linking the important steps in the presumptive process: acknowledgement of a potential exposure, concession of that exposure, and the presumption of service connection to related illnesses.
- Improved research and oversight into the science behind toxic exposures, to include a permanent contract with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAEM) and enhanced reporting requirements.
- A streamlined care system for veterans and survivors, to include better VA-DoD record-sharing and the removal of toxic-exposure costs from the congressional pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) process.
- A new model for classifying

exposures and presumptives, one that would clarify the system and allow for a more focused approach to research and data-gathering.

All of the above recommendations would come with applicable deadlines for action by the VA, ensuring the process moves forward and continuing to give the benefit of the doubt to the veteran as presumptives are established. Rather than wait more than three decades while battling a range of progressive ailments, veterans should have a clear path to receiving the care they've earned through service and sacrifice.

[\[RELATED: Veterans Share Stories of Toxic Exposure\]](#)

The 119th Congress offers a new opportunity to address these recommendations. MOAA looks forward to working with lawmakers to improve this process for generations of veterans.

As we shape this important legislation, please consider registering with our Legislative Action Center: Doing so will allow you to receive the latest updates on member outreach campaigns and let you customize prewritten messages to your lawmakers on behalf of MOAA's legislative priorities.

Florida provides many services to the state's veterans

Florida is home to 1.5 million veterans and according to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA), one-third of them are entitled to benefits they don't yet receive.

The FDVA has many ways veterans can get information and assistance.

To contact a state veterans' service officer, veterans can call (727) 319-7440 and they'll return your call within 24 hours. You may also contact them via e-mail at FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV

FDVA "Virtual" Video Conference

- What are "virtual" video conference appointments?

Virtual video conference appointment is a major step forward on the FDVA's part, in counselling veterans and their families on their claims or appeals. This method of expediting the claims process and counselling our veterans is designed to maximize available technology; enabling FDVA to meet face-to-face with veterans during these extraordinary times of the COVID-Pandemic.

FDVA has launched a new "virtual" video conference option, providing veterans with the flexibility and convenience of meeting with their veteran representatives from a personal computer or mobile device. The "virtual" video conference appointments are just like video hearings, the veteran can participate from their cell phone, tablet, or computer. No travel is



needed.

- Where can veterans have a "virtual" video conference appointment?

Anywhere with a Wi-Fi or internet connection -- it is entirely up to the veteran. The "virtual" video conference appointment gives veterans the choice of location for their "virtual" appointment. For example, the veteran can be in their home with their VSO/representative in a separate location. veterans can also have those around them such as family members or caregivers assist them in this user-friendly process, whether it's helping set up the iPad/computer, or supporting access to a cell phone

- How do veterans request a "virtual" video conference appointment with FDVA?

Veterans will request a "virtual" video conference appointment the same way they would request other FDVA communications:

1. Email FDVA at FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV
2. Call FDVA at (727) 319-7408 (dedicated for "virtual" appointment requests)

- What happens before the

"virtual" video conference?:

1. At the time of scheduling, the veteran will receive an email with the date, and time of the "virtual" video conference appointment as well as the link for accessing FDVA's Go To Meeting™ platform.

2. Internet/ device requirements: It is recommended veterans use a personal computer or laptop with a secure WI-FI or internet connection in a private setting (e.g. office, within a home). Veterans may use an Android or Apple mobile devices in a private setting, with a secure and reliable WI-FI connection or cellular service. The preferred browser, and the one that works best, for both personal computers, laptops and Android devices is Google Chrome. If access to Google Chrome is not available, Internet Explorer is a comparable alternative browser. All devices must have a camera and microphone for video/audio capabilities. Android devices require no application as they launch automatically in a web browser after the session
(Continued on next page)

Veteran Affairs News (continued)

(Continued from previous page)

link is selected from the email invitation.

At the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, they advocate for Florida veterans and connect them to earned benefits and services. They seek to honor those who served the United States.

Field Services Outreach

FDVA Service Officers regularly attend events throughout the state to help veterans with questions about their earned benefits and assistance.

Find out about the upcoming events that are going on from benefits presentations to town hall meetings across Florida and get your questions answered. [Click here to view the latest schedule.](#)

Free Benefits Counseling

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs has service officers co-located with the VA Regional Office in Bay Pines, each VA Medical Center and many VA Outpatient Clinics. Assistance with claims is free and covers all state and federal veterans' programs. FDVA, through its Bureau of State Approving Agency, also evaluates and approves secondary and post-secondary education programs so Floridians can take advantage of federal veterans' educational programs such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

For more information, call (727) 319-7440.

County Veteran Service Offices

Information on current federal, state and local veterans' programs, entitlements and

referral services is also available in Florida through a network of County Veteran Service Offices. The counselors are trained and accredited annually by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. All services are provided free of charge. Lee County's Veteran Service Office is located at 2440 Thompson Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901, phone 239-533-8381, fax 239-533-7960, main email veterans@leegov.com. The veteran service officers there are:

- Rodney Van Ness, Manager/CVSO, Phone: (239) 533-7977, E-mail: rvanness@leegov.com.
- Jon DeLorenzo, VSO, Phone: (239) 533-7978, E-mail: jdelorenzo@leegov.com
- Jonathan Ramirez, VSO, Phone: (239) 533-7975, E-mail: jramirez@leegov.com
- Estefania De Los Santos, VSO, Phone: (239) 533-7962, edelossantos@leegov.com

Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide

The Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide is an annual publication designed to bring you the latest information on federal and state benefits in a concise, easy to read format. The guide, which is a primary tool in our arsenal to advocate for our state's veterans, is produced by the Florida

Veterans Foundation.

[Click here](#) to view the Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide.

GI LAW

The Governor's Initiative on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI LAW) offers legal representation in civil cases to help reduce the burden that some veterans and service members may face.

Governor Ron DeSantis is committed to ensuring our service-members have the support of the state's legal community and its best legal minds. To achieve this goal, GI LAW will draw from the talent of Florida's leading law firms to provide pro bono (free) services for military members.

Through this initiative, Florida's men and women in uniform will receive local counsel in a variety of civil matters, including actions in local courts.

Participating attorneys will dedicate time and expertise to ensure a prompt and fair resolution of legal matters. This program is a collaboration between the Governor, the Department of Military Affairs, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs and FloridaCommerce.

[Click here](#) for more information on GI LAW.



2025 Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide now available

The 2025 Florida Veterans' Guide from the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs is now available in digital form.

This annual guide helps connect Florida's veterans and their families with earned federal and state benefits, services and support. It also contains useful phone numbers and website addresses for additional information.

[Click here](#) to view the 2025 digital edition of the Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide.

FLORIDA VETERANS'
BENEFITS GUIDE
2025

Courtesy of the Florida Veterans Foundation

BOLDLY SERVING MORE THAN 35 YEARS
FDVA
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
www.FloridaVets.org

Tax season guidance for veterans

As tax season approaches, many Veterans begin gathering their necessary financial documents and consulting with tax professionals. VA wants Veterans to know they may qualify for special tax breaks and free assistance programs to help them navigate the filing process and maximize their returns.

Whether a Veteran files their taxes independently or uses a tax professional, VA encourages Veterans and their loved ones to review the following tips and resources to both help them navigate the tax season with confidence and to avoid tax season scams.

- **Tax benefits as a Veteran:** Disability benefits received from VA should not be counted as part of a Veteran's gross income. Payments from compensation, pension, Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E), and education—including the G.I. Bill—are exempt from taxation. Always review the Internal Revenue Service's webpage on Veterans tax information and services before submitting a tax return.

- For Veterans who receive disability benefits from VA, refer to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Publication 525 under "Military and Government Disability Pensions" for more information.

- Veterans may be eligible to claim a federal tax refund based on an increase in their VA disability percentage (which may include a retroactive determination).

- Combat-disabled Veterans who are granted Combat-Related Special Compensation after an award for Concurrent Retirement and Disability may be eligible to claim a federal tax refund.

- **Free tax assistance programs:** Veterans have access to several free tax assistance programs.

- **IRS Free File:** If a Veteran's adjusted gross income is \$79,000 or less, they can file electronically with an IRS Free File software provider. If their income is higher, they can use Free File fillable forms.

- **IRS Direct File:** If a Veteran lives in a participating state, they can use the free IRS Direct File service to

e-file their federal tax return directly with IRS.

- **In-person help:** If a Veteran's adjusted income is \$64,000 or less, if they have a disability and/or need language support, or if they are 60-years old or older, they can receive free in-person help from an IRS-certified volunteer.

- **Military OneSource:** Use the MilTax software to file federal and state returns for free for up to 365 days after military separation or retirement. For information on other topics, visit MilitaryOneSource.mil or call 800-342-9647.

- **Always verify communications:** With the increasing sophistication of scams targeting Veterans, it's important to distinguish between legitimate and fraudulent communications from VA.

- VA will never send text messages to confirm or request personally identifiable information (PII) for benefits or federal payments.

- Do not provide personal banking or credit card information to anyone alleging affiliation with VA or other federal entities.

- Do not share your VA National Call Center (NCC) personal identification number (PIN) with anyone, including family, friends or any entity who makes contact via mobile communication. The VA NCC PIN is a unique identifier which helps protect personal information when communicating with VA.

- **Get an IRS Identify Protection Personal Identification Number (IP PIN).** IP PINs are assigned to taxpayers to prevent Social Security Number (SSN) fraud on federal income tax returns. Scammers can use SSNs to commit tax fraud by filing a fraudulent return or claiming a refund; obtaining an IP PIN will keep these scammers from filing a tax return using Veterans' SSNs.

- **Protect your personal information:** The tax filing season has increasingly become a prime opportunity for scammers to exploit unsuspecting taxpayers through various communication methods.

- **Refrain from sharing PII,** including VA.gov logins, VA NCC personal PINs, dates of birth, military

entrance/discharge details, branches of service or SSNs.

- Limit posting PII online, and don't share residence addresses, dates of birth, workplace locations or kinship details.

- Delete old social media accounts, limit online presences and minimize or remove available biographical information.

- Never send bank information or payments to "online friends" or others. Scammers may threaten to destroy your files or data if you do not send payment or banking information. If you are a victim of ransomware, do not respond to these threats and do report the incident immediately.

- **Protect against identity theft scams.** All three credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion) offer Veterans the ability to freeze their credit file for free. A credit freeze allows Veterans to control access to credit reports; requires approvals for applications for credit cards, mortgages or loans; and helps protect against identity theft.

Tax season can be stressful, but Veterans can avoid scams and protect their finances by increasing their knowledge and taking precautions. Understanding Veterans' tax benefits, choosing a trusted professional or service, recognizing scams and safeguarding PII are all steps to ensure a safe and secure tax filing experience.

If Veterans encounter a tax scam, they should report it to the appropriate authorities. Reporting scams helps protect others from becoming victims and assists in the investigation and prosecution of bad actors. For more information and to report an abusive tax scheme or a tax return preparer, visit [Report a tax scam or fraud | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](http://Report a tax scam or fraud | Internal Revenue Service (irs.gov)).

If Veterans miss a VA benefits payment, identify a discrepancy in payments or find suspicious activity with their direct deposit account, contact VA immediately at 800-827-1000. Veterans who suspect they are victims of fraud can find resources to file a report to the appropriate agency by visiting www.vsafe.gov or calling 833-38V-SAFE.

Roth IRA restrictions: How you can plan ahead to avoid taxes, penalties

*By: Lila Quintiliani
(This article originally appeared in the February 2025 issue of Military Officer, a magazine available to all MOAA Premium and Life members. Learn more about the magazine here; learn more about joining MOAA here.)*

Roth individual retirement accounts (IRAs) can be a great way to save for retirement because distributions after you reach age 59? are generally tax-free.

Roth IRAs have no obligation for required minimum distributions (RMDs). And because contributions are made with money you've already paid taxes on, these IRAs can provide flexibility even before retirement age since you are able to withdraw any contributions you made without penalty or taxes.

However, there are several restrictions on Roth IRAs that owners should know about if they want to avoid taxes and/or penalties. The restriction is known as the "Five-Year Rule," but in reality, there are two separate five-year rules to pay attention to.

Five-Year Rule: Withdrawals

This IRS rule states you can withdraw your earnings from your Roth IRA tax-free as long as you have held the account for at least five years. This specifically applies to earnings, since as mentioned above, you can withdraw your contributions at any time.

The clock for this rule starts the first time money is deposited into any Roth IRA you own.

The five-year period begins on Jan. 1 of the year you made your first contribution, so if you make your first contribution in December, you actually might only have to wait a little over four years.



If you don't wait the full five years before beginning withdrawals, your distributions will be considered nonqualified and you will have to pay taxes at your ordinary income tax rate on your earnings, even if you are age 59?. If you are under age 59?, you will owe a 10% early withdrawal penalty in addition to taxes on your earnings.

[\[RELATED: Thrift Savings Plan to Unveil Roth Transfer Option in 2026\]](#)

There are a few exceptions to the five-year rule that allow you to make a withdrawal without paying the 10% penalty. These include withdrawals up to \$10,000 for the purchase of a first home, if you become permanently and totally disabled, or for educational purposes. However, you would still owe income tax on these distributions.

Five-Year Rule: Conversions

The other five-year rule states that you must wait five years before withdrawing balances converted from a traditional IRA to a Roth

IRA. Otherwise, you might owe a 10% early withdrawal penalty, which would come on top of the income taxes you already owe from the conversion.

Again, the clock for the five-year period begins in January of the year you execute the conversion, no matter when during the year the conversion actually happened. However, each conversion or rollover is subject to a separate five-year holding period.

[\[RELATED: What's Changing for Your Retirement Contributions in 2025 and Beyond?\]](#)

Those who have passed age 59? won't be subject to the 10% penalty on their conversion, but they will need to have had the account open for at least five years to avoid running afoul of the five-year rule mentioned above, which would cause their withdrawals to be taxed.

Inherited Roth IRAs

While owners of Roth IRAs don't need to take RMDs, their beneficiaries must do so.

Those RMDs are generally tax-free if they meet the five-year aging rule. If the owner of the IRA had opened it more than five years previously, the beneficiary won't owe taxes. If the five-year period wasn't met, the distribution will be included in the beneficiary's gross income and will be subject to taxes.

While Roth IRAs have many benefits, both as a way to save for retirement and to potentially provide a legacy for survivors, it is important to understand the five-year rules that might apply. Otherwise, you, or your heirs, might be in for an unexpected tax bill.



Make sure all of your contact information is up-to-date by using this membership form

ADD TO YOUR CONTACT LIST:

info@capecoralmoaa.org

All correspondence from the chapter will come from this address only.

If you have any questions, please contact our membership chair:

Col Gary Nolan

Email:

capecoralmoaa@gmail.com

Phone:

618-407-6945

Websites

Cape Coral MOAA
www.capecoralmoaa.org

FCoC
www.moaafl.org

MOAA National
www.moaa.org

Legislative Action Center
www.moaa.org/

Membership

Cape Coral
Military Officers Association of America
(CCMOAA)
PO Box 100508, Cape Coral, FL 33910-0508

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION • DIRECTORY UPDATE

New Chapter Member Change of Address/Information

Name _____
Please Print

Spouse's Name _____
Please Print
(Spouses, Widows, Widowers are welcome as chapter members)

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Rank _____ Service _____

Check appropriate boxes:

Retired Active Duty Widow(er) Associate*

* Associate members have the same privileges as other members, except that they are ineligible to vote.

Regular Reserve National Guard

Former Officer Senior NCO

MOAA National Membership No. _____ MOAA Life Member _____
A lifetime MOAA membership does NOT mean your chapter membership is lifetime

MOAA National Website: <https://www.moaa.org>

Signature _____ Date _____

NO FEES FOR MEMBERSHIP

Scholarship Program Donation \$ _____

Please use this form for new membership and/or updating your information.

Mail to:
CCMOAA, ATTN: Secretary,
PO Box 100508, Cape Coral, FL 33910-0508