

2010-2011 AFSA LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

This platform of legislative targets will be used as a “blueprint” for testimony and lobbying efforts, in addition to responses dictated by day-to-day events. Each area designates association-approved initiatives.

MILITARY FAMILIES

MILITARY PAY AND COMPENSATION/TAX INCENTIVES

- Review the Basic Allowance for Housing to more fairly provide for the family/personal needs of enlisted members
 - Review COLA criteria for all locations
 - Make permanent, the military pay formula to +1/2 percent above the Economic Cost Indicator (ECI)
 - Continue to seek payment of hazardous duty pay for military firefighters
 - Urge DoD to categorize military-married-to-military members as a dependent of each other for the purpose of funded Emergency Leave Travel.
 - Implement a fully funded Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) on all USAF installations
 - Provide postage-free mailing service to members deployed to combat zones
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HOUSING AND PERMANENT CHANGES OF STATION

- Make adjustments to the Household Goods (HHG) weight allowances that takes into consideration the number of family members and EFMP exemptions for necessary equipment and furnishings
 - Provide all military members being assigned to OCONUS locations the option of government-funded POV shipment or storage
 - If advantageous to the government, reimburse transportation expenses for PCSing members to take their POVs to a location other than a commercial storage facility
 - Continually monitor the upgrades to the quality of housing/dormitories for military members
 - Monitor/scrutinize housing privatization efforts to preclude adverse impact on all military members
 - Review the Joint Travel Regulation for currency
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MILITARY STORES

- Resist DoD/DECA efforts to reduce the benefit, that negatively alter current pricing policies, or provide the benefit to non-military beneficiaries
 - Resist the Base Exchange merger process to prevent degradation of the benefit
 - Where permissible by Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), provide full overseas retiree exchange and commissary benefits
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CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS (CDCs)/BASE REALIGNMENTS AND CLOSURES (BRAC):

- Pursue CDC changes to (1) minimize CDC expenses for enlisted members, (2) adjust hours of operation to accommodate mission requirements, (3) allow 30 days each year during which the military member may remove their child from the CDC without having to pay for the period of unused service--to facilitate taking annual leave without losing their CDC slot, and (4) establish some equality in the program by expanding the categories for how rates are currently assessed
- Mitigate the impact of BRAC decisions on the quality-of-life for all beneficiaries

SURVIVOR BENEFITS

- Pursue Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) widows to remarry after age 55 without losing their entitlement
- Pursue the full concurrent receipt of DIC and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) without an offset in either
- Permit the member to designate multiple SBP beneficiaries with a presumption that such designations and related allocations of SBP benefits must be proportionate to the allocation of retired pay
- Allow survivors of retirees to draw the final full month's retired pay for the month in which retirees die
- Provide space-available travel opportunities for survivors of military retirees

POW/MIA

- Provide a full accounting of POW/MIAs from all past and future military actions, and promote international compliance in recovery efforts

VOTING/PATRIOTISM

- Protect the American flag from purposeful acts of physical desecration

MILITARY HEALTH CARE

- Oppose DoD plans to establish a TRICARE Standard enrollment fees and to significantly increase Standard and TRICARE for Life annual deductibles
- Oppose DoD plans to significantly increase annual TRICARE Prime enrollment fees for military retirees
- Limit beneficiary costs for TRICARE network and mail order prescription drugs; ensure DoD formularies accommodate all beneficiaries; limit beneficiary cost shares for military clinic-provided medicines
- Review provider reimbursement levels and education to ensure sufficient participating providers to support TRICARE programs
- Exempt those military retirees who entered service prior to December 7, 1956, from the obligation of Medicare Part B payments
- Mandate that TRICARE cover medically required oral surgery procedures
- Establish a full optometry benefit for military retirees
- Provide the dental benefit programs for active duty, Guard, and Reserve members, retirees, and their families
- Review military dental care program reimbursement rates are adjusted to each area of the nation to ensure participation of civilian dental care providers
- Enhance Air National Guard and Reserve health care program benefits
- Improve the protection and security of personal and medical record information and data.
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VETERANS' PROGRAMS

- Limit user fees and prescription co-pay increases at VA medical facilities
- Require the VA to accept licensed civilian medical/dental provider prescriptions
- Pursue the VA to have chiropractic care where possible
- Allow the use of Medicare in VA on a reimbursable basis for enrolled Medicare-eligible veterans for their non-service connected care (known as "VA-Medicare Subvention")
- Review the veterans' disability evaluation, benefits claim, and appeals process
- Ensure sufficient capacity and full funding at national cemeteries
- Closely monitor the Wounded Warrior Act provisions and the continual improvements to Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) improvements

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

- Pursue technical changes to the Post 9-11 GI Bill
- Enhance financial education initiatives and services for Airmen and their families
- Provide military members and their families' in-state tuition rates at federally supported state universities and colleges—regardless of residency requirements
- Provide 10-year portability for Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) benefits
- Provide an accruable month-per-month Active Duty rate for mobilized members of the Selected Reserve
- Ensure full funding of the Impact Aid Program

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

- Eliminate the Career Status Bonus (CSB/REDUX) program along with providing an opportunity for those who enrolled to repay the “bonus” in order to receive their full retirement benefit
- Prevent attempts to modify or amend the current active duty military retirement system
- Provide Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) for service incurred disabilities
- Repeal the Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act (USFSPA)
- Provide eligible beneficiaries over 65 years of age with a permanent ID card

ANG AND AFRC

- Reduce the earliest Guard & Reserve retirement compensation age from 60 to 55
- Provide employer and self-employed tax credits
- Obtain appropriations to reimburse travel expenses for Unit Training Assemblies (UTAs); approved, but not yet funded by Congress
- Set Air Reserve Technicians' retirement eligibility for unreduced benefits to age 50 with 20 years of service (YOS), or at any age with 25 YOS--if honorably, involuntarily separated
- Eliminate the annual cap on inactive duty training points creditable for retirement
- Enhance Selected Reserve Montgomery GI Bill (SR-MGIB) benefits
- Award full veterans' benefit status to Guard & Reserve members who complete 20 qualifying years of service, but do not otherwise qualify as veterans under title 38