

**Legislative Liaison Report
To Board and Members
November 12, 2016**

Now that our election cycle is over, it is time to review our lobbying efforts for the year. I hope that all readers were rewarded with the election of some of their favorite political leaders.

During the late summer, MOAA asked us to visit our Senate and House representatives expressing our needs for certain provisions of the Defense Authorization Bill to be considered. You may recall that the bill was in a conference committee reconciling differences between the two bills passed by each chamber. At issue were differing versions concerning TRICARE fee increases, housing allowance reductions for those on active duty, military pay increases and the perennial attempt at phasing out the Widows Tax.

Keep in mind that an appropriations bill had already passed and was signed by the President. The Authorization Bill specifies where the money will go and each house passed their own versions in the spring and were supposed to confer and reconcile the differences.

Apparently they are still conferring, as no progress has been made all these months later! The new year is upon us, a new president and congress is coming, and the armed forces need to know their budgets and allocations for the year.

I called the legislative office at MOAA and they assume that some sort of continuing resolution will probably be passed. These bills continue old measures going forward until changed by new legislation. I assume that this means starting from scratch, as bills die with the old congress.

It should be an interesting year unfolding as the new President apparently has a different philosophy concerning our relationships with both friend and foe. Military exercises currently underway will undoubtedly be reviewed. The one constant is that the military works for the civilian leadership and responds to orders by the President.

One thing that never changes is the need to convince our elected officials of the needs of our serving and retired military and our requirement to visit their offices with our message.

During the preparation of this report, I was called by the president of the Royal Niagara Military Institute (RNMI) confirming my attendance at a board meeting this evening. During our conversation, he asked me about the function and relevancy of the American Electoral College. I may be the legislative liaison for our local MOAA chapter, but I must admit to being at a loss trying to explain this unique American institution.

Respectfully Submitted,

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