



# MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION

## LEGISLATIVE VICE PRESIDENT – LEGISLATIVE REPORT

23 April 2014

Officers, Delegates, Members and Guests of the 47<sup>th</sup> MNGEA General Conference

Legislative actions remain a grassroots effort. The only way we will ever be successful is by having a large membership contact their representatives, be it at city, local, state or federal level. MNGEA, NGA-MN, EANGUS, NGAUS, AGAUS or any of the other military affiliated associations cannot effect change alone.

The true power is in numbers, the more members represented the more powerful we become. 36 military and veteran organizations collaborate in Washington DC in the Military Coalition. The more members each of the separate organizations represent the stronger the whole. Delegates assembled here today, the more of these organizations you belong to the more votes you get.

While it remains important for each of these organizations to establish a legislative agenda and focus each year, without membership the requests to the Minnesota Legislature and United States Congress will go unanswered.

In Minnesota we have been well represented for multiple years, both our Senators are extremely active regularly authoring bills for legislation benefitting members of the Armed Services. We have representation from both sides of the isle on the House Armed Services Committee and our entire Congressional Delegation is represented in the Senate and House National Guard Caucus, respectively.

We must continue to be vigilant that our benefits do not get reduced or eliminated. We have made significant strides in legislative activity. The use of the VoterVoice App provides us with an effective up-to-date tool to reach our elected officials. Recently, we used it to promote action in support of a tax incentive for military retirees. We found it's effectiveness by immediate response of several legislators, both in the House and Senate.

Last February the MNGEA Board hosted a legislative workshop in St. Paul. We are planning to host another next year. The exact dates are yet to be determined, but will coincide with the most effective dates too present new bills.

Fellow members, it has been my distinct pleasure to serve as your Legislative Chair for the past year. Mr. Vice President, I move for acceptance of my report.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Kennedy".

Ray Kennedy

Vice President for Legislation



# MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

47<sup>th</sup> Annual General Membership Conference  
22-23 APRIL 2016  
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Officers, Delegates, Members and Guests of the 47<sup>th</sup> MNGEA General Conference

The Resolutions Committee met on 22 April 2016. The follow members participated in the committee deliberations: Ashley Watson, Charles Benda, Brian Theis, Emmett Klucas, Marcus Erickson, Steve Gerads and Chair Ray Kennedy

The committee discussed current military related issues before the State Legislature and National Congress. Additionally, the committee discussed nine resolutions for adoption by the general membership. We have formatted the resolutions in accordance with our operating instruction and hereby present them for adoption.

At this time I would like to thank the Resolutions Committee members for their assistance to formulating this year's legislative agenda for our Association.

Mr. President, I move for acceptance of this report

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Kennedy", with a long, sweeping underline.

Ray Kennedy  
Executive Vice President,  
MNGEA Legislation & Resolutions Committee Chair



# Draft Resolution 16-1

## For

# MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

**Date:** 15 April 2016

**POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone):** Ray Kennedy, ray.kennedy7@outlook.com, 651 402-8786

**Chapter/Area:** Ch 1, area 10

**Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG):** Joint

**Type Resolution** - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: **New**

**Relating To** - Keep this as simple as possible: (EX: Retirement, Combat Vehicles, C-130 Modernization, etc): **Toxic Exposure legislation**

**Background** - Identifies the policy, modernization program, equipment, or change being proposed - and why; be specific and as brief as possible; spell out all acronyms:

Burn pit exposure and various other toxic exposures are cause of illnesses among veterans of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan failed to make the 2016 list of peer-reviewed medical research programs that Congress requires the Defense Department to conduct. The absence of burn pit exposure on the list was confirmed on Tuesday by a spokeswoman for the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs at Fort Detrick, Maryland

Sen Amy Klobuchar introduced S. 2679 a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a center of excellence in the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of health conditions relating to exposure to burn pits. A companion bill, H.R. 2237 was introduced in the House. Both have been forwarded to their Veterans and/or military affairs committees

**Proposed Recommendation** - Specific item or program being advocated; spell out all acronyms. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)

- Urge the MN CODEL to co-sponsor H.R. 2237 (Sen. Franken already supports S. 2679)
- Urge EANGUS support to urge Congress to enact this legislation

2d Doug Wortham AIF

Resolution #:   1        Date Rec'd:  15 Apr 16       Disposition:  recommend adoption 

Submit NLT 20 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: [legislative@mngea.com](mailto:legislative@mngea.com)

*Resolutions are the means by which we, as an organization, decide what we do and support. Resolutions can be written to do something as simple as recognize a host unit or chapter for putting on a conference. Resolutions are most commonly used to declare legislative initiative that we will pursue as a state organization. You as a member can help to establish the goals and focus of this organization by submitting a resolution to be considered before general membership of MNGEA. The resolution is referred to committee and is reviewed at the committee breakout on the first day of conference. The legislative committee chair will then present your resolution before the general membership for approval. MNGEA needs YOU to help bring issues to our membership that concerns the soldiers and airmen of the Minnesota National Guard. If you have an idea, do some research and send your resolutions in to the addresses listed below. If you have questions or need assistance, contact the Legislative Vice President, Resolutions Chair, MNGEA President, or the state office.*



# Draft Resolution 16-2 For MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

Date: 15 April 2016

POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone): Ray Kennedy, ray.kennedy7@outlook.com, 651 402-8786

Chapter/Area: Ch 1, area 10

Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG): Joint

Type Resolution - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: New

Relating To - Keep this as simple as possible: (Ex: Retirement, Combat Vehicles, C-130 Modernization, etc): SSLI clarification for briefings

Background - Identifies the policy, modernization program, equipment, or change being proposed - and why; be specific and as brief as possible; spell out all acronyms:

Compel state compliance with 37 Unites States Code 707 and eliminate any misinformation about the application of the State Sponsored Life Insurance Program.

At the crux of the issue, our National Guard JAG Corps is not always in agreement with each other about the application of this program, and whether or not to treat it like a Non-Federal Entity, even though the Joint Ethics Regulation under Chapter 3, Paragraph 209 - Endorsements specifically authorizes it as a genuine federal entity like that of the SGLI.

Proposed Recommendation - Specific item or program being advocated; spell out all acronyms. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)

- Urge Minnesota Congress to enact a State Law compelling compliance with 37 USC 707 and the Joint Ethics Regulation, Ch 3, para 209
- Collaborate with NGA-MN

2d Dianne Metcalf APIF

Resolution #:   2   Date Rec'd:  15 Apr 2016  Disposition:  recommend adoption 

Submit NLT 20 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: [legislative@mngea.com](mailto:legislative@mngea.com)

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# Draft Resolution 16-3 For MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

Date: 19 April 2016

POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone): Ray Kennedy, ray.kennedy7@outlook.com, 651 402-8786

Chapter/Area: 1 / 10

Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG): Joint

Type Resolution - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: New

Relating To – Businesses to be Enabled to Direct Pay for Tricare Reserve Select

**Background** – Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), more commonly referred to as ObamaCare, businesses are required to provide affordable health care to Americans. If a business does not provide care, they risk to incur monetary penalties. During a testimony before the House Veterans Affairs Committee, EANGUS offered up an entirely new idea that the subcommittee found to be intriguing. Executive Director Al Garver suggested that small business owners be somehow enabled to directly pay for the Tricare Reserve Select policy premiums of an employee who is a Guardsman or Reservist. By paying the single rate of \$51.62 or the family rate of \$195.81 per month, a small business owner could save from \$3,000 to \$10,000 or more per year, per individual. This number would be an immediate and significant incentive to hire Guardsmen and Reservists. Best of all, Guard members are already entitled to purchase these policies, so no new program needs to be developed.

**Proposed Recommendation** – To urge the Congress of the United States to enact legislation enabling businesses to direct pay the Tricare Reserve Select premium for Reserve Component (RC) members.

2d Patterson AP1F

Resolution #: 3 Date Rec'd: 19 Apr 16 Disposition: recommend adoption

Submit NLT 15 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: [legislative@mngea.com](mailto:legislative@mngea.com)

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# Draft Resolution 16-4 For MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

Date: 15 April 2016

POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone): Ray Kennedy, ray.kennedy7@outlook.com, 651 402-8786

Chapter/Area: Ch 1, area 10

Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG): Joint

Type Resolution - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: New

Relating To - Keep this as simple as possible: (Ex: Retirement, Combat Vehicles, C-130 Modernization, etc): Veteran Status and Preference in MN

**Background** - Identifies the policy, modernization program, equipment, or change being proposed - and why; be specific and as brief as possible; spell out all acronyms:

Under current regulation and law, a member of the armed services is not granted veterans status unless having served for a period of 181 consecutive days or greater on active federal duty. Reserve component members must serve for a period of twenty years or more and reach age sixty to become eligible for a retirement annuity. Reserve component member volunteers a minimum of ten percent of their life in service to their state and this great nation. Their service comes at a price to the service member, their family, their friends, and their employers.

For the past number of years, we urged this legislation on a National Level. Representative Tim Walz, MN1 and Sen John Boozman, AR annually introduced bills in the respective chamber of Congress. Last year this proposal was included in the original NDAA, later vetoed by President Obama. This provision was stricken from the second version of the 2015 NDAA.

**Proposed Recommendation** - Specific item or program being advocated; spell out all acronyms. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)

Urge the MN Congress to enact legislation to redefine the qualifications for veteran status to include Reserve component members who have successfully served twenty years or more in service to their state and this great nation. And, to provide Veterans Preference when applying for jobs in our great State, as well as, eligibility for other State benefits, such as veteran license plates, fishing and hunting licenses, etc.

2d Brian Teis AP1F

Resolution #:   4   Date Rec'd:  15 Apr 16  Disposition:  recommend adoption 

Submit NLT 20 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: legislative@mngear.com



# Draft Resolution 16-5 For MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

Date: 15 April 2016

POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone): Ray Kennedy, ray.kennedy7@outlook.com, 651 402-8786

Chapter/Area: Ch 1, area 10

Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG): Joint

Type Resolution - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: New

Relating To - Keep this as simple as possible: (Ex: Retirement, Combat Vehicles, C-130 Modernization, etc): TRICARE Enrollment Fee

**Background** - Identifies the policy, modernization program, equipment, or change being proposed - and why; be specific and as brief as possible; spell out all acronyms:

The Pentagon has proposed a series of TRICARE fee increases, outlined in the President's fiscal year 2017 budget. Congress has these measures under review.

The DoD proposal would require all retired service members, except those currently in TRICARE for Life, to pay an annual enrollment fee to participate in TRICARE. Without payment of the "participation" fee, access to TRICARE would be forfeit until the next open season. DoD proposed a one-time fee to access TRICARE for Life.

MNGEA believes Congress should reject the Pentagon plan.

**Proposed Recommendation** - Specific item or program being advocated; spell out all acronyms. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)

- Contact US Senators and Representatives
- Ask EANGUS to urge members of Congress to reject this DoD proposal

*2d Dwayne Keohstopp APIF*

Resolution #: <u>5</u>	Date Rec'd: <u>15 Apr 16</u>	Disposition: <u>recommend adoption</u>
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Submit NLT 20 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: [legislative@mngea.com](mailto:legislative@mngea.com)

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I write to urge your rejection of the Pentagon proposal, outlined in the President's fiscal year 2017 budget, which would require all retired service members pay an annual enrollment fee to participate in TRICARE, the military healthcare benefit earned and promised for a 20-or-more year career.

Specifically, I strongly oppose the DoD proposal to establish a TRICARE Standard enrollment or participation fee and believe Congress should reject this plan. TRICARE Standard is an earned benefit. Charging a participation fee changes the value of benefit. It breaks faith with currently serving members and those who have retired. Moreover, it reduces the earned entitlement to a simple insurance plan, which if not paid causes the service member to forfeit his earned benefit.

In addition, I strongly oppose the Pentagon recommendation to alter access to TRICARE for Life, the military program provided those military retirees age 65 or older and their families. The DoD proposal would establish for the first time ever a TFL enrollment fee to access the earned benefit. Uniformed service retirees and their families already are required to pay into Medicare part B in order to participate in the program. The DoD plan would push an additional payment on the backs of beneficiaries simply to participate in the program they earned and were promised in exchange for a military career of 20-years or more.

I also oppose the exorbitant changes the DoD plan would place on those who use TRICARE Prime, the managed service healthcare program for service members, dependents, and some under age 65 retirees. While there is need to improve the appointing system and referral process, the Pentagon proposal is excessive by any measure.

I ask your continued and unwavering support of military members and retired. I urge you to hold your ground against these misguided efforts to shift costs to those who have already given decades of service to our country.

Sincerely,





# Draft Resolution <sup>16-6</sup> 19-6 For MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

**Date:** 19 April 2016

**POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone):** Ray Kennedy, ray.kennedy7@outlook.com, 651 402-8786

**Chapter/Area:**

**Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG):** Joint

**Type Resolution** - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: New

**Relating To** - Keep this as simple as possible: (Ex: Retirement, Combat Vehicles, C-130 Modernization, etc): Amending 10 USC 1209, section 12304b

**Background** - Identifies the policy, modernization program, equipment, or change being proposed - and why; be specific and as brief as possible; spell out all acronyms:

Not all active duty orders make a service member eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits, even in certain locations where United States soldiers face combat-like situations. United States Code, title 10, chapter 1209, section 12304b, provides that when the Department of Defense determines that it is necessary to augment the active forces for a preplanned mission in support of a combatant command, the Department of Defense may order any unit of the selective reserve to active duty for not more than 365 days.

Active orders under United States Code, title 10, chapter 1209, section 12304b, are not included as a qualifying service for purposes of the Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits under United States Code, title 38, chapter 33. Military personnel activated under this authority are also not eligible to pre- and post-deployment health benefits for them and their families. Service under this order is also not eligible for reduction of the service members retirement age.

On September 13, 2014, more than 40 soldiers from the Minnesota National Guard's 204th Area Support Medical Company (ASMC) were deployed under United States Code, title 10, chapter 1209, section 12304b, on a nine-month active duty order to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt in support of the Multi-National Force and Observers (MFO). The MFO is an international peacekeeping force overseeing the terms of the 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. The Department of Defense is growing increasingly concerned about the dangerous conditions facing United States soldiers deployed to the Sinai Peninsula, as ISIS and other radical insurgents have increased their attacks against United States soldiers and military installations.

United States soldiers serving on the Sinai Peninsula face daily threats of violence, but are not eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits as a result of that service. Upon return from the nine-month active duty order, the 204th ASMC unit was notified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs that the unit's members were not eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits based on their nine-month deployment to the Sinai Peninsula. Approximately 400 soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, of the Minnesota National Guard are currently mobilizing to support the MFO mission in Sinai. The unit will deploy to Sinai in August of 2016 and the deployment is expected to last for nine months.

Approximately 300 airmen from the 148<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, of the Minnesota National Guard are presently deployed to South Korea under the same authority. They are supporting the US Pacific Command with a Theatre Security Package maintaining a deterrent against threats to regional security and stability. While presently a peaceful mission, the potential threat of escalation and resulting action from North Korea are ever present.

**Proposed Recommendation** - Specific item or program being advocated; spell out all acronyms. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)

Urge the MN CODEL to introduce legislation amending federal law to include active orders under United States Code, title 10, chapter 1209, section 12304b, for as a qualifying service for

- Purposes of the Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits under United States Code, title 38, chapter 33.
- Pre- and post-deployment health care
- Reduction of mandatory retirement below age 60.

Forward this resolution for inclusion at the EANGUS National Conference to urge Congress to enact legislation, amending 10 USC, chapter 1209, section 12304b

2d Patterson APIF

Resolution #:   6        Date Rec'd:  19 Apr 16       Disposition:  recommend adoption 

**Submit NLT 20 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: [legislative@mngca.com](mailto:legislative@mngca.com)**

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7194... 2d Patterson APIF



# Draft Resolution 16-7 For MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

Date: 15 April 2016

POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone): Marcus Erickson

Chapter/Area: Ch 1, area 10

Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG): Joint

Type Resolution - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: New

Relating To - Keep this as simple as possible: (Ex: Retirement, Combat Vehicles, C-130 Modernization, etc): Space – A travel

Background - Identifies the policy, modernization program, equipment, or change being proposed - and why; be specific and as brief as possible; spell out all acronyms:

The Reserve Components have become a Strategic Reserve. Both Guard and Reserve have become operationally as active as the Active Component. Yet, Space-A travel is not available for drilling Guard and Reservists.

Proposed Recommendation - Specific item or program being advocated; spell out all acronyms. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)

- Request EANGUS to urge DoD to amend regulations to allow Space-A travel for Reserve Component members at the same level as the Active Component

2d Kristin Von Eschen APIF

Resolution #: <u>7</u>	Date Rec'd: <u>22 Apr 16</u>	Disposition: <u>recommend adoption</u>
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Submit NLT 20 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: [legislative@mngea.com](mailto:legislative@mngea.com)

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# Draft Resolution 16-8 For MNGEA / EANGUS Resolutions Process

Date: 15 April 2016

POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone): Marcus Erickson

Chapter/Area: Ch , area

Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG): Joint

Type Resolution - "New" or "Change" to existing Standing Resolution; indicate resolution # & item: New

Relating To - Keep this as simple as possible: (Ex: Retirement, Combat Vehicles, C-130 Modernization, etc): Tax Incentive for Employers

Background - Identifies the policy, modernization program, equipment, or change being proposed - and why; be specific and as brief as possible; spell out all acronyms:

Membership in the National Guard and Reserve is beneficial to the State of Minnesota in countless ways. Reserve Component members are twice a citizen. Ready to defend the State and Nation at a moments' notice. Ready for support in natural disasters and any other requests from the Governor, State Legislature, the President and Congress.

Proposed Recommendation - Specific item or program being advocated; spell out all acronyms. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)

Request the State Legislature to provide tax incentives for employers to employ active drilling Guardsmen and Reservists

2d Robert Klinkner APIR

Resolution #: 8 Date Rec'd: 22 Apr 16 Disposition: recommend adoption

Submit NLT 20 April to: Mail to: Ray Kennedy, 2100 Brooke Lane, Hastings, MN 55033  
or email: [legislative@mngea.com](mailto:legislative@mngea.com)

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## Draft Resolution 16-9

Date: 15 April 2016

POC Making Input (name, e-mail, phone): Resolutions Committee

Chapter:

Category (Joint, ARNG, ANG): Joint

Type Resolution - New:

Relating To – Appreciation for the Hospitality and Efforts by the Minnesota National Guard Enlisted Association and the Holiday Inn Hotel, St. Cloud, MN

**Background** - The 47<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the Minnesota National Guard Enlisted Association met in St. Cloud, MN on 22 and 23 April 2016. The Holiday Inn Hotel staff and the MNGEA Board acted as gracious hosts and hostesses to National Guard members, their spouses and guests. The tireless efforts and dedication of the Conference Committee and the staff of the Holiday Inn Hotel, under direction of Brian Eikmeier made significant contributions to ensure a most successful General Conference.

**Proposed Recommendation** - That the members and guests of the 47<sup>th</sup> annual Minnesota National Guard Enlisted Association conference show their sincere appreciation for the efforts displayed by the conference committee and the Holiday Inn Hotel staff.

*2d Sgt. Thomas APIF*

Resolution #: 9 Date Rec'd: 15 Apr 2016 Disposition: Recommend adoption



## MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION (MNGEA)

22 April 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR MNGEA CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

FROM: MARK J. WASSERBAUER/MNGEA STATE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: President's Report for 2016 State Conference, 22-23 April

Dear fellow MNGEA Members,

Welcome members to the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual State Conference here in St. Cloud. This past year has been another busy and productive year for us.

Here is a quick synopsis of our highlights since last April.

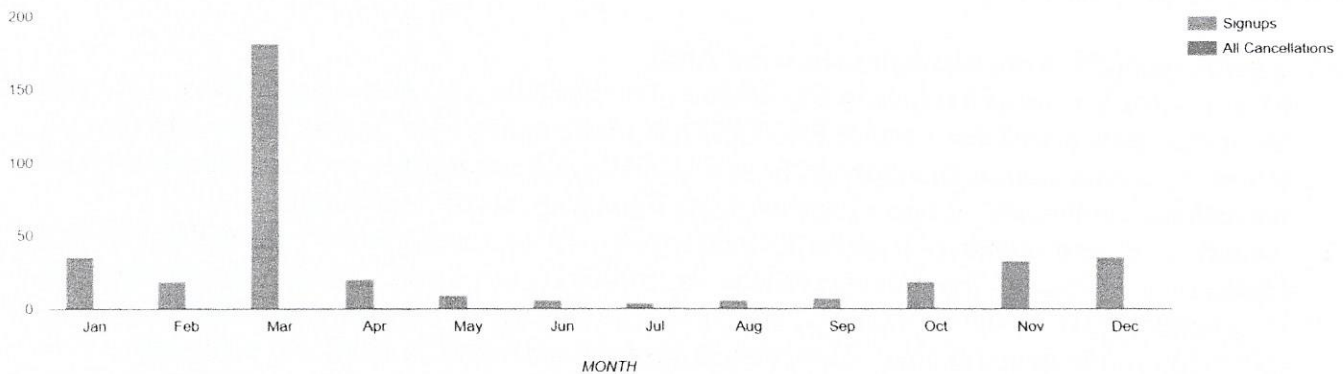
- May ... Area V Caucus has held in Des Moines, IA. For those that do not know, Area V is made up of nine state associations under EANGUS and meets annually to discuss topics effecting our fellow state associations, hear updates from EANGUS, and coordinate travel and participation for the national conference. It was a busy weekend filled with lots of information.
- August ... eleven members traveled to Indianapolis, IN to attend the 44<sup>th</sup> EANGUS National Conference. Two of the eleven traveled on military orders and attended the Professional Development side of the conference. If you haven't been to a National Conference, I strongly encourage you to attend if able. This event is strongly supported by NGB and really opens your eyes to how important our State and National Association is and how much more we need to do.
- January ... Quarterly Newsletter mailed to membership. Monthly email blasts of new stories from webpage goes out to the masses. If you opted out of receiving our emails through your profiles, you probably didn't receive them or they won't to your SPAM folder. This is a great way to get a monthly recap of all the articles that are posted to our web page, important issues affecting our members and retirees. If you haven't updated your email addresses within your profiles or opted not to receive emails, please update and/or reconsider. You are missing lots of great information!
- February ... VP Kennedy traveled to Washington DC to attend the EANGUS Legislative Workshop. Lots of great information provided from EANGUS Legislative Director Scott Bousum. New VoterVoice App was introduced to the states and new EANGUS initiatives were provided to states. Ray was able to personally visit all ten CODEL offices on Capitol Hill, discussing the "hot buttons" for the Enlisted Association and the State.
- February ... MNGEA hosted the first State Legislative Workshop in many decades at Cedar Street Armory. The group was small but was a good foundation to build on. A few members had appointments with State Representatives and Senators. Two main talking points (State Tax Exemption for Retiree Pay and Veteran Status for Title 38) were provided in addition to Duluth Airport Runway Expansion project endorsement.
- March ... MNGEA uses VoterVoice to send Call To Action message 2016-1: HF137 & SF295 (Minnesota tax exemption for retirees/survivors pay).
- April ... New MNGEA Recruiting posters are introduced to several armories. Working on a plan to distribute them statewide.

As we roll into 2016, I would encourage our members to be ambassadors of MNGEA and introduce fellow Soldiers and Airmen to our association. Social media continues to be the new medium of communication. Our Facebook® page has been doing well but we'd love to see more postings from all our members. To

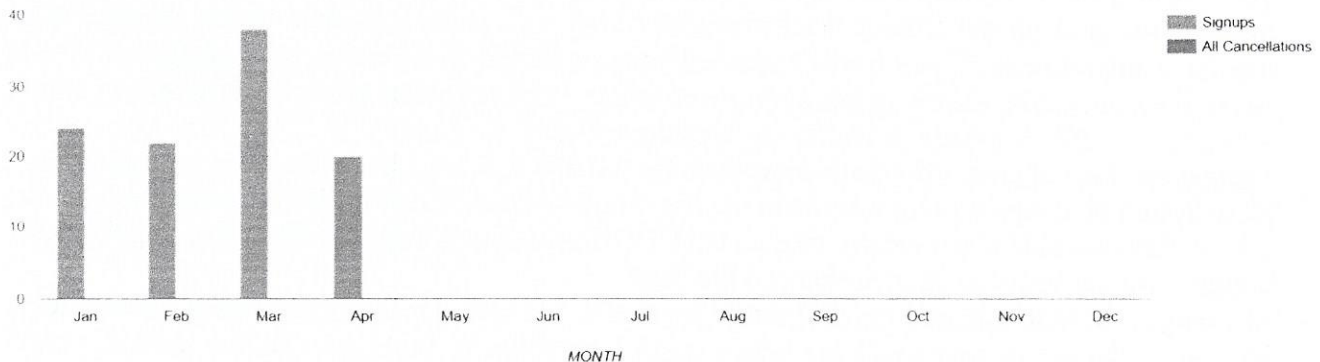
find us, simply type in MNGEA in the search block, find our association page, and request to become a member. We now have a MNGEA Twitter account also (@MNGEA2). You can also find the link on our new web page. It's that simple!

Priorities for 2016: Membership, Legislative Initiatives, and Communication! Nothing has changed in my priorities. Our state membership goal has been 1200 for the year and unfortunately, we did not make that goal. As of today, our membership sits at 823 members but the positive thing to note is, we are seeing a steady increase in the number of online renewals (especially in LIFE memberships) over the last six months (reference the charts below). I believe the new recruiting poster boards, broadening our use of Social Media (Facebook and now Twitter) and monthly email blasts of posted Blog articles from our web page have made a big difference. We have been getting a strong push from our senior enlisted leaders in spreading the word about MNGEA! I truly believe we can get there in 2016!

## 2015



## 2016



As we all know, budget dollars continues to shrink within the DoD and VA budgets. If you haven't noticed, we have been seeing a trend of many veterans programs and benefits slowly going away. We continue to work hard with our legislative leaders and the contacts we've made in DC and in St. Paul over the last few years have been valuable to our organization. We plan to continue building those relationships through our newly revamped State Legislative Workshop program.

The toughest area to tackle continues to be communication. Our Blog page has been successful. Since rolling out the new web page, we have posted 267 articles on our webpage and have recently set up our email server to automatically send monthly email blasts of posted articles to our membership (this only

works if you update your email addresses on the profile though). We recently created a MNGEA Twitter account and our working on expanding to SnapChat, LinkedIn and Instagram. Our webpage continues to grow and improve. We recently password protected some of our pages to better protect our members. MNGEA has worked with EANGUS to use the VoterVoice app to push legislative initiatives. These are all steps in the right direction and I truly believe this will help our Association grow (in membership and support), showing others we are viable and relevant to the needs of today's Soldier and Airmen.

In closing, I would like take a moment to thank you – our members! At the conclusion of this conference, I will be stepping down as your President. It has been a privilege to be your State President these past six years! I had some lofty goals for our Association when I became President and although some of them did not materialize, I believe we have made improvements along the way. With that, I wish to make one last request. Our Association cannot survive without involvement. I challenge each member to talk to your younger Airmen and Soldiers about the Association and what it can do for US. Whether you are a Military Technician, AGR, or Drill Status Guardsman, the Association works issues on all fronts. In order for us to continue growing, we need new ideas and perspectives! We need involvement! Many of our professional development courses focus around generational gaps. Baby boomers, Gen Xers, and today's Gen Y's (or Millennials). This is where our Association needs lean towards. Question is ... how do we engage them? How can we get them more actively involved? Invite them to become a Chapter President or Area Director. Ask them to join in on a Board meeting (in person or through VTC or teleconference). Sponsor them to the Conference! It's that's easy! Now is the time to get involved. Thank you all for a great six years and for all your past support.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark J. Wasserbauer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark J. Wasserbauer  
State President, MNGEA