



MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION (MNGEA)

10 April 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR MNGEA MEMBERSHIP

FROM: MARK J. WASSERBAUER/STATE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Legislative Report for 2025 State Conference, 11-12 April

The State President and two delegates (Lisa Erikson and Tyler Jackson) attended the EANGUS Legislative Workshop 23-26 Feb 2025 in Washington DC. There were seven legislative priorities set forth by EANGUS to the State Associations. These were either carry-overs from the previous year or initiatives created from Resolutions passed at the EANGUS Conference in Detroit last August.

NGA-MN visited the Minnesota Congressional Delegates (CODEL) the week prior in Washington DC and presented three initiatives on behalf of the Minnesota Adjutant General, MG Shawn Manke. CMSgt Lisa Erikson attended as a delegate of MNGEA but is also the current Minnesota National Guard Command Senior Enlisted Leader (CSEL) and was able to provide these White Papers for MNGEA and these were also included in the CODEL packets our team presented to all ten (10) Minnesota CODEL offices. Most visits were with Legislative or Military Liaison staffers but we were fortunate enough to meet directly with Congressman Pete Stauber (MN-8) and Congresswoman Kelly Morrison (MN-3). Congresswoman Morrison currently sits on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and was very appreciative of those who serve, having family members who have served in the past. The Richard Star Act was previously passed during the 118th Congress and had plenty of support across the board but did not get enacted in the NDAA last session. Nine (9) of ten (10) MN CODEL had co-sponsored the Richard Star Act, only Congressman Tom Emmer did not but was the House Majority Whip and had abstained due to his leadership role.

The following White Papers were provided by EANGUS and MN JFHQ.

EANGUS Initiatives

- Major Richard Star Act Attachment 1
- GI Bill Parity Attachment 2
- TRICARE for All Attachment 3
- TRICARE Extension for Young Adults Attachment 4
- National Guard Child Tax Credit Attachment 5
- 25 for 25 Fighter Missions Attachment 6
- Retention of Enlistment Incentives for T32 Attachment 7

MN TAG Initiatives

- State Partnership Program (SPP) Attachment 8
- ASVAB Congressional One-Pager Attachment 9



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- Communication Plan for ASVAB Modernization Attachment 10

Bills re-introduced in the 119th Congress and MN CODEL co-sponsors:

- Richard Star Act (S. 1032 and H.R. 2102)
 - o Brad Finstad (MN-1)
 - o Angie Craig (MN-2)
 - o Kelly Morrison (MN-3)
 - o Betty McCollum (MN-4)
 - o Iihan Omar (MN-5)
 - o Pete Stauber (MN-8)
- GII Bill Parity (S. 649 and H.R. 1423)
 - o Angie Craig (MN-2)

Several other military and/or veteran centric bills have been introduced in the 119th Congress. MNGEA and EANGUS will be watching closely as they progress.

If members wish to submit legislative resolutions, all state resolutions must be submitted to EANGUS by 15 May in order to be considered at the EANGUS Conference by the Resolutions Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

MARK J. WASSERBAUER
State President
MNGEA



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ATTACHMENT 1

Major Richard Star Act

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to pass the “Major Richard Star Act” to eliminate pay and disability offset.

The Major Richard Star Act was re-introduced in the 118th Congress once again as H.R.1282 and S.344 by Rep. Gus Bilirakis and Sen. Jon Tester respectively. This bill provides that combat-disabled military retirees with fewer than 20 years of creditable service may concurrently receive, without reduction, veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). Currently thousands of veterans continue to be subjected to an offset that restricts them from receiving their full, earned compensation.

In 2004, Congress eliminated the offset for concurrent receipt for retirees rated at 50 percent disabled or higher. Those who are 40% disabled and below and/or those unable to complete 20 years of service due to service-connected injuries or illness have an offset in pay that prevents them from receiving their full compensation. Of those, around 42,000 retirees receive CRSC due to injuries incurred in combat.

EANGUS has long argued that retired pay and veteran service-connected disability compensation are fundamentally different benefits granted for various reasons. Military retired pay is an earned benefit for vested years of service. Service-connected disability compensation is for injury and to deny retired pay because of a disability is an injustice.

The Major Richard Star Act would provide total offset relief. Former Service members who were medically retired from the military with less than 20 years of service (Chapter 61 retirees) AND are eligible for CRSC would no longer have their benefits reduced by the current offset.

This legislation received an overwhelming majority of cosponsors in both chambers with 326 in the House and 74 in the Senate in the 118th Congress. If the legislation had been brought to a vote, this would have passed with the cosponsors alone. However, a deciding vote was delayed once again until the session ended. EANGUS urges the 119th Congress to reintroduce this bill and be the finalizing vote to ensure that this major issue is no longer ignored or delayed.

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.



MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION (MNGEA)

ATTACHMENT 2

National Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to pass legislation to establish G.I. Bill parity for the National Guard and all other reserve components.

Education continues to be a major incentive for joining the military and continuing to serve. During the 118th Congress, H.R.7543 and S.3873, both titled “Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2024”, were introduced by Rep. Mike Levin and Sen. Jerry Moran respectively, to equalize military duty status eligibility for Post 9/11 GI Bill educational benefits. A similar bill passed in the House during the 117th Congress but did not receive a vote in the Senate.

This legislation would count every day in uniform – weekend drills, annual training, and state and federal active duty – towards Post 9/11 GI Bill eligibility. Currently, only federal active duty is counted and is typically only available while deployed.

The need for parity has been highlighted by the unprecedented use of the National Guard and other reserve components. Since the tragedy of September 11th, National Guard service members have been activated over 12 million times, not including domestic missions to provide pandemic relief, natural disaster response, border security, and protecting the U.S. Capitol. Many of these missions are ongoing, with no clear end in sight.

Unlike active duty service, a day in the National Guard or reserve components does not always count as a day of service for benefits. Regular weekend training days, annual training, and state level domestic activations do not count toward benefits. As wars wind down, federal deployments abroad have decreased, making it more difficult for reserve component service members to earn federal benefits, such as the Post 9/11 GI Bill, despite frequent domestic missions.

It is crucial to ensure that reserve component service members can earn the same benefit under the Post 9/11 GI Bill as their active duty counterparts. We urge the 119th Congress to reintroduce this legislation and accelerate its’ passage, thus marking the most impactful change to the Post 9-11 GI Bill for the reserve components since the program’s inception.

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.



MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION (MNGEA)

ATTACHMENT 3

TRICARE for All

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to pass legislation to provide health care for the National Guard and all other reserve components.

Healthcare coverage is one of the top issues affecting the readiness and deployability of the National Guard. During the 118th Congress, H.R.4221, titled "Healthcare for our Troops Act", was introduced by the now Senator Andy Kim to provide TRICARE for all members of the reserve components at no cost to the service member. The primary challenge ahead is to secure appropriations, as funding has not been allocated for this option. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that the benefits will significantly outweigh the costs.

The National Guard must maintain the same medical, physical, and individual standards as the active component but does not receive the same healthcare benefit to meet and maintain those standards. In the early 2000s, as the country demanded more from the National Guard, TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) was established to enhance service members' readiness by offering an affordable healthcare option for them and their families. The growing need for a stronger, more prepared National Guard highlights the issue of medical readiness. While TRS provided a healthcare option, it was not an immediate or guaranteed solution.

- If a member enrolls in the TRS program, and their duty status changes, they may be automatically enrolled into TRICARE Prime. However, once their duty status reverts back and their TRICARE Prime coverage ends, there is no automatic re-enrollment. This can lead to a loss of health care coverage before TRS is reinstated.
- Annual health assessments focus on evaluating health readiness rather than providing solutions to identified problems. These evaluations may be conducted during drill weekends, which means sacrificing limited and valuable training time.
- The variety of healthcare treatments and coverage options results in health care records being scattered across several locations, such as duty stations, TDY locations, civilian providers. With no centralized tracking system, the necessary data for military service may not be requested or retained, making it extremely difficult to monitor deployable standards.

These are just some of the issues that will be addressed by passing TRICARE for all legislation. This is both an individual care issue and a readiness issue for the National Guard. We urge the 119th Congress to reintroduce this legislation and ensure its' passage for the benefit of our service members in the National Guard.

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.



MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION (MNGEA)

ATTACHMENT 4

TRICARE Extension for Young Adults

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to pass legislation to provide an extension for dependent coverage for TRICARE for the National Guard and all other reserve components.

I. Description

This resolution seeks to eliminate the government exemption within the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that allows TRICARE to offer dependent coverage only up to age 21 (or 23 for full-time students), instead of the mandated 26 years for all other health plans.

II. Business Case

Current State:

- Under the ACA, private and employer-sponsored health plans must provide coverage for dependents up to age 26.
- TRICARE, the health care program for uniformed service members and their families, currently cuts off dependent coverage at age 21, or 23 if the dependent is a full-time college student.
- Exceptions exist for severely disabled dependents who can receive extended coverage beyond these ages.
- Dependents can opt into TRICARE Young Adult (TYA) after these age thresholds but must pay the full premium without DoD subsidies.

Discrepancy:

- This difference stems from an exemption in the ACA specifically for government health programs like TRICARE, creating an inequity in healthcare access for military families compared to civilians.

Legislative Precedent:

- The "Health Care Fairness for Military Families Act of 2023" (HR 1045 and S956) was introduced in the 118th Congress to address this issue, aiming to align TRICARE with the ACA's dependent coverage mandate.

III. Resolution

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States advocates for legislative change to ensure that TRICARE extends coverage for all qualified dependents to the age of 26, matching the standards set by the ACA for commercial insurance plans. This resolution emphasizes:

- **Equity:** Ensuring that military families have the same health care benefits for their young adult dependents as civilian families under the ACA.



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- **Retention and Morale:** Improved health care benefits could enhance the quality of life for service members, potentially impacting retention rates positively.
- **Health and Well-being:** Continuous coverage without gaps would promote better health management among young adults from military families, potentially reducing long-term health care costs.

IV. Implementation

- **Legislative Action:** Congress should amend existing laws to remove the exemption for government health plans from the ACA's dependent coverage extension.
- **Funding:** Address how the expansion of coverage would be funded, possibly through reallocation within the military health system budget or through new appropriations.
- **Timeline:** Propose a reasonable timeline for implementation to ensure all stakeholders are prepared for the change.

V. Conclusion

Extending TRICARE coverage for young adults to age 26 not only aligns with broader health policy goals of the ACA but also supports military families, acknowledging their unique sacrifices. This legislative action would demonstrate a commitment to parity in healthcare benefits for all American families.

VI. References

- ACA, Title 42 USC Sec 2714
- Healthcare.gov: Young Adults and the Health Care Law
- CMS: Adult Child Coverage Fact Sheet
- HHS: FAQ on Young Adults and the Affordable Care Act
- Healthcare.gov: Where Can I Read the Affordable Care Act?

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.



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ATTACHMENT 5

National Guard Child Care Tax Credit

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to pass legislation to provide a child care tax credit for the National Guard and all other reserve components.

I. Introduction

This section of the white paper focuses on the detailed economic impact of implementing the National Guard Child Care Tax Credit. By addressing the child care challenges faced by National Guard members, this legislation not only supports military personnel but also stimulates local economies, reduces public expenditure on social services, and enhances workforce participation.

II. Economic Benefits for National Guard Members

- **Reduced Absenteeism:** The lack of accessible child care significantly contributes to absenteeism during mandatory drills. By providing local child care options, this tax credit could decrease absentee rates, directly improving military readiness and efficiency. Research suggests that each percentage point reduction in absenteeism can save millions in operational costs and increase the effectiveness of training sessions.
- **Increased Retention:** High-quality, accessible child care can be a deciding factor for service members considering whether to continue or leave service. Better retention rates mean less expenditure on recruitment and training of new personnel, which can run into billions annually for the military.

III. Economic Stimulus for Local Child Care Businesses

- **Revenue Increase:** The tax credit would encourage child care providers to expand services or improve quality to meet the demand from National Guard families. This could lead to increased revenue through both military and civilian clientele due to enhanced reputation and capacity.
- **Job Creation:** With increased demand, child care facilities might hire additional staff, contributing to local job creation. Each new job in child care can have a multiplier effect, boosting local economies through increased consumer spending.
- **Business Sustainability:** The tax benefit would help stabilize child care businesses, many of which operate on thin margins. This could lead to fewer closures, ensuring a stable supply of child care services in the community.

IV. Broader Economic Impacts

- **Economic Growth:** By supporting local businesses, the legislation indirectly fosters economic growth in areas where National Guard members live, which are often in rural or less economically developed regions. This could lead to increased local tax revenues and economic activity.
- **Reduction in Public Costs:**
 - **Child Poverty:** Studies show that accessible child care can reduce child poverty rates by allowing more parents to work or work more hours. This, in turn, reduces the need for public assistance programs, thereby lowering government expenditure. For instance, the



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expanded Child Tax Credit has demonstrated significant poverty reduction effects, suggesting similar benefits from targeted child care credits.

- **Education and Health:** Providing stable child care can lead to better educational outcomes and health for children, reducing long-term societal costs related to education and health care services.

- **Workforce Participation:**

- **Parental Employment:** The availability of child care directly impacts parents' ability to engage in employment. Data from various studies, including those on the Child Tax Credit, indicate that parents, especially mothers, are more likely to enter or increase their workforce participation when child care is affordable and accessible.

- **Economic Productivity:** Increased workforce participation translates into higher economic productivity, potentially leading to a GDP increase. The Center for American Progress has highlighted that reducing child poverty through such measures can have macroeconomic benefits, potentially adding hundreds of billions to the economy annually.

V. **Cost-Benefit Analysis**

- **Initial Cost vs. Long-term Savings:** While there's an initial cost associated with the tax credit, the long-term benefits, such as reduced welfare costs, lower military recruitment expenses, and increased local economic activity, could outweigh these costs. A detailed cost-benefit analysis, considering state-specific data, would be necessary for a precise estimate but generally, investments in child care have shown a positive return on investment.

- **Inflation and Tax Revenue:** The economic activity stimulated by this credit could contribute to increased tax revenues from both income and sales taxes, potentially offsetting the costs of the credit over time.

VI. **Conclusion**

The National Guard Child Care Tax Credit would not only alleviate immediate child care issues for Guard members but also stimulate economic development, reduce public spending in various sectors, and enhance workforce participation. This detailed economic impact analysis supports the need for Congress to consider this resolution as a strategic investment in both military readiness and community welfare.

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.



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ATTACHMENT 6

25 for 25 Fighter Missions

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to ensure the Air National Guard maintains the 25 fighter missions it currently provides by legislating the recapitalization of units at a one for one rate as the Air Force divests legacy combat aircraft.

The 25 Air National Guard (ANG) fighter squadrons are essential to the United States air defense and homeland security. These squadrons provide a highly skilled and ready force of experienced pilots, maintainers, and aircraft that can be rapidly mobilized in times of crisis. Additionally, the ANG is pivotal in training new pilots and maintainers and supporting civil authorities during natural disasters and other emergencies.

Charged with defending United States airspace against enemy aircraft, the ANG's 25 fighter squadrons constitute 21% of the total Air Force, 30% of the United States' total combat power, and carry out 94% of the homeland defense air combat mission – all while consuming a mere 7% of the Air Force's total budget.

As an integral component of the Air Force's Total Force Concept, the ANG is critical to overall wartime readiness. During conflicts, the ANG can be rapidly mobilized to bolster the active duty Air Force. The 25 fighter squadrons are exceptionally well-trained and equipped.

The ANG also plays a crucial role in training new pilots and maintainers. These squadrons provide a realistic training environment for pilots and teach maintainers the latest aircraft systems, ensuring that the Air Force maintains a highly trained force capable of meeting any challenge.

In the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), there is language that requires the Secretary of the Air Force to develop a plan to sustain and recapitalize all 25 fighter aircraft squadrons in the Air National Guard. This report is to be delivered no later than July 1, 2025. EANGUS eagerly awaits this report as any reduction in the Air National Guard's force structure directly diminishes the nation's combat power. Therefore, maintaining the ANG's 25 fighter squadrons is critical to the current national defense strategy.

We urge the 119th Congress to pursue any possible avenues to ensure that all 25 fighter squadrons across the Air National Guard retain their flying mission to continue protecting and defending our nation.

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.



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ATTACHMENT 7

Retention of Enlistment Incentives for Title 32 AGR and Technicians

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to pass legislation to modify existing retention policies for the National Guard and all other reserve components.

I. Introduction

This addresses the legislative need to modify existing policies regarding the forfeiture of enlistment and retention incentives when National Guard members transition to Title 32 Active Guard Reserve (AGR) or Technician positions. The current policy inadvertently discourages highly skilled and motivated individuals from advancing their careers within the National Guard framework.

II. Background

- **Current Policy:** Under current regulations, members of the National Guard who have been awarded bonuses or other incentives may lose these benefits upon transitioning to certain positions like T32 AGR or Technician. This is often due to contract language that does not account for lateral or internal career progression within the Guard.
- **Impact:** This policy has created a disincentive for career progression, potentially leading to a loss of talent, reduced experience levels in key roles, and a decrease in overall readiness and capability of the Guard units.

III. Business Case

- **Retention of Talent:** Allowing the retention of incentives would ensure that the National Guard retains a cadre of experienced, incentivized individuals who are more likely to continue contributing to the organization's mission.
- **Career Path Flexibility:** By removing financial penalties for career changes within the Guard, members would be more likely to pursue roles where they can offer the most value, enhancing both individual and organizational performance.
- **Recruitment and Morale:** Attracting and retaining top talent is crucial for maintaining a high-quality force. Knowing that bonuses and incentives are not lost upon taking up critical roles within the Guard could boost morale and job satisfaction.
- **Operational Readiness:** Continuity in leadership and technical roles directly impacts readiness. Losing personnel to external opportunities due to incentive forfeiture can disrupt unit cohesion and operational effectiveness.

IV. Proposed Legislation

- **Objective:** To amend existing incentive contracts to allow Guard members to retain their enlistment or retention bonuses when transitioning to T32 AGR or Technician positions.
- **Amendments to Incentive Contracts:**
 - **Explicit Language:** Contracts should be revised to clearly state that incentives are retained when moving to specified positions within the Guard.



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- **Retroactivity:** Consideration should be given to making this change retroactive for current members who have not yet transitioned but would under new terms.

- **Implementation:**

- **Legislative Action:** Congress should enact legislation that directs the Department of Defense to update all relevant policies and contracts.
- **Administrative Action:** The National Guard Bureau would need to implement these changes across all states, ensuring uniform application.

V. Expected Outcomes

- **Increased Applicant Pool:** More qualified individuals would apply for T32 AGR and Technician roles without fear of financial loss.
- **Enhanced Skill Retention:** The Guard would benefit from keeping experienced members in various capacities, enhancing overall skill levels.
- **Improved Morale and Loyalty:** Members would feel valued and supported in their career progression, potentially leading to higher retention rates.
- **Cost Efficiency:** While there might be an initial increase in incentive costs, the long-term benefits of retaining skilled personnel could outweigh these expenses through reduced recruitment and training costs for new hires.

VI. Legislative Support and References

- **Precedents:**

- Legislation like the Military Spouse Hiring Act shows Congress's willingness to support military personnel in career transitions without penalties.

- **Advocacy:** The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States supports this initiative, highlighting the need for policy reform to maintain a strong, skilled National Guard.

VII. Conclusion

The proposed legislative change to allow the retention of enlistment and retention incentives when accepting T32 AGR or Technician jobs is a necessary step to ensure the National Guard can retain its most capable members. This white paper recommends that Congress act swiftly to revise the current policies, thereby enhancing the Guard's operational effectiveness, morale, and readiness.

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.



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ATTACHMENT 8



State Partnership Program (SPP) -Increased Funding and Predictability



Call to Action Congress is urged to provide **full funding through Army and Air Force budgets** for the State Partnership Program (SPP) to address the growing number of partnerships and to **establish predictable funding mechanisms** that ensure the program's long-term effectiveness and stability. **Establish proportional funding increases** as new partner nations join the program.

Issue Overview Since its inception 30 years ago, the State Partnership Program has proven invaluable in fostering military and civilian relationships worldwide. SPP now supports 107 partner nations. Eight new partnerships are projected for 2025. However, funding has not kept pace with this growth, jeopardizing the program's ability to meet its mission requirements.

Key Concerns

- **Funding Disparities:** SPP continues to rely on Congressional Marks for new partner nation emerging requirements. Since 2022, SPP has grown from 95 partner nations to 107 in 2024. During this three-year period, funding levels remained relatively stagnant and even decreased during the greatest growth period in 2024. (see chart on back page)
- **Unpredictable Funding:** Without a fully committed SPP budget, the program continually relies on Congressional funding additions. During years of Continuing resolutions, SPP engagements are severely impacted without a predictable funding. Disruptions in funding cause execution rates to diminish due to canceled events exercises in the first and second quarter.

Proposed Actions

- **Proportional Funding Increases:** Increase SPP funding proportionally to support the number of growing partnerships ensuring sufficient resources for effective engagement and support.
- **Predictable Funding Mechanisms:** Transition from reliance on continuing resolutions to two-year appropriations, allowing for consistent planning and program execution.

Recommended Bill Language

- **Program Full Funding:** *"The Secretary of Defense shall program full funding of the State Partnership Program through Army and Air Force budgets to reflect the number of established partnerships, ensuring resources meet operational and engagement requirements."*
- **Predictable Appropriations:** *"Congress directs the Department of Defense to provide two-year funding for the State Partnership Program to ensure stability and enhance planning capabilities."*

Benefits of Reform

- **Stronger Global Relationships:** Adequate funding ensures SPP can continue building meaningful partnerships that enhance security cooperation and readiness.
- **Improved Resource Allocation:** Programmed, predictable, and proportional funding allows states to plan and execute engagements effectively, maximizing program impact.
- **Support for National Defense Strategy:** SPP plays a key role in strengthening alliances and partnerships, a cornerstone of the National Defense Strategy.



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Background

- Engagements were reduced/canceled due to COVID-19 travel restrictions in 2021
- In the last five years, engagements have dramatically increased in number at the request of combatant commanders and partner nations.
- The Minnesota National Guard gained a second partner nation (Norway) in 2023 with no increased funding.
- Travel expenses (flights/hotels) and service member pay has increased in the last five years.

Fiscal Year	# SPP Partner Nations	NGB Programed Budget (\$M)	NGB Congressional Add (\$M)	Total Budget (\$M)	Executed/Obligation %
2021	93	19.8	24.2	44	60%
2022	95	20	19.1	39.1	94%
2023	99	16.4	26.5	42.9	89%
2024	107	18.9	22.2	41.2	91%
2025	Projected 115				

2024 USSOUTHCOM CDR- Gen. Laura Richardson “Since 2010, our program has completed 3,629 events with 426 events completed in FY23 and another 328 planned for FY24. Improving regional interoperability and the readiness of both Partner Nations and U.S. forces to respond to crises and threats, the State Partnership Program is instrumental in the conduct and success of not only our operation, but our enduring relationships throughout the region.”

2024 USCENTCOM CDR – Gen. Michael “Erik” Kurilla “With the region’s strategic location between Iran, Afghanistan, the PRC, and Russia, this momentum in our military-to-military relationships is invaluable to our national security but it also places constraints on our partners. We intend to continue cooperation, via programs like International Military Education and Training and the State Partnership Program, at a pace with which our Central Asian partners are individually comfortable.”

2024 NGB Strategic Plans and Policy and International Affairs Director - Maj. Gen. William Zana, “The SPP accounts for about 1% of the Defense Department’s security cooperation budget. That 1% results in somewhere between 20% and 30% of all geographic combatant command engagements – a number even more remarkable when you think in certain countries the predominance of engagements are driven by the SPP.”

2023 Ukraine Armed Forces Senior Enlisted Leader - Chief Master Sgt. Oleksandr Kosynskyi “In this war, it doesn’t matter which kind of technique or technology we use; people are still critical – crucial. We have a huge history of cooperation with the California National Guard, which has given us good help.”

- The Department of Defense (DoD) provides multi-year funding for certain programs to ensure stability, enhance planning capabilities, and optimize resource utilization. Examples are:
 - Major Defense Acquisition Programs
 - Research and Development
 - Military Construction Projects
 - Readiness and Training Programs
 - Energy and Environmental Programs
 - Healthcare Programs



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ATTACHMENT 9



Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Reform



Call to Action Congress is urged to pass legislation mandating the **modernization of the ASVAB no later than January 1, 2027**, to ensure the test reflects current educational norms and meets the evolving needs of the military. A reformed ASVAB will enhance recruitment and readiness in our Armed Forces.

Issue Overview The ASVAB, a critical assessment used to determine military enlistment eligibility and job placement, **has not been updated in more than 20 years**. It remains out of step with the new mission sets, such as cyber and space, and current educational practices, such as the widespread use of calculators for standardized testing and classroom learning.

Key Concerns

- **Inaccurate Reflection of Skills:** The test does not reflect the skills necessary for today's military jobs, which increasingly require technical and analytical proficiencies.
- **Outdated Format:** The ASVAB does not permit calculators, creating a disconnect with current educational norms.
- **Missed Recruitment Opportunities:** A test that better aligns with current practices could improve the recruitment of highly qualified candidates and reduce unnecessary barriers to enlistment.

Proposed Actions

- **Commission a Study:** Direct the Department of Defense to conduct a comprehensive review of the ASVAB's format, content, and administration, focusing on updating it to meet 21st-century standards.
- **Revise the Test:** Revise the test to assess aptitude for new skills necessary for today's military and update test to improve accuracy in evaluating mathematical and technical skills.
- **Timeline for Implementation:** Direct the Department of Defense to update ASVAB to be implemented no later than **January 1, 2027**, to ensure timely modernization and integration.

Recommended Bill Language

- **Study Mandate:**
"The Secretary of Defense shall commission a study, no later than 180 days after the enactment of this Act, to evaluate and propose updates to the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). This study shall include consultation with educational experts, military personnel, and technical specialists to ensure alignment with current military needs and educational standards. The results of this study will be provided to the Defense Committees of Oversight no later than 365 days after the enactment of this Act."
- **Implementation Deadline:**
"The Secretary of Defense shall implement the updated ASVAB no later than January 1, 2027."

Benefits of Reform



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- **Enhanced Readiness:** A modernized test ensures recruits possess the relevant skills necessary for today's advanced military operations and mission sets.
- **Improved Accessibility:** Aligning the ASVAB with modern educational practices makes the test more accessible to potential recruits.

Background

- References.
 - Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), <https://www.officialasvab.com/>
 - Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 1145.01, Qualitative Distribution of Military Manpower incorporating Change 3, effective 19SEP24
 - Sturm, H. M., *The Validity of the SAT and ACT*, dated 2022 (<https://spark.bethel.edu/etd/862>)
- The ASVAB is a timed test, conducted generally as either a proctored test coordinated through the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) or through the Computer Administrated version (CAT-ASVAB [implemented in 1996]), which is used to determine eligibility for military careers. The ASVAB measures aptitude in four domains: verbal, math, science and technical, and spatial.
- The subtests within the ASVAB are General Science, Arithmetic Reasoning, Word Knowledge, Paragraph Comprehension, Mathematics, Electronics, Auto and Shop, Mechanical, and Assembling Objects. Scores in each area of these subtests are commonly referred to as line scores, which determine eligibility in specific Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). Scores on four of the subtests (Word Knowledge, Paragraph Comprehension, Arithmetic Reasoning, and Mathematics Knowledge) are combined to compute the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score, used for eligibility for the armed forces. An AFQT score of 31 out of 100 is required for entry to military service, unless authorized for enlistment as Mental Category IV (MCAT IV), requiring an AFQT of 16 however this is congressionally capped at a total of 4% of enlistments.
- Rather than an AFQT score, the use of subset or line scores that are directly related to aptitude areas required to perform technical MOSs (ex cyber) would better support identifying technical aptitude for these type of MOSs.
- Historically, applicants who have enlisted under the MCAT IV program have been shown to have better training pipeline success and increased longevity within the military.
- The ASVAB varies in time limit based on the method of administration, however, generally requires 3 to 4 hours to complete. Use of calculators is not allowed.
- The ASVAB underwent its most recent revision in 2002, with a subsequent percentile rank scoring system renormalization in 2004.
- In FY23, MN Army National Guard (MNARNG) Recruiting and Retention Battalion incurred 293 applicants disqualified for entrance to the MNARNG due to failing ASVAB results out of 1,865 processors (15.7%) at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). In FY24, 195 applicants were disqualified based on low ASVAB scores of a total of 2,130 processors (9.2%).
- In addition to disqualification for service, an intangible number of individuals were not qualified for their primary Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) preference based on individual line score results.
- Since the last revision of the ASVAB, the Scholastic Aptitude Test underwent two major revisions (2005 and 2016) and the American College Test (ACT) was adjusted once (2005)



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(Strum 2022) and there is another revision to the ACT scheduled for implementation in Spring 2025.

- Children are introduced to calculators as early as grade three and their use is permitted throughout their education. By prohibiting calculator use on the ASVAB, the DoD limits many potential recruits who have a firm understanding of the subject matter but are unaccustomed performing long-handed math.
- Previously, the House Armed Services Committee included provisions aimed at enhancing the ASVAB's effectiveness and accessibility. Additionally, the House proposed initiatives to integrate the ASVAB more closely with civilian career planning resources. Draft language not found.



MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION (MNGEA)

ATTACHMENT 10



MNNG Communication Plan Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Modernization Version 2 Command Information As of 7 Feb 2025



Purpose The purpose of this communication plan is to advocate for modernization of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) by leveraging strategic relationships and coordinated outreach efforts. This initiative will utilize our connections within the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), engage with members of our Congressional Delegation (CODEL), and collaborate with other National Guard states that maintain strong ties to their respective CODELs. Additionally, we will generate and disseminate targeted communications, including letters to the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) and to Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), to articulate the need for ASVAB modernization. Through these efforts, we aim to foster legislative support, enhance recruitment and readiness, and ensure the ASVAB remains an effective tool for assessing the capabilities of future service members.

Issue The ASVAB, a critical assessment used to determine military enlistment eligibility and job placement, **has not been updated in more than 20 years**. It remains out of step with the new mission sets, such as cyber and space, and current educational practices, such as the widespread use of calculators for standardized testing and classroom learning. **See ASVAB Modernization Congressional One-Pager for proposed actions, recommended bill language, and additional background information.**

MNNG Action Utilize multiple engagements to educate and gain support for ASVAB modernization.

Chief, National Guard Bureau (CNGB) – Stake Holder - TAG

- **Action:** Inform CNGB the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization. Ask CNGB to discuss with service chiefs that a modernized ASVAB aligns with evolving military mission sets and enhances career-matching algorithms to improve military recruitment and retention.

Director of the Army National Guard (DARNG), LTG Stubbs– Stake Holder - TAG

- **Action:** Inform DARNG the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization.

Director of the Air National Guard (DANG) -Acting, MG Pirak – Stake Holder – Brig Gen Begin

- **Action:** Inform DANG the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization.

SEA to the CNGB, SEA Raines – Stake Holder – CSEL/SEA

- **Action:** Inform SEA the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization. Ask SEA to discuss with service senior leaders that a modernized ASVAB aligns with evolving military mission sets and enhances career-matching algorithms to improve military recruitment and retention.

54 Adjutants General – Stake Holders - TAG



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- **When: February**
- **Action:** Inform TAGs at AGAUS Conference the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization.

CODEL Staff Luncheon – Champions – LTC Davis

- **When: 5 March**
- **Action:** Inform CODEL Staff about the updated congressional one-pager. Ask for their support of ASVAB Modernization. Re-emphasizing this is not to lower standards but to assess applicant aptitude for skills not previously required for the Armed Forces.

CODEL Staff DC Visit– Champions – TAG & LTC Davis

- **When: 10-12 March**
- **Action:** Ask Congressman Finstad to sponsor the ASVAB Modernization bill. Finstad is a member of the HASC. Ideally, meet with Finstad first. If Finstad is agreeable, ask other Congressional Members to co-sponsor during 1:1 meetings.

Note: A Representative who introduces a bill or resolution in the House is called its sponsor. Several Members together may submit a bill, but only the Member whose name appears first is considered its sponsor; the others are cosponsors. A bill can have only one sponsor, but there is no limit on the number of cosponsors it may have.

NGB's Directors of Strength Maintenance – Champions & Stakeholders – LTC Bingham

- **When: 11-14 March**
- **Action:** Inform 54 RRB CDRs/CSMs the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization. Ask for support by communicating to their GROs the value of an updated test.

XXXX – Champions & Stakeholders – MAJ Kostiuk

- **When: XXXX**
- **Action:** Inform 54 ANG Recruiting stations the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization. Ask for support by communicating to their GROs the value of an updated test.

WI, AK, MD, IN GROs– Champions & Stakeholders– LTC Davis

- **Action:** Inform GROs the steps the MNNG is taking to gain ASVAB modernization. If Congressman Finstad is agreeable to sponsoring the bill, ask these GROs to work with their CODEL members to co-sponsor the bill.

Note: NGB-LL noted that WI, AK, MD had strong CODEL engagement. IN's Senator Young co-sponsored applicant medical reimbursement.

NGAMN– Champions – COL Augé

- **When: 26-27 April**
- **Action:** Submit ASVAB modernization resolution NLT 28 February. Anticipate an approved vote from association members at NGAMN Conference business meeting 26 April.

MNGEA– Champions – CSM Rost

- **When: 26-27 April**



MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION (MNGEA)

- **Action:** Submit ASVAB modernization resolution NLT 26 April. Anticipate an approved vote from association members at MNGEA Conference business meeting 26-27 April.

EANGUS Region 5– Champions – CSM Rost

- **When:** 16-18 May
- **Action:** If approved by MNGEA, submit ASVAB modernization resolution NLT 30 May. Gain other state association sponsors for the resolution.

EANGUS – Champions – CSM Rost

- **When:** 10-15 August
- **Action:** If approved by EANGUS Region 5, submit ASVAB modernization resolution NLT 30 May.
15 February to 15 May -States submit resolution proposals visa the EANGUS web form.

NGAUS– Champions – COL Augé

- **When:** 22-26 August
- **Action:** If approved by NGAMN, submit ASVAB modernization resolution NLT 30 May. Gain other state association sponsors for the resolution. Present at Joint Resolution Committee at NGAUS conference on 22 August.