



**FALCONS LANDING CHAPTER
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
20540 FALCONS LANDING CIRCLE, #P1
POTOMAC FALLS, VIRGINIA 20165**



Falcons Landing Chapter Legislative Report **February 2020**

Just when we thought we could take a breath, with the passage and presidential signature on the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), along comes the FY2021 iteration. Stand-by for heavy rolls! BUT FIRST . . .

Resting on our laurels has never been an option for Falcons Landing MOAA members. We know that follow-up is important, and that is what we will do to ensure that there is no back-sliding on the important aspects of the NDAA for 2020, for which we all fought so hard. While the 3% pay raise for active duty, and repeal of the “Widows Tax” are pretty much a LOCK, the issue of base housing for our active duty brethren requires our continuing attention. Also, we will need to keep a watchful eye on military medical personnel drawdowns and TRICARE fee-creep.

DOD:

The Department of Defense submission for FY2021 arrived at Capitol Hill on February 10th. The Deputy Secretary of Defense, Mr. Norquist, announced a “New Defense

Strategy”, shifting focus to the changing nature of warfare. Cyber and space warfighting capability nuclear modernization, and homeland defense are the signature priorities for DOD focus. \$18B will be concentrated on the Space Force in countering cyber-attack potential, and establishing an offensive/defensive posture in space. This year’s RDT&E request; therefore, is even larger than last year’s. That’s a record.

Under the heading of “Creative Financing” –

***Expect reductions in the areas of chemical and biological defense as responsibilities are shifted to partner nations.**

***Don’t be surprised that various acquisition projects will be SLOWED to balance the budget.**

***There will be no request for Border Wall construction; HOWEVER, there is a Department of Homeland Security request to DOD, which is currently pending.**

***“Traditional” maritime, air, and land capabilities are addressed, of course, but seem to take a decidedly back-seat. There is a 3% military pay raise proposed, as well as increased allowances & funding of costs for retiree pay and healthcare. All services are seeking increased end strength in the FY2021 submission.**

***STARS & STRIPES funding is likely to be cut, which is understandable, considering that newspapers, at large, are being replaced by electronic media.**

***There is an ominous silence on the subject of commissaries and exchanges.**

CONGRESS:

This is where the rubber meets the road. In an election year, I think we can expect there to be more posturing than at a Paris fashion show! The phrase “Continuing Resolution” comes into play, the closer we get to November. The Wall Street Journal thinks that the Congress will kick the can down the road until the electorate decide the direction in which the nation will go. Continuing Resolutions, as many of you know (all too well) are a terrible way to run a business – no less a government, but that is what we may be facing this year again! As I said, at the outset, stand-by for heavy rolls.

MOAA (National):

Our national legislative priorities are:

First & Foremost – FAMILIES

Be sure to read your February edition of the MOAA Magazine for the specifics (pages 14-20).

Also

- *To protect health benefits**
- *To keep pay & benefits strong**
- *To end concurrent receipt penalties for retirees**
- *To support the total force (including Guard & Reserve)**

VIRGINIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS:

Our Commonwealth initiatives include:

- *To promote the personal property tax exemption**
- *To encourage counting late-arriving overseas military ballots**
- *To support tax relief for certain 100% disabled veterans**

***To push for tax credit for employers who hire VA Guard & Reservists**

***To encourage emergency response pay for Guard & Reservists.**

VIRGINIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS:

In addition to the “Wish List”, noted above, MOAA Virginia is sponsoring a Congressional Luncheon, on Capitol Hill, on April 30th. Falcons Landing President, Bob Manning, and I are coordinating with the office of our local congressional representative, Jennifer Wexton on this event.

And speaking of our representatives, just a reminder that the Democratic primary will be conducted on March 3rd, and the Republicans will choose delegates to their national convention at a state convention in June. Our national election will take place on Tuesday, November 3rd and, in addition to the presidential election, both Senator Mark Warner (D), and Representative Jennifer Wexton (D) will be on the ballot. Their opponents have yet to be selected.

It seems fitting to come full-circle with this report by ensuring that you know that the administration has announced a first step to a peace deal with the Taliban, in which US troops would be withdrawn from Afghanistan. Further word on these negotiations is expected within the next two weeks.

My apologies for the length of this report. This year is going to present significant challenges, all of which we need to be aware of, in order to make our voices heard, and our votes count.

WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

**Clair Wylie
Legislative Liaison**