

HRCMOAA Legislative Affairs Corner
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By Colonel Stan Remer USA, Retired
Legislative Affairs Chair

MOAA Summer Advocacy in Action (AiA) has closed with a focus on Military Spouse Hiring, Duty Status Reform to consolidate roughly 30 reserve duty statuses to four and Government shutdown fairness and impact on servicemembers pay and benefits.

The key legislative issue that MOAA is now focusing on is HR 9237 (Take Care of America's Veterans Act). This bill consolidates more than 60 individual bipartisan veterans bills into one sweeping piece of legislation. District 2 Congresswoman Jen Kiggans was an original co-sponsor of the bill when introduced June 10, 2026. While the bill includes major long-awaited improvements for military retirees and survivors it has sparked intense controversy.

Here are some of the primary pros and cons of the act:

Pros (MOAA, American Legion, Wounded Warrior Project, AMVETS and over 22+ other organizations support)

- **Concurrent Receipt:** Includes the Major Richard Star Act. Allowing roughly 54,000 combat-insured veterans to receive both their full military retirement pay and VA disability compensation simultaneously without offsets
- **Survivors Protections:** Includes the 'Love Lives On Act', allowing surviving Gold Star spouses to remarry under certain conditions without losing their VA dependency and indemnity benefits
- **Catastrophic Disability Support:** Significantly expands benefits and care provisions for severely disabled veterans, such as those requiring specialized spinal cord, ALS, MS, or bowel and bladder care
- **Mental health and Rural Access:** Expands mental health services, substance abuse programs, and healthcare options for veterans living in underserved rural and urban areas.

Cons (VFW, DAV, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and 50+ other organizations oppose including a coalition of 22 labor unions including AFGE do not support)

- **Disabled Rate Reduction:** To fund the bill, Congress proposes changes to how the VA calculates disability ratings for sleep apnea and tinnitus
- **Impact on future Veterans:** Organizations like VFW argue that this change could strip or reduce future disability compensation
- **Intergeneration Divide:** Opponents argue the bill creates a bad precedent by “pitting generations of veterans against one another” – forcing future service members to pay for the benefits of past combat veterans
- **VA Privatization Concerns:** Labor groups, including the AFGE, oppose the bill due to language that could outsource clinical research and privatize select mental health services
- **VA Home Loan Fee Increases:** Some veteran advocates argue the bill places an unfair burden on future buyers by implementing higher fees on certain VA home loans

Current Status and Next Steps

House leaders pulled the bill in mid-July 2026 before a final vote. The Senate Companion measure (S.4744) sits on the legislative calendar.

Floor Rescheduling: House leadership must decide when to bring the omnibus package back to the floor for additional debate and a final vote

Controversy and Negotiations

Lawmakers are facing intense lobbying from veteran service organizations over specific funding offsets and provisions like Section 108, which may prompt amendments or stall progress before it can move to the Senate.