

Albuquerque MOAA Chapter Annual Legislative Committee Report

1. Legislative Actions

This year the Albuquerque Chapter supported three legislative initiatives.

1. Uniformed Service Retiree Income Tax Deduction – Senate Bill 169 sponsored By Senator William Burt (District 33) and 30 additional Senate sponsors. No Senate committees heard Senate Bill 169. House Bill 249 sponsored by Representative “Rudy” Martinez (District 39) and seven additional Representatives. The bill was given unanimous approval by the House Labor, Veterans’ and Military Affairs Committee. However, the House Taxation and Revenue Committee did not hear the bill.
2. Expedited Licensure for Military Families – House Bill 30 sponsored by Representative Alcon (District 6) and Senator Gould (District 10). The Governor signed the bill. The law now allows military service members and their dependents to obtain professional licenses in an expedited manner and all fees are waived.

2. Military and Veterans Legislative Council (MVLC)

The Albuquerque Chapter is a member of the MVLC whose purpose is to support state legislative proposals that provide for fair and equitable treatment of members of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, military retirees, family members, survivors and veterans. Michael Cochrane is a member of the Executive Council and Marvin Schott is a member of the Legislative Team. There are approximately 10 military and veterans’ organizations as members of the MVLC. Periodic meetings are held to propose legislation, find bipartisan sponsors in the state Senate and House of Representatives, assist in drafting legislation, develop position papers and coordinate testimony in the legislative committees. For the 2020 NM Legislative Session support for three legislative initiatives were developed.

1. Uniformed Service Retiree Income Tax Deduction
2. Expedited Licensure for Military Families
3. Transportation for Veterans’ in Rural Communities Task Force

Many rural veterans don’t have access to cars or are unable to drive. Thereby limiting access to the Veterans Administration health care facilities. There are limitations to a variety of alternatives to driving and are not well suited to serving rural transportation to health care facilities. To improve transportation a “hub and Spoke network has been proposed as a pilot project in the Deming area. However, no legislation has been initiated nor has a funding source been identified.

3. MOAA State Legislative Forum

The MOAA State Legislative Forum is a virtual form where MOAA state legislative representatives meet to share successes and concerns with regards to military and veterans issues at the state legislature level. It is a forum to exchange information across state MOAA Councils and independent chapters. Twenty-seven states participate in the forum. It is an abundant source of information to learn what other states are doing and to help form legislative initiatives for all the New Mexico MOAA chapters. Marvin Schott has participated in two virtual meetings. Topics discussed include personal income tax deduction for military retirees, support

for surviving spouses, concurrent receipt for disabled veterans, and the proposed reduction of 18,000 Military Health Care Billets by the Defense Health Care Agency.

4. Proposed Initiatives for the New Mexico 2021 Legislative Session
 1. Uniformed Services Retiree Income Tax Deduction
 2. Veterans Transportation to Health Care Facilities
 3. Engage with the New Mexico Veterans Administrations in developing legislative initiatives