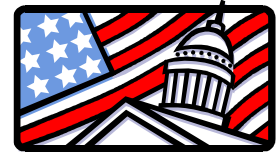


## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - NATIONAL



As this goes to press, Congress is in its August recess. This is a perfect time to **meet with congressmen in their home districts** to advocate for our VCOC National Objectives! So far, I know of meetings scheduled with Congressmen Eric Cantor and Randy Forbes. Since Forbes' district spans the area of several chapters, representatives from the Richmond, Southside, Portsmouth, and Hampton Roads chapters are planning to attend. Please share the information from the meetings with other chapters.

The main topic in the press these days is **national health care reform**. Clearly it is of great importance to all MOAA members. In particular we have concerns about the impact on TRICARE and TRICARE for Life. The prevention of the erosion of our health care benefits is a major national legislative objective for the VCOC and MOAA National. MOAA is keeping us well informed, but the whole situation is in a complete state of flux and can change daily. The MOAA Legislative Update of 7 August 2009 is very informative and helpful. I would urge anyone who has not subscribed to the MOAA Legislative Update to do so. Also, MOAA fact sheets and talking points are extremely useful in any meeting with congressmen. They can be found at [http://moaa.org/lac\\_getting\\_involved/lac\\_resources\\_youcanhelp/default.htm](http://moaa.org/lac_getting_involved/lac_resources_youcanhelp/default.htm).

At the moment, it appears **TRICARE** and TRICARE for LIFE are not under direct assault in terms of raising co-pays. However, the situation with MEDICARE is worrisome. We know that in past years we had problems with the statutory formula for setting MEDICARE payments to doctors. Unless Congress passes a fix, we are facing a **21% cut to doctors this January**, which may cause many to quit seeing MEDICARE and TRICARE patients. Let's be sure to advocate for this fix with our congressmen now.

In addition to advocating for TRICARE, let's not forget a couple of other long standing national objectives of VCOC – the **SBP/DIC and Concurrent Receipt** issues.

Please see the MOAA fact sheets and talking points referenced above.

Lastly, I would point out that one of our top legislative objectives, which hasn't received much press lately because of the national health care issue, is being shortchanged while appearing to be on the road to improvement. I'm referring to the VCOC objective of **increasing the size of ground forces**. The current Defense Authorization bill allows for a 30,000 end strength increase in the Army, but it is only for two years and I understand half of that increase must be paid for "out of hide". This is clearly not our intent. The increase **needs to be fully funded and "permanent"**. The increase is important for our national defense and we should clearly point this out to our congressmen.

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[VCOC Website National Legislative Section:  
http://VirginiaMoaa.com/nationallegislative.html](http://VirginiaMoaa.com/nationallegislative.html)

VCOC MOAA  
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE  
**TOP PRIORITY**  
**Strengthen the All Volunteer Force**

OBJECTIVES:

1. Increase size of ground forces.
2. Prevent erosion of TRICARE benefits.
3. Fully implement all recommendations of VDBC - Veterans Disability Benefits Commission. Including elimination of the SBP-DIC off-set, full concurrent receipt for disabled retirees and expedite the disability claims and appeals process.