



The OWRC Briefing Board

The Newsletter of the Ohio Western Reserve Chapter, An affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America
March 2026 | Volume 26 Issue 3| OWRC.net and MOAA.org
For questions contact the Chapter Webmaster at andy@andrewemanuele.com



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- 2026-2027 OWRC Calendar

From National:

Webinar: Protect Yourself, and Your Family, From Cybercrime

Chapter News: Drones 'change everything' about combined arms combat, US Army Aviation chief says

Chapter News: Army using AI to update doctrine

Presidents' Notes



- Andy and I attended Operation T.A.S.K. Force in Tallmadge on 21 February. The host was the Alpha 11 Veterans Service Organization (VSO). There were about 50 persons attending, and I estimate they represented about 30 VSOs and other organizations, like the League of Women Voters. The website for the host is <http://alpha11veterans.org> if you want to take a look. There were four meetings last year and this is the first for 2026. Chuck Auker was there for the Vietnam Veterans, and Sandy Conley for the Stark County SAM Center. The microphone was passed around and each organization presented what they did.

Direction Home to assist vets living under bridges, etc. Home repair for vets who either cannot pay or are incapable of fixing their home. Legal services for vets. Discussion on guide/service dogs. Warriors Journey Home. Kent State services for vets to get a degree. The Alpha 11 group is setting up a program called the Quartermaster. There is a need for furniture, kitchen pots and pans, tableware, etc. One group does nursing home visits to vets. A North American Indian Cultural Center representative introduced his group. A mortgage company said all mortgage firms are working on making it easier for vets to get VA loans and move into their own homes. They are at <http://www.exmortgage.com>, if you know of any vets trying to get a home.

We do assist at the Standdown for Summit County, and our JROTC/ROTC banquet, and the Veterans Day at the Firestone Golf Club. I will make contact with the organizations to see what we (YOU!) could offer. Maybe drive someone to a doctor's appointment? I used our roll up banner and passed out our OWRC business cards. We may get some feedback on our website.

We are expected to help our fellow vets and those now in military service. More ideas to come as I explore this avenue.

Wishing everyone a Happy Saint Patrick's Day on March 17th - Tuesday. We will have our regular luncheons at Michael's A.M. each Wednesday.

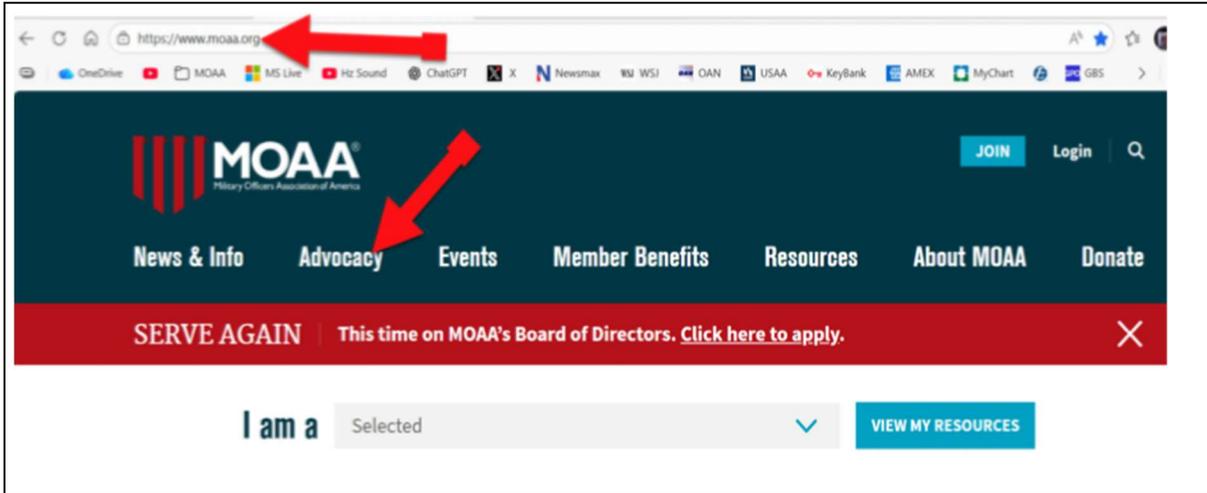
The Old Farmer's Almanac says it will be a normal (wintry) March, as far as the weather. So, drive safe!

Major William Maki USAF (Ret)



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You can click on the legislative items that have the word "Write" by them. You may have to fill out your name, street and city address, and other items. Once you do this, next time the areas may automatically fill in for you. So, it will be easier and faster the following months.

<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction>

There are also five areas on the bottom of the screen, like Currently Serving, Families and Survivors, Retirees and Veterans and more. You may click on those to see special legislative requests that MOAA is also advocating.

EVERY TIME YOU "VOTE" MOAA CAN TAKE THOSE VOTES TO OUR ELECTED MEMBERS. THIS SHOWS THEM THE ACTIVE AND RETIRED AND SURVIVING SPOUSES WANT ACTION!

So please, fellow members, do your part. Send in your requests each month.

The MOAA Education Assistance Program

Scholarships & Interest-Free Loans for College Students of Military Families

Applications for the 2026-27 academic year are now OPEN!

Please identify which application you need to complete and use the appropriate button below to get started. First-time applicants must create an account and complete the New Student Application, while current recipients should log in to their existing account to complete the Renewal Application.

All applications are due by **March 1, 2026**. If you need help or have questions, please contact us for assistance at edassist@moaa.org.

NEW STUDENT APPLICATION

RENEWAL APPLICATION

Access the Application Portal



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We use SurveyMonkey Apply to facilitate our application process. While applications are only open from Nov 1 to March 1, you can access your account at any time to check the status of your [application](#).

OWRC 2026 Calendar:

March 18th OWRC General Meeting. Michael's A.M.
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

April 9th JROTC/ROTC Awards Banquet/ Guys Party Center
18th OCC Quarterly meeting - Columbus
21st OWRC Quarterly Meeting at the Akron VSC
25th AMBA Insurance payment (or before)
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

May 13th OWRC General Meeting, Michael's A.M.
25th Memorial Day
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

June 14th Flag Day
Weekly Wednesday Luncheons

July 4th - Independence Day!
18th OCC Quarterly Meeting - Columbus
21st OWRC Quarterly Meeting - Akron VSC
25th Annual Picnic at Andy's home
Weekly Wednesday Luncheons

August 12th OWRC General Meeting at Michael's A.M.
16th Annual picnic at the Cuyahoga Falls VFW
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

September 7th Labor Day
Summit County Stand down (14-15)
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

October 14th OWRC General meeting at Michael's A.M.
17th OCC Quarterly meeting - Columbus
20th OWRC Quarterly meeting - Akron VSC
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

November 11th Veterans Day
18th Doughboy Breakfast and Annual Business Meeting
(select next year's officers)
26th Thanksgiving
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

December 4th Annual Christmas/Holiday Party
25th Christmas
31st New Years Eve
Weekly Wednesday luncheons

January



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Drones ‘change everything’ about combined arms combat, US Army Aviation chief says

by Zita Ballinger Fletcher, *Military Times*

Feb 20, 2026

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — Drones are profoundly changing the Army’s approach to aviation and combined arms training, Maj. Gen. Clair A. Gill, commanding general of the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, told *Military Times* in an interview.

During the Army’s first annual [Best Drone Warfighter Competition](#) in Huntsville, Alabama, the Fort Rucker-based aviation chief shared his insights about the impact of drones on military doctrine.

“The application of drone technology is only limited by your creativity,” he said. “It’s this constantly evolving game of technology and craftsmanship to create the desired effect that you want on the other end.”

While Army aviators are no strangers to unmanned systems, drones being fielded today are immensely different from those developed over the last two decades, many of which tended to be larger and required more manpower to operate, Gill said. “In the last five to 10 years I would say we have seen a complete shift in what drone technology is and how it can be used,” Gill said. The net result, he added, is that drones are “no longer just the purview of Army aviation.”

“I would argue now with the proliferation of small drones and how cheap and effective they can be that Army aviation is just one minor user now. ... Everybody is going to have drones in the airspace to some degree.

“It’s going to change everything. The nature of war is the same. It’s always an endeavor of human conflict. But the character of war is just fundamentally different.”

Lessons from Ukraine

Drones have been used successfully as a force multiplier in a variety of global conflicts, from Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan to the Middle East and Ukraine.

While the U.S. Army is adapting its approaches based on observing other forces around the world, Gill stressed that there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to drone warfare.

The U.S. Army must develop drone combat doctrine in line with its unique capabilities, he said.

“We’re not the Ukrainian army, nor are we the Russian army,” he said. “We just fundamentally operate differently.”

Gill told *Military Times* that observers from the Army Aviation Center of Excellence are currently embedded with Ukraine’s Security Assistance Group, or SAG-U, to study lessons from the conflict. However, fighting methods from Ukraine should not be broadly applied to American forces, he noted, due to differences in U.S. tactics and capabilities.



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“We would be fools not to pay attention and not to take a lot of lessons from them, which we’re doing, but we can’t take the wrong lessons,” Gill said. “Just because it didn’t work in Russia-Ukraine doesn’t mean it might not work for us.”

Project Victor

The tactical element of the Army’s drone competition gave soldiers the chance to test drone aviation abilities while leveraging field skills on a hunter-killer mission, during which each team was afforded a single reconnaissance FPV drone and up to five “killer” drones.

“That really is the application of the technology,” Gill said. “They have to be able to use the technology in the context of what it is that we do, not just fly the drone.”

The tactical challenge gave leadership an opportunity to observe with the aim of refining training, doctrine and approaches to drone combat operations.

Gill explained that restructuring within Army commands has allowed analysis teams to be established at each Army Center of Excellence, including those dedicated to aviation, maneuver and fires.

“We’ve restructured our subordinate teams and we have something called a Transformation Integration Directorate, TID, and within them they have a Transformation Lesson Learned Manager, a TLLM,” he explained.

These managers are responsible for evaluating all observations and establishing what lessons are useful to the Army before uploading them into a new database system called Project Victor.

Powered by generative AI technology, the system will give soldiers broad access to whitepapers, studies and useful information about operating drones in the field.

“That should be a database where any soldier can just go in,” he said. “That should be up and running by this summer.”

Enduring need for human pilots

Despite the nearly unlimited applications of drones in war, Gill emphasized that they will never replace the ability of humans and do not compensate for the skills of trained Army aviators.

“Ultimately, to put an assault force onto an objective, you need manned aviation,” he said.

Gill cited the recent operation to capture Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro as an example of the finesse Army aviators bring to the table.

“That was a very exquisite demonstration with some our best aviators and some of our best aircraft,” he said. “We continue to crank out the world’s best rotary aviators.”

The enduring need for human expertise was borne out in the tactical lane of the competition itself, as some teams experienced difficulty using the drones and soldiers tapped into combat training fundamentals for success.

“A lot of people seem to think that because we’re moving so quickly in the unmanned space that it means we’re moving away from the manned space,” Gill said.

“We need to have both.”



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<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2026/02/20/drones-change-everything-about-combined-arms-combat-us-army-aviation-chief-says/>

About Zita Ballinger Fletcher

Zita Ballinger Fletcher previously served as editor of *Military History Quarterly* and *Vietnam* magazines and as the historian of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. She holds an M.A. with distinction in military history.

Army using AI to update doctrine

By Eve Sampson, *Military Times*

Friday, Feb 20, 2026

When a soldier reads a field manual, they are studying the Army's guide on how to fight. Now, doctrine writers are using artificial intelligence to update those manuals, the service shared in a press release this week.

Leaders at the Combined Army Doctrine Directorate have started training authors on generative AI tools to speed up research and drafting, a move that reflects the military's broader efforts to quickly push updated guidance to a force facing a rapidly-evolving battlefield.

"We have had people ask us about using AI and large language models to speed up the doctrine development process for years," said Richard Creed Jr., the directorate's leader. "So, when some of these tools became available, the first thing we did was figure out their capabilities," he said.

Doctrine development has historically been a time consuming and tedious process that stretches years, and officials are looking to speed it up by incorporating AI into the writing process, the Army said.

For example, one internally-developed tool lets authors speedily search hundreds of texts for historical examples, transforming a task that may have previously taken days of investigation. Another tool helps writers check grammar and how easy their work is to comprehend, freeing up leaders to focus on other parts of the process.

Still, officials noted in the release that the technology is far from perfect and cannot be used without human judgment.

Lt. Col. Scott McMahan, a doctrine writer assigned to the Operational Level Doctrine Division acknowledged that the tools are flawed and that AI models may "hallucinate," and make up information that is not factually accurate. The models are improving though, he said.

"You treat it like a resourceful and motivated young officer who might not know all the information, but they can certainly assist you in cutting some corners and being a little more efficient," McMahan said.



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Army leaders have been talking about AI on the battlefield as well, warning that a future large-scale fight could overwhelm human capacity with thousands of targets per day. The service has also stood up a dedicated AI and machine learning career field for officers to specialize.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2026/02/20/army-using-ai-to-update-doctrine/>

About Eve Sampson

Eve Sampson is a reporter and former Army officer. She has covered conflict across the world, writing for The New York Times, The Washington Post and The Associated Press.

From National:

Webinar - Protect Yourself, and Your Family, From Cybercrime

APRIL 22, 2026 | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT

Online Event

Can't make the webinar? No problem. Register now and we'll send you a link to the recording.

Americans lost *more than \$16 billion* to internet crime in 2024, [according to a report](#) from the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center -- that's up 33% from the previous year. And military members are three times more likely to become victims of certain types of cyberattacks than other U.S. adults, according to the [Federal Trade Commission](#).

Join Ally Armeson, executive director of [FightCybercrime.org](https://fightcybercrime.org), to gain a deeper understanding of what cybercrime is, its impact on the military and veteran community, and how it is evolving. You'll learn about the scope of the problem, why cybercriminals are so successful, and how artificial intelligence is helping scammers.

You'll also come away with immediate actions you can take if you encounter a scam, what to do after a scam, and how you can build a strong personal "cyber foundation."

Don't miss this chance to learn how to protect your family, and your finances, from cybercriminals. Register today and join us!



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Amid outcry, VA abruptly stops enforcing new disability rating rule

By LINDA F. HERSEY, *STARS AND STRIPES* ·
February 19, 2026

The Department of Veterans Affairs on Thursday abruptly announced that it would stop enforcing a new rule requiring disability ratings to be calculated by how well veterans function on medication and not solely on the underlying condition or injury itself.

“Effective immediately, VA is halting enforcement of the interim final rule, ‘Evaluative Rating: Impact of Medication,’” VA Secretary Doug Collins said in a brief statement posted on social media on Thursday.

“VA issued the rule to clarify existing policy and protect veterans’ benefits in the wake of an ongoing court action. But many interpreted the rule as something that could result in adverse consequences,” Collins said.

The rule, which had gone into effect Tuesday without prior notice, was quickly condemned by major veterans groups as effectively lowering a veteran’s disability rating and subsequent monthly compensation.

“DAV is extremely disappointed and alarmed by VA’s decision to issue an interim final rule today that could potentially reduce disability compensation for millions of disabled veterans,” said Coleman Nee, national commander of Disabled American Veterans.

“As a former Army nurse, it seems this rule change could have unforeseen and harmful downstream effects for veterans, which is why it demands serious public scrutiny and possible legislative clarification from Capitol Hill,” said Carol Whitmore, national commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The rule required examiners for the VA to calculate the improvements veterans derive from taking medication when determining ratings, while recent court rulings had directed the VA to base a veteran’s disability level on the severity of the condition.

At issue was an amendment to the Code of Federal Regulations — called an interim final rule — that directs how VA examiners assess a veteran’s impairments on daily life skills and employment.

A public comment period on the rule opened Tuesday on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) and will run through April 20. More than 10,000 people had commented by midday Thursday.



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“While VA does not agree with the way this rule has been characterized, the department always takes veterans’ concerns seriously,” Collins said in his announcement. Collins also indicated that the VA would not pursue enforcing the rule again.

“To alleviate these concerns, VA will continue to collect public comments regarding the rule, but it will not be enforced at any time in the future,” Collins said.

“Under my leadership, VA is ensuring that everyone applying for benefits receives everything they have earned as quickly and conveniently as possible,” Collins said.

“This includes reducing the backlog of veterans waiting for benefits by more than 60%. We will continue these improvements on behalf of America’s veterans, families, caregivers and survivors,” Collins said.

The DAV issued a statement Thursday afternoon that applauded the decision.

“We appreciate the secretary listening to and acting on the concerns of those who have served and sacrificed for this nation,” Nee said. “No veteran should ever have to worry that taking medications they need due to their illnesses and injuries could result in the reduction of their benefits.”

VETERANS HEALTHCARE VETERANS BENEFITS VETERANS AFFAIRS FEATURED ON INSTAGRAM LINDA F. HERSEY
Linda F. Hersey is based in Washington, D.C., and reports on veterans. She previously covered the Navy and Marine Corps at Inside Washington Publishers. She also was a government reporter at the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner in Alaska, where she reported on the military, economy and congressional delegation.

Read more at: <https://www.stripes.com/veterans/2026-02-19/va-rule-change-evaluative-rating-halted-enforcement-20805900.html>

Source - Stars and Stripes

‘Full Cost of War Act’ Attempts to Tie Military Force Decisions to Veteran Funding

by Haley Fuller, Feb 22, 2026, *Military.com*

When Congress debates whether to send U.S. forces into harm’s way, the financial discussion typically centers on near-term operational costs: troop deployments, weapons systems, logistics, and sustainment.

Two veteran lawmakers argue this framing leaves out one of the most predictable and enduring consequences of war: the obligation to care for those who return home. Their proposal, the Full Cost of War Act, seeks to hardwire that obligation into the earliest stages of any future conflict decision.



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Reintroduced in the 119th Congress by [Chris Deluzio](#) and [Ted Lieu](#), the bill would require Congress to authorize funding for veterans' medical care, disability compensation, and related benefits at the same time it authorizes the use of military force or declares war. The measure aims to ensure that caring for veterans is not treated as a downstream budget issue, but as an integral component of the cost of military action itself.

What the Bill Would Do

The [Full Cost of War Act](#) is narrowly written but structurally significant. Under its terms, any authorization for use of military force (AUMF) or declaration of war enacted after the bill becomes law would have to include an authorization of appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs. That authorization would cover "such sums as may be necessary" to provide medical care, disability compensation, and other earned benefits resulting from the conflict, as jointly determined by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

The bill does not dictate a specific dollar figure or create an automatic funding stream. Instead, it imposes a procedural requirement: Congress cannot authorize force without also acknowledging, in statutory form, that veterans' care costs will follow.

The actual appropriations would still occur through the normal budget process, preserving Congress's constitutional power of the purse while forcing lawmakers to confront the long-term fiscal implications up front.

Why This Matters in Practice

Since World War II, Congress has relied primarily on AUMFs rather than formal declarations of war to authorize military action. The [2001 AUMF](#), passed in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, has served as the legal basis for operations in multiple countries over more than two decades.

During that same period, the [cost of caring](#) for post-9/11 veterans has grown steadily, with long-term obligations extending decades beyond the end of major combat operations.

[Research](#) from the Congressional Budget Office has shown that veterans' benefits and medical care constitute a substantial portion of the total cost of war over time, often rivaling or exceeding direct combat expenditures in later years. Despite that reality, those costs are rarely central to the initial authorization debate, which tends to focus on immediate national security concerns.

By tying VA funding authorization to AUMFs, the Full Cost of War Act would function as a forcing mechanism. Lawmakers voting to approve military force would have to do so with explicit recognition that future veterans' care is a foreseeable and unavoidable consequence rather than a discretionary add-on.



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Supporters' Rationale

Deluzio, a Navy veteran, has framed the bill as a matter of moral consistency. In announcing the legislation, he argued that if the government cannot commit to funding veterans' care in advance, it should not commit troops to combat at all. Lieu, an Air Force veteran, has emphasized that the "full cost" of military action includes the lifelong care owed to servicemembers who are injured or disabled as a result of those decisions.

The proposal does not limit presidential authority directly, nor does it repeal existing AUMFs. Instead, it operates at the intersection of war powers and budgeting, reinforcing Congress's role in both areas without altering the substantive criteria for authorizing force.

Potential Legal and Budgetary Effects

From a legal standpoint, the bill would not change the standards under which force may be authorized. Congress would still debate and define the scope, duration, and objectives of any military action. The new requirement would add a parallel authorization related to veterans' benefits, potentially expanding committee involvement to include those with jurisdiction over veterans' affairs and appropriations.

Budgetarily, the act could make the long-term costs of war more visible to both lawmakers and the public. While it would not prevent future supplemental appropriations, it would embed an acknowledgment of veterans' care costs in the authorizing statute itself. That acknowledgment could influence future debates over the size and scope of military engagements, particularly in an era of sustained pressure on the VA health care system.

Critics could argue the bill adds procedural complexity without guaranteeing sufficient funding, since authorizations do not appropriate money by themselves. Supporters counter that the symbolic and practical effect of requiring explicit recognition of veterans' costs is precisely the point.

A Structural Shift, Not a Spending Mandate

The Full Cost of War Act does not promise new benefits or expand eligibility within the VA system. Instead, it seeks to align Congress's war-making decisions with its long-term obligations to those who serve.

By embedding veterans' care into the initial authorization framework, the bill reflects a broader argument: wars do not end when combat operations cease, and the government's responsibilities do not end when troops come home.

Whether the legislation gains traction remains uncertain. Still, its premise resonates with a growing bipartisan interest in reassessing how Congress authorizes and oversees military force. At minimum, the



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bill forces a question that has often been deferred: if the nation is willing to fight, is it also willing to pay the full cost of that decision, including decades of care for the men and women who carried it out?

<https://www.military.com/feature/2026/01/26/full-cost-of-war-act-attempts-tie-military-force-decisions-veteran-funding.html>

Haley Fuller is a contributing writer for Military.com and a former U.S. Marine Corps captain whose work bridges the worlds of military service, law, and public accountability.

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TRICARE Users: This Scam Could Put Your Personal Health Information at Risk

Get expert advice on avoiding a type of fraud that could target service-connected beneficiaries.

[READ MORE](#)



Resources for Today's Currently Serving Officers

MOAA can help you develop the leadership skills you need to succeed in the military and the career you have after it.

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MOAA SITREP: The Major Richard Star Act

A regularly updated resource on this must-pass legislation targeting an unfair pay offset faced by combat-injured veterans.

[READ MORE](#)



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Application for Ohio Western Reserve Chapter, an Affiliate of MOAA

Name: _____ Military Status: _____ Spouse Name: _____
 Component: _____ Branch of Service: _____ Rank: _____ Applicant DOB: _____ Spouse DOB: _____
 Regular Member (Retired, Former, Active officer of the eight uniformed US Services) **Membership \$25/year**
 Widow(er)-Surviving Spouse membership is available for surviving spouse of officers **Membership \$10/year**

Address: _____
 Primary Phone: _____ Secondary Phone: _____
 email: _____

Chapter Member Dues = \$25/yr January 1 to December 31, Annually.

Newsletters will be emailed, check this box if you prefer USPS Mail

Make check Payable to OWRC-MOAA

Mail to: OWRC-MOAA P.O. Box 4272 Copley, OH 44321.

or go to OWRC Website <https://OWRC.net> for application and pay via credit card or PayPal.

Donation to (check one)
 Stand Down
 ROTC/JROTC Scholarship
 Fisher house (Wade Park VA)

Enclosed is a check for: _____

NEVER STOP SERVING®

<p>President William Maki Maj, USAF, RET william_maki@att.net</p>	<p>1st Vice President, Programs Tom Luczynski BG, USA, RET tlucz@gmail.com</p>
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<p>Membership Data Ron Smetana LTC, USA, RET ronsmetana@att.net</p>	<p>Trustees 1 Year John Chapman CPO, USN, RET johnchapman248@gmail.com</p>



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<p style="text-align: center;">Trustees 2 Year and Webmaster Andrew R Emanuele LTC, USA, RET andy@andrewemanuele.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Trustees 3 Year Tom N. Harnden LtCol, USAF, RET tharnden@neo.rr.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ROTC/JROTC Liaison VACANT</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter Editor VACANT</p>

OWRC Purpose and Mission Statement

To support the purposes and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America; promote camaraderie among the officers (retired, active and former) within the OWRC region and relationships with other veteran organizations; and support projects for those pursuing military service (ROTC programs) and assisting veterans (wounded, jobless and homeless).

Legislative Contacts:

MOAA Legislative Update [MOAA | Legislative Action Center \(quorum.us\)](https://www.moaa.org/legislative-action-center) .

President Donald J. Trump (R) The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Washington DC 20500 Switchboard: 202-456-1414 www.whitehouse.gov

Senator Bernie Moreno (R) SR-B33 Russell Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510 <https://www.moreno.senate.gov> Cleveland Office, Carl B. Stokes U.S. Courthouse 801 W Superior Ave., STE 1400 Cleveland, OH 443113 T: (216) 522-7272

Senator Jon A. Husted (R) U.S. Senate SR-198 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone:(202)224-3353 <https://www.husted.senate.gov/>



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Representative Mike Rulli (R) U.S. Congressional **OH District 6** 4137 Boardman-Canfield Road, Suite 106 Canfield, OH 44406 Phone: (330) 967-7312 rulli.house.gov/contact, or Washington, D.C. Office 421 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-5705 Clairsville Office 101 North Market Street, St Clairsville OH 43950 (740) 338-3738

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