

FY 2011 Top Legislative Issues

Early Retirement Credit for Guardsmen

- Authorize retroactive credit to September 11, 2001
- Provide an incentive for continued service beyond 20 years, by authorizing one year early retirement credit for every two years served beyond twenty

Empowerment

- Permanent seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau (CNGB)
- Authorize a 3-Star vice chief of National Guard Bureau
- Tactical Control (TACON) for governors of Title 10 personnel during homeland disaster response operations

Fully Equip and Modernize the Army National Guard (ARNG)

- Continue to provide robust funding for ARNG equipment and the National Guard and Reserves Equipment Account (NGREA), which enables the Guard to acquire critical dual-use equipment for homeland disaster response operations

Recapitalize the Air National Guard (ANG)

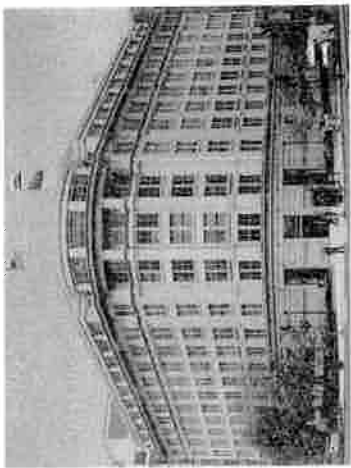
- Implement a Total Force concurrent and balanced procurement policy for both flying and support missions and commit to the timing and locations of ANG aircraft basing
- Aging ANG fighter aircraft should be programmed for the Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) to ensure continued combat capability while units await new missions

Modernize National Guard Facilities

- Provide robust military construction funding to assure modern and functional training and mobilizations facilities
- Fully support an increase of Guard and Reserve Initiative funds to provide flexible options for critical infrastructure projects

Recognize Title 32 Duty in Post 9/11 GI Bill

- Correct the oversight of not including National Guard Title 32 active duty to fully qualify for educational benefits under the Post 9/11 GI Bill



What Has NGAUS Done For You Lately?

A lot. But recent victories are only the latest of a long list of triumphs in 132 years of work on Capitol Hill

2009

Extending the availability of TRICARE coverage to "gray area" area retirees (National Guardsmen and Reservists who have retired but not yet reached age 60) topped several NGAUS accomplishments. The association convinced Congress to increase from 90 to 180 days the time a Guardsman or Reservist is eligible for TRICARE coverage prior to mobilization.

NGAUS also won nearly \$1.1 billion over the president's budget request for Guard equipment and an increase from 60 to 75 percent in the federal share of the Guard's health Care/NICE program.

In addition, Congress, at the association's request, authorized service secretaries to waive reserve-component enlistment by up to 2 percent to enhance recruiting and address in essential units or in critical specialties. Previous waiver

authority only applied to active-component and strength.

And NGAUS won acknowledgment from the president and lawmakers that the historic Post-9/11 GI Bill has an unintended blindspot: it doesn't cover Guardsmen who performed homeland security missions in a state (Title 32) status.

2008

The association won the largest increase in Army Guard Active Guard Reserve (AGR) positions in 22 years.

NGAUS worked with Congress to add 3,564 full-time positions (2,110 AGRs) above the president's request.

The association also won increased control grades for the Army and Air Guard. Separated Department of Veterans Affairs' health care for rural veterans and the recolonization of TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS)

premiums based on actual cost. As a result, TRS individual coverage was reduced to \$47.51 a month for 2009.

In addition, Congress enhanced provisions against deployment frolics and mortgage interest-rate hikes, provided authority for the service secretaries to provide active-duty (TRICARE Prime) medical and dental care to Guardsmen and Reservists, and established a new GI Bill of benefits for veterans of the war on terror.

Lawmakers, also at NGAUS' behest, put the brakes on an Air Force scheme to consolidate aircraft maintenance, which would have cut hundreds of positions from the Air Guard.

2007

Spurred by the association, Congress elevated the NGB chief to four-star general and formally made the position a principal advisor to the defense secretary.

Lawmakers also raised the Guard Bureau from a joint bureau in the departments of the Army and Air Force to a joint activity of the Defense Department and required the defense secretary to identify and revenue the NGB charter to reflect its new status.

NGAUS also convinced Congress to maintain the Joint Cargo Aircraft program, extend to 10 years the time limit for mobilized Guardsmen and Reservists to use their education benefits and increase from 90 to 130 the amount of points per year that can be applied to reserve retirement.

In addition, lawmakers reduced the age some Guardsmen and Reservists are eligible for retirement pay. For every 90 days of continuous active-duty in the war on terror, they will receive retirement three months earlier. However, it only covers service from January 2008 forward.

2006

Congress streamlined TRICARE medical coverage into a single, low-cost program for all Guardsmen and Reservists regardless of their mobilization status or history of access to health care.

The victory culminated the association's seven-year effort to improve the Guard's medical readiness while providing an important new recruiting and retention benefit.

NGAUS also led the successful fight

against an Army plan to cut more than 17,000 soldiers from the Army Guard's end strength.

In addition, Congress approved more than \$3.5 billion for Guard equipment, much of it at the association's behest.

2005

Congress extended TRICARE to all Guardsmen and Reservists in a three-tier system. The new program isn't everything NGAUS wants or the Guard needs, but is another step in the right direction.

The association helped win more than \$1 billion in congressional add-ons. Included in the overall budget are funds for 13 C-17s, eight C-130Js and five KC-130Js.

In addition, NGAUS became the focal point for opposition to the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure recommendations to ground 29 Air Guard flying units.

2004

The association and Congress overcame DoD opposition and made progress on TRICARE. The new language permanently provides Guardsmen and Reservists access to TRICARE 90 days prior to mobilization and 180 days after separation.

Guardsmen and Reservists were also now eligible to purchase one year of TRICARE for every 90 days of continuous active duty as long as they extend their service agreements.

Congress also approved new education benefits for the Guard and increased enlistment and re-enlistment bonuses.

In addition, lawmakers approved a measure that allows the defense secretary to provide states with money to employ Guardsmen for homeland defense under Title 32 for up to 180 days.

2003

NGAUS convinced Congress to overcome strenuous Pentagon objections and provide the first major expansion of TRICARE health care coverage to the Guard and Reserve.

While only temporary, the measure gave Guardsmen access to coverage 60 days before mobilization and 180 days after release from active duty. It also provided medical coverage on a cost-share basis to the one in five traditional Guardsmen and Reservists without.

employer-provided health coverage.

Congress also added \$1.3 billion more than the president's budget request for such, unburdened requirements as engine upgrades and targeting pods for Air Guard fighters.

2002

With the Global War on Terror dramatically increasing Guard operations tempo, NGAUS and Congress looked to help Guardsmen on the front lines and their families.

Lawmakers expanded the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act protections to Guardsmen mobilized under Title 32 for more than 30 days. They also extended Montgomery GI Bill eligibility from 10 to 14 years and provided commissary benefits to Guardsmen called to state duty in support of a federal emergency.

2001

The association convinced Congress to provide disability coverage to Guardsmen injured overseas within normal commuting distance to their homes and extend VA home loans through 2011.

2000

Congress increased the maximum number of retirement points per year from 75 to 90 and extended several special pay, bonuses and benefits—all at NGAUS' urging.

The association was also among several military and veterans' service organizations that convinced lawmakers to provide TRICARE for Life eligibility to all Medicare-eligible retirees of the uniformed services and their family members.

In addition, lawmakers provided funds for five new weapons of mass destruction-civil support teams. DoD wanted only 10 teams spread nationwide, but Congress shared NGAUS' view that every state needed one. █

Compiled from official NGAUS conference proceedings dating back to 1879 and other reference materials available in the library at the National Guard Memorial, the association's headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Top 10 All-Time NGAUS Achievements

1. Guard reauthorized and funded as reserve of the Army 1903
2. Thwarted attempts to cut or relegate Guard 1915, 1920, 1944, 1948, 1950, 1963, 1974, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2003, 2006, 2008
3. Guard included in plans for separate air force 1944
4. Guard empowerment 2007
5. Drill pay 1916
6. Federal retirement pay 1948
7. Federal funds for army construction 1950
8. Civil-service status for full-time technicians 1968
9. Active Guard and Reserve program 1978
10. (Tie) Federal educational benefits 1984

Honorable mention: Bural rights (1959), Civil Relief Act, protections for those mobilized under Title 32 (2007), TRICARE employment origins (1994), TRICARE access to "gray area" retirees (2009), VA home loans (1992), year-round commissary access (1983).



NGAUS HEADQUARTERS The building that housed the association's first office (a two-room apartment) in Washington, D.C., in 1944 bears a resemblance to its current presence in the nation's capital (left).