

## 2019 SDNGEA Resolutions

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-01 Increase in FSGLI coverage for dependent children.**

**Situation:** The average funeral cost continues to increase and can now easily exceed \$10,000. *“The National Funeral Directors Association estimates the median cost of a funeral and burial at about \$8,500. This price does not include a burial plot or things like flowers or transportation. Depending on the funeral home and funeral items chosen, the cost could be substantially higher.”* Reference 2. Funeral costs have by nearly 4% between 2014 and 2017, and this trend is expected to continue, Reference 3. With this increase, the FSGLI for dependent children will soon not even be enough to cover the cost of a funeral.

#### **References:**

1. Federal Trade Commission Consumer Information, Funeral Cost and Pricing Checklist, July 2012, [https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0301-funeral-costs-and-pricing-checklist#Funeral\\_Fees](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0301-funeral-costs-and-pricing-checklist#Funeral_Fees)
2. Lincoln Heritage Funeral Advantage, How Much Does a Funeral Cost?, 2019, <https://www.lhlic.com/consumer-resources/average-funeral-cost/>
3. National Funeral Directors Association, Statistics, 2019, <http://www.nfda.org/news/statistics>

**Recommendation:** The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States urges Congress to review the current FSGLI amount for dependent children and consider increasing the amount.

Committee recommends approval.

**APPROVED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-02 Continued contribution to The Thrift Saving Plan (TSP) after expiration of service obligation**

**Situation:** Service members are not authorized to continue contributing to their TSP account following completion of their service obligation. The Thrift Saving Plan (TSP) is a wonderful benefit to our service members because of its low administration fees and management flexibility. However, when a service member leaves the service they are not able to continue contribution to this program. This does not apply to service members who leave the service and are still federally employed.

**Recommendation:** Allow service members to continue contributing to their TSP accounts after completing their mandatory service obligation.

Committee recommends approval.

**APPROVED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-03 Transfer eligibility of Post 911 GI Bill.**

**Situation:** Starting on 12 July 2019, if you have more than 16 years of service, you are no longer eligible to transfer your Post 911GI Bill.

**Recommendation:** The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States urges Congress to re-evaluate the eligibility criteria to grant exceptions to policy for life changing events.

Committee recommends approval.

**APPROVED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-04 TriCare Retired Reserve rate re-evaluation for grey area retiree's.**

**Situation:** Current Soldiers who retire with 20 good years of service in the National Guard are eligible for TriCare Retired Reserve health insurance but the rates are unfortunately very high for the time between their retirement and age 60. This resolution was approved by the body at the 2016 National EANGUS conference but the changes have not yet been approved and therefore we need to continue to push the issue.

**Recommendation:** We would like to recommend a re-evaluation of the TriCare Retired Reserve Rates to ensure that our retirees are offered exceptional coverage at a reasonable price.

Committee recommends approval.

**APPROVED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-05 Allow AGR's with USERRA rights to use T32 Military Leave.**

**Situation:** Newly converted Active Guard Reserve (AGR) from the T32 Federal Technician program have been denied the use of accrued military leave. While under USERRA rights the individuals continue to accrue 120 hours of military leave annually. South Dakota policy letter from The Adjutant General (draft MFR Federal Technician Military Leave dated 10 January 2017) that prevents individuals from using military leave while on an AGR tour beginning in FY 17.

**Recommendation:** The SDNGEA urges state legislature to reinstate military leave for members covered under USERRA rights.

Committee recommends approval.

**DEFEATED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference** (need more information and questioned whether this was a legislative issue, a NDAA issue, a policy issue, or a combination of misinterpretation. The NDAA changed the USC 709 g, National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2017, Section 513, dated 23 December 2016, Title 32 USC 709, The National Guard Technician Act, 5 USC § 6323(a)(1), Military Leave; Reserves and National Guardsmen)

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-06 Increase South Dakota State Tuition Assistance to 100% for technical colleges.**

**Situation:** Currently there are many states surrounding us that provide 100% State Tuition Assistance for National Guard Service Members who are attending in-state technical colleges. South Dakota currently pays 83% for technical colleges.

**Recommendation:** Allow 100% State Tuition Assistance in South Dakota technical colleges.

Committee recommends approval.

**APPROVED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-07 Increase South Dakota State Tuition Assistance to 100% for colleges and universities.**

**Situation:** Currently there are many states surrounding us that provide 100% State Tuition Assistance for National Guard Service Members who are attending in-state colleges and universities. South Dakota currently pays 50% in-state tuition for universities.

**Recommendation:** Allow 100% State Tuition Assistance in South Dakota colleges and universities, but students must apply for Federal Assistance if eligible prior to this benefit.

Committee recommends approval.

**APPROVED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-08 Reduced rate for hunting and fishing license for SDNGEA service members.**

**Situation:** SD has some of the most beautiful State Parks and plentiful resources for hunting and fishing. Currently SD offers discounts for disabled veterans and a couple other specific groups of veterans, but many traditional SD National Guard members do not qualify for any discounts.

**Recommendation:** The South Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association urges state legislature to review the qualifications for reduced rate hunting and fishing license and consider offering a reduced rate for SDNGEA members.

Committee recommends approval.

**DEFEATED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

### **SDNGEA Resolution 2019-09 Reduced rate for state park entrance fees for service members.**

**Situation:** SD has some of the most beautiful State Parks and plentiful resources for hunting and fishing.

Currently SD offers discounts for disabled veterans and a couple other specific groups of veterans, but many traditional SD National Guard members do not qualify for any discounts.

**Recommendation:** The South Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association urges state legislature to review the qualifications for discounted state park entrance fees and consider offering a reduced rate for service members, including retirees.

Committee recommends approval.

**DEFEATED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

**SDNGEA Resolution 2019-10 Thank you to the hosts of the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

**Situation:** The 60<sup>th</sup> Annual South Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association Conference, in Sioux Falls, SD at the Downtown Holiday Inn, hosts have done a wonderful job. The members and guests have thoroughly enjoyed this well planned conference and all of the amenities that have been provided.

**Recommendation:** The conference delegates give a round of applause to the people responsible for such an outstanding conference on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

Committee recommends approval.

**APPROVED at SDNGEA 2019 Conference**

## **2018 SDNGEA Resolutions**

**Title: SDNGEA Resolution 2018-01 Concurrent Receipt of Federal Tuition Assistance (TA) and MGIB**

**Description:** College students are not authorized to utilize FTA and MGIB concurrently.

**Proposal Type:** Resubmission

**Submitter:** South Dakota

**Business Case:** Change 3 to DoDI 1322.5 Para 1k that occurred in July of 2014 removed the allowance for service members to utilize more than one assistance program at the same time. The removal of this benefit has been detrimental to recruiting and retention for the National Guard nationwide.

**Recommendation:** Allow college students to utilize both Federal TA and MGIB concurrently.

**REAFFIRMED**

**Title: SDNGEA Resolution 2018-02 Allow Bonus Incentives for All National Guard Service Members**

**Description:** Rank and time-in-service currently prevent Army National Guard soldiers from receiving reenlistment benefits.

**Proposal Type:** New

**Submitter:** South Dakota

**Business Case:** Currently service members are not allowed any type of bonus incentive after serving 13 years, or after obtaining the rank of E-7. These service members are lumped into a category called “Lifers” and are expected to remain committed to the National Guard for retirement and medical benefits. Currently, service members who have not yet reached these earmarks are eligible for up to a \$15,000 re-enlistment bonus. If these younger, more inexperienced service members are being pursued for re-enlistment this heavily, it only makes sense to offer some type of bonus incentive to those individuals who have a deeper wealth of knowledge and skill. However, with an understanding that this group of “Lifers” is likely more inclined to remain in the National Guard for other reasons, the incentives would not need to be nearly as extravagant. Also, dependent only on career field, the Air National Guard has no ranking or service stipulations for traditional service members to receive bonus incentives.

**Recommendation:** Considering the immense value of those men and women who have served 13 years and/or obtained the rank of E-7, and in an effort to retain a lethal force, we should continue to offer these individuals re-enlistment bonuses, similar to the Air National Guard.

**REAFFIRMED**

**Rejected at 2018 EANGUS Conference. Title: SDNGEA Resolution 2018-03 Continued contribution to The Thrift Saving Plan (TSP) after expiration of service obligation**

**Description:** Service members are not authorized to continue contributing to their TSP account following completion of their service obligation.

**Proposal Type:** Resubmission

**Submitter:** South Dakota

**Business Case:** The Thrift Saving Plan (TSP) is a wonderful benefit to our service members because of its low administration fees and management flexibility. However, when a service member leaves the service they are not able to continue contribution to this program. This does not apply to service members who leave the service and are still federally employed.

**Recommendation:** Allow service members to continue contributing to their TSP accounts after completing their mandatory service obligation.

**DEFEATED AT 2018 EANGUS CONFERENCE**

**Title: SDNGEA Resolution 2018-06 Allow National Guard Airmen to receive education benefits comparable to National Guard Soldiers**

**Description:** The Army National Guard offers student loan repayment program incentives, while the Air National Guard has no comparable program.

**Proposal Type:** New

**Submitter:** South Dakota

**Business Case:** Currently, there are no student loan repayment incentives offered to airmen in the South Dakota Air National Guard. The G.I. Bill and tuition assistance incentives are great benefits for airmen, but for those who have already received a college education at the time of enlistment, there should be an equal incentive to lessen the burden of student loans and reward them for the work they've already done in furthering their education. It is important for our South Dakota National Guard branches to offer enlistees equal benefits. Because the Army National Guard has a student loan repayment program for its soldiers, the Air National Guard should be able to offer these same benefits.

**Recommendation:** Allow airmen receive student loan repayment benefits to mirror those offered by the Army National Guard to repay federal student loans up to an amount of \$50,000.

**REAFFIRMED**

**Title: SDNGEA Resolution 2018-07 Dual-Status Technician Maternity & Paternity Leave**

**Description:** Dual-status federal technicians would like more comparable maternity/paternity leave to that of AGR's.

**Proposal Type:** New

**Submitter:** South Dakota

**Business Case:** Currently, all federal technicians are authorized up to 12 weeks of unpaid maternity leave. This forces some technicians to use up their store of sick leave and/or annual leave, and can cause financial burden. Active Guard Reservists currently receive 12 weeks of paid maternity leave or 2 weeks of paid paternity leave.

**Recommendation:** Allow Dual-Status Federal Technicians to receive up to 12 weeks of paid maternity leave and 2 weeks of paid paternity leave, similar to AGR benefits.

**REAFFIRMED**

**Title: SDNGEA Resolution 2018-08 Mothers of Military Service Leave Act**

**Description:** Support for proposed SB1721.

**Proposal Type:** New

**Submitter:** South Dakota

**Business Case:** There is currently a proposed bill (SB1721) to grant the National Guard and Reserve components 12 weeks of fully paid maternity leave in accordance with the DoD Policy "Force of the Future Initiative." This policy was established in 2016 for active military members and left out the National Guard and Reserve components.

**Recommendation:** Continue to push for the approval of SB1721.

**REAFFIRMED**

**Rejected at 2018 EANGUS Conference. Title: SDNGEA Resolution 2018-10 Automatic re-enrollment in Tricare Reserve Select (TRS) and current dental carrier after Active Duty (AD) time in which Tricare Prime automatically kicked in.**

**Description:** Continue to push for carriers to auto-enroll soldiers back into TRS and dental coverage following Active Duty service.

**Proposal Type:** Resubmission

**Submitter:** South Dakota

**Business Case:** If you are currently enrolled in TriCare Reserve Select but go on Active Duty orders for over 30 days you automatically are enrolled into Tricare Prime and Active Duty Dental. When your orders end, so does your health and dental insurance and the providers do not remind you that you have to re-apply for TriCare Reserve Select or dental coverage. Numerous Soldiers have re-applied for TRS shortly before their orders ended but their application was not processed because they were on AD orders. There seems to be a large disconnect between DEERS and TriCare in regards to the length of AD orders. This has left many Soldiers and their families without coverage. This resolution was approved by the body at the National EANGUS conference but the changes have not yet been approved and therefore we need to continue to push the issue.

**Recommendation:** We would like TriCare and dental carriers to auto-enroll you back into TriCare Reserve Select and dental coverage if you were enrolled before the long tour Active Duty orders.

**REAFFIRMED**

## 2017 SDNGEA Resolutions

**SDNGEA Resolution 2017-01 Increase South Dakota State Tuition Assistance to 100%.**

**Situation:** Currently there are many states surrounding us that provide 100% State Tuition Assistance for National Guard Service Members who are attending in-state colleges and universities. South Dakota currently pays 50% in-state tuition for universities and 83% for technical colleges.

**Recommendation:** Allow 100% State Tuition Assistance in South Dakota.

Committee does not recommends approval.

**RE-WRITTEN IN 2019 RESOLUTION**

**SDNG Resolution 2017-02 Ensure Reserve Component (RC) health care benefits eligibility for all RC personnel regardless of employment or employer.**

**Situation:** Section 706 of the FY07 NDAA authorized TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) for all National Guard Members and their families, however, the language was inserted into the statute which prohibits eligibility to enroll in TRS if the member is enrolled or eligible to enroll in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of Title 5, or better known as “Federal Employee Health Benefits” (FEHB) program. This exclusion is codified in Title 10 U.S.C. Section 1076d, (a)(2). This exclusion affects all National Guard Technicians as well as all members working for other government agencies who participate in the FEHB Program. As many as 50,000 Guard members are prohibited from choosing TRS as a family coverage option due to this restriction. In some cases, currently, the rates for TRS can be nearly half the cost of the least expensive coverage option under the FEHB, making TRS the better option for many Guard Members who are currently not eligible. Eliminating this restriction will allow Guard Technicians greater choice in selecting the health care plan which best meets their family’s needs. This resolution was approved by the body at the 2016 National EANGUS conference but the changes have not yet been approved and therefore we need to continue to push the issue.

**Recommendation:** The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States urges Congress to amend Title 10 U.S.C. Section 1067d (a) by deleting paragraph two which creates an exclusion in TRICARE eligibility for anyone eligible for health benefits under Chapter 89 of Title 5 (Federal Employee Health Benefit Program)

Committee recommends approval.

**REAFFIRMED**

**SDNG Resolution 2017-03 South Dakota Driver License expiration changes for military service members serving on Active Duty for 180 days or more.**

**Situation:** Under South Dakota Statute, any license issued to a person on active duty military service does not expire. South Dakota will issue licenses to service members of the United States Armed Forces and their

families (service person's spouse and dependent children) with the words "military-no expiration" in the place of the expiration date. These individuals do not have to renew their driver licenses for the length of their military service. The license is valid only when accompanied with a current valid (unexpired) military identification card (CAC). A retired military identification card is not considered as sufficient. The license is valid unless sooner suspended, cancelled, or revoked for cause as provided by law. The license is valid until 90 days after any discharge from active duty. You may renew your driver license through normal procedures if you choose to keep your address and/or photo up to date.

Who would qualify:

- \* All members of the armed forces on active duty, to include National Guard and Reservists called for active service for 180 days or more.
- \* Spouses and dependents with a valid dependent identification card of military personnel who occupy the same residence as the person on active duty.

Upon Expiration (90 days from discharge):

- \* A license will expire upon 90 days from release or discharge from active duty, at that time all South Dakota laws regarding an expired license are in effect.

**Recommendation:** South Dakota does currently have a similar codified law (32-12-45) which states: A valid South Dakota operator's license held by any person who enters or is in the United States armed forces shall continue in full force and effect so long as the service continues and the person remains absent from this state. This would add the "no expiration" comment right on the license so law enforcement agencies in other states would have a better understanding. It also has family members as an addition as they are stationed outside of South Dakota as well. The "person remains absent from this state or returns to this state" is also removed which relieves the requirement of the service member to renew their license if they come home for a short period or timeframe.

Committee does not recommend approval.

**DEFEATED AT 2017 SDNGEA CONFERENCE**