

NGAUS Historical Accomplishments

2020

Some new benefits and greater eligibility for some existing veterans' programs top NGAUS accomplishments.

The new benefits include paid maternity leave for drill-status women. The intent of the program, which the Pentagon has not yet implemented, is to provide excused absences with pay and retirement points for up to three months of unit training assemblies.

Also included in the fiscal 2021 National Defense Authorization Act is six months of transitional medical coverage for Guardsmen and their families after Title 32 coronavirus response missions.

Meanwhile, the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvements Act of 2020 credits for the first time service under Title 32 toward Department of Veterans Affairs home loans.

Additional language extends federal employment protections and reemployment rights to Guardsmen who serve at least 14 days of state active duty or who are mobilized to respond to a national emergency or natural disaster.

NGAUS also won some major equipment battles in 2020. One of the most significant is the six C-130J Super Hercules cargo planes for the Air Guard. There are also 43 new or rebuilt UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters along with \$100 million in the Humvee modernization program for the Army Guard.

Finally, a provision in the NDAA adds the National Guard Bureau chief to the list of senior officers able to provide an unfunded priorities list to Congress.

2019

The final required major benefit fix to mobilization authority 12304b tops a strong year of accomplishments.

Congress created the new authority in 2012 to give the services easier access to the National Guard and Reserve for preplanned missions. But it lacked the personnel benefits provided by other authorities, including premobilization and transitional health care and credit toward the GI Bill and early retirement. Adding the three benefits was a NGAUS priority for four years.

The association also convinces lawmakers to include a provision in the fiscal 2020 NDAA that opens TRICARE Reserve Select in 2030 to Guardsmen and Reservists to dual-status technicians and other full-time federal employees currently prohibited from purchasing TRS.

NGAUS was also instrumental in getting 64 new UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters for the Army National Guard and four new C-130J Super Hercules cargo planes for the Air Guard in fiscal 2020 legislation. In addition, lawmakers for the sixth consecutive year add \$100 million to the budget to rebuild Humvees. They also provide \$395 million each for the Army and Air Guard in the National Guard Equipment and Reserve Equipment Account.

Unfortunately, the Pentagon later reprograms the Humvee and NGREA funding along with two of the C-130Js from fiscal 2020 appropriations.

2018

FEDREC

- NGAUS advocacy and survey of over 3,000 NGAUS members led Congress to authorize the Secretary of the Army and Secretary of the Air Force to adjust the effective date of promotion for National Guard officers experiencing undue delays in federal recognition.

12304b Parity

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize further corrections to 12304b orders disparity:
 - High deployment allowance accrual for all Reserve Component servicemembers.
 - Non-reduction in pay protections for Reserve Component servicemembers who are also federal employees in their civilian capacity.

2017

12304b Parity

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize initial corrections to 12304b orders disparity:
 - Pre- and post-mobilization TRICARE health care.
 - Post-9/11 GI Bill accrual.

Post-9/11 GI Bill Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy, along with other military and veterans associations, led Congress to pass the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 and included significant National Guard GI Bill benefit expansions, including:
 - Increased eligibility for Reserve Component servicemembers who have served less than 36 months on active duty.
 - Elimination of the 15-year cap on using GI Bill benefits.
 - Policies to make increase transferability of benefits to other beneficiaries.

2016

Veterans Status

- After six years of NGAUS advocacy, Congress changed the federal “veteran” definition to include all National Guard and Reserve retirees, conveying the honor of federal veteran status to Reserve Component servicemembers.

Remotely-Piloted Aircraft Domestic Operations

- Congress passed NGAUS-endorsed legislation recognizing the remotely pilot aircraft (RPA) mission as aeronautical under the Federal Aviation Administration definition, thereby enabling Air National Guard units to remain eligible for low- or no-cost leases at civilian airports.

National Guard Benefits

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to pass legislation to treat deaths during drill weekends the same as those on active duty under the Survivors Benefit Plan (SBP).

2015

A-10 Retirement Prohibition

- NGAUS advocacy supported Congressional efforts to successfully prohibit the retirement of the A-10 close-air support aircraft.

Military Retirement Expansion (Blended Retirement)

- NGAUS advocacy, along with other military and veterans associations, led Congress to approve the Blended Retirement System, which combines traditional military retirement pensions with defined contributions to a 401(k)-style Thrift Savings Plan account, thereby increasing the number of servicemembers receiving a retirement benefit accrual to 85%.

2014

National Commission on the Future of the Army

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress to establishing the National Commission on the Future of the Army to evaluate Total Army future, including limiting the controversial plan to transfer all Army National Guard AH-64 Apache attack helicopters to the Active Component.

Enhanced Early Retirement Benefit Accrual

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to remove the requirement that a 90 day period of active duty service, which results in early retirement benefit accrual, take place within the same fiscal year.

2013

National Guard Deployment Predictability

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to approve limits on cancelling National Guard deployments, leading to increased predictability for servicemembers, families, and employers.

2012

National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress to establishing the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force to evaluate the Total Air Force future, including the appropriate force structure mix, prevent Air National Guard personnel and aircraft cuts, and ensure more transparency and National Guard input in budget request development.

Enhanced National Guard Policies

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to provide transition-assistance advisors in each state, restore Post-Deployment/ Mobilization Respite Absence leave, and approve automatic federal recognition of all National Guard warrant officers promotions to Chief Warrant Officer 2.

2011

National Guard Empowerment: A Seat at the Table

- NGAUS advocacy overcame strenuous Pentagon opposition and Congress authorized a seat for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Benefits Enhancement

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress authorizing re-employment rights for extended Title 32 duty and expanded access to health care for National Guard servicemembers in rural areas.

2010

GI Bill Eligibility

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress amending the Post-9/11 GI Bill to ensure eligibility for National Guard servicemembers performing homeland security missions in a Title 32 status.

Air National Guard Force Structure

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to halt an Air Force attempt to unilaterally re-assign Air National Guard C-130 aircraft from several states to an Active-Component training unit and require the Secretary of the Air Force to obtain written approval of all parties before moving aircraft between components.

2009

Enhanced TRICARE Access

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress increasing, from 90 to 180 days, the time National Guard or Reserve servicemember eligibility for pre-mobilization TRICARE coverage.
- Congress also authorized TRICARE medical coverage for National Guard gray-area retirees.

2008

Post-9/11 GI Bill

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress to authorize, for National Guard servicemembers, new educational benefits for service performed on active duty authorized by the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, includes:
 - Coverage of costs for tuition, housing and books.
 - Transferability of servicemember benefits to certain family members.

2007

Early Retirement Credit

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress authorize early retirement credit for National Guard and Reserve servicemembers, which allows for a reduction in retirement age by each 90-day period of qualifying active duty service performed from January 2008 forward.

Enhanced National Guard Benefits

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to extend to 10 years the time limit for mobilized National Guard and Reserve servicemembers to use education benefits, as well as increase from 90 to 130 the amount of points per year applicable to a reserve retirement.

2006

TRICARE Reserve Select

- NGAUS advocacy, after seven years to improve National Guard medical readiness, led Congress to create TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS), the first time every traditional Guardsman and Reservist were made eligible for low-cost health coverage subsidized by the federal government.

2005

Shielding National Guard Force Structure

- NGAUS advocacy led to successful opposition of 2005 Base Realignment and Closure recommendations to eliminate 29 Air National Guard flying units.

2004

Pre- and Post-Mobilization TRICARE

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to permanently provide National Guard and Reserve servicemembers access to TRICARE 90 days prior to mobilization and 180 days after separation.

2003

TRICARE Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to provide temporary TRICARE access for National Guard and Reserve servicemembers 60 days before mobilization and 180 days after separation, as well as lost-cost coverage to part-time National Guard and Reserve servicemembers without employer-provided health care.

Benefits Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to make permanent access to VA home loans for National Guard and Reserve servicemembers with six years of service, as well as approve unlimited use of commissary stores on military bases for National Guard servicemembers.

2002

TRICARE Access Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to provide TRICARE Prime to activated National Guard servicemembers without access to a military medical facility, as well as authorize federal agencies to pay federal health-insurance premiums for federal employees, who serve in the National Guard, when activated for 30 or more days.

SCRA Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to expand the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act, now called the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), protections to National Guard servicemembers mobilized under Title 32 orders for more than 30 days.

2001

Enhanced Disability Benefits

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to provide disability coverage for National Guard servicemembers injured while traveling overnight within normal commuting distance to their homes.

2000

Benefits Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy, along with other military and veterans associations, led Congress to provide TRICARE for Life eligibility to all Medicare-eligible retirees of the uniformed services and family members.
- NGAUS advocacy also led Congress to increase the maximum number of retirement points per year from 75 to 90, as well as extend several special pays, bonuses, and benefits.

1999

Benefits Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to create a Thrift Savings Plan for the National Guard and Reserve, expand TRICARE Dental Program access to family members, and extend VA loans to the National Guard and Reserve for eight years.

1998

Imminent Danger Pay Eligibility

- NGAUS advocacy led to Congress providing imminent danger pay to National Guard servicemembers comparable to the Active Component.

1996

Protecting the National Guard

- NGAUS advocacy defeated proposed cuts to Army National Guard divisions and reductions, from 15 to 12, in Air National Guard general-purpose flying unit authorized aircraft.

Personnel Benefit Increases

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to increase available retirement points for all National Guard servicemembers and retired credit for time served in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) as part of the simultaneous membership program.

1995

Protecting Full Time Support

- NGAUS advocacy defeated efforts to significantly cut National Guard military technicians and led Congress to mandate that force structure dictate any future changes to military technician end strength.

1994

USERRA

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to approve the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act (USERRA); comprehensive legislation to protect the civilian employment of Reserve Component servicemembers mobilized for active duty.

Additional VA Benefits

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize burial rights for retired National Guard and Reserve servicemembers at any VA cemetery.

1993

Montgomery GI Bill Benefits Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to expand Montgomery GI Bill education benefits to Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) personnel, as well as provide benefits for graduate studies.

1992

National Guard Youth Challenge

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to create the National Guard Youth Challenge program, initially a pilot program to work with at-risk youth in 12 states to produce individuals with the values, skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults.

VA Benefits Access

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize a seven-year program to provide VA home loans to National Guard and Reserve servicemembers with at least six years of service.

1991

Benefits Enhancement

- NGAUS advocacy, in conjunction with Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, led Congress to authorize several personnel benefits for Guardsmen, which included:
 - Basic allowance for quarters for single servicemembers without dependents.
 - Payment of medical special pay at active-duty rates.
 - Variable housing allowance upon mobilization.

1987

Permanent Federal Educational Assistance

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to make the Montgomery GI Bill permanent.

1986

Enhanced Utilization Authority

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to adopt the Montgomery Amendment, a provision to protect the ability of Congress to prescribe National Guard training and ensure Department of Defense access to National Guard units for overseas mobilizations over gubernatorial objections.

1984

Montgomery GI Bill

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to create the Montgomery GI Bill, which provided federal financial support to National Guard servicemembers attending college for the first time.

1983

Commissary Privileges

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to mandate the Department of Defense begin allowing National Guard and Reserve commissary privileges by testing year-round access.

1982

Technician & AGR Status

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to provide civil-service retirement disability pay to National Guard technicians separated from their jobs due to a physical inability to maintain drilling membership, as well as clarify Congressional intent for National Guard AGR personnel to serve under state control.

1981

NGREA

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to create the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA), a Congressionally-dedicated funding source to modernize Reserve Component equipment and weapons platforms.

1980

Protecting the National Guard

- NGAUS advocacy won additional administrative assemblies to compensate for a loss of administrative pay and defeated a proposal to eliminate military leave pay for federal employees.

Enhanced Utilization Authority

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize presidential mobilization of up to 100,000 National Guard and Reserve servicemembers without declaring a national emergency.

1979

Pay Enhancement

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize pay for simultaneous membership in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and the Army National Guard.

1978

Additional Full Time Support

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to approve a test of full-time manning in Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) status, in addition to military technicians.

1976

Enhanced Utilization Authority

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize presidential mobilization of up to 50,000 National Guard and Reserve servicemembers without declaring a national emergency.

1973–75

Recruiting for an All-Volunteer Force

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize bolstered National Guard benefits to improve recruiting and retention for the new all-volunteer force, which included:
 - Housing allowances for new National Guard servicemembers under the Reserve Enlists Program.
 - Full-time group life insurance coverage.
 - Authority to withhold premiums from drill pay for state-sponsored insurance.
 - Burial flags.
 - Some access to space-available travel.

1968

Federal Status for Technicians

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to pass and President Lyndon Johnson to sign into law the National Guard Technician Act to bring more than 40,000 National Guard full time technicians into civil-service status.

1961–65

Protecting the National Guard

- NGAUS advocacy defeated Pentagon effort to reduce Army National Guard personnel end-strength and eliminate four combat divisions, as well as a proposal to reduce defense spending by cutting National Guard and Reserve pay tables to 75% of that received by the Active Component.

1960

Employment Rights

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to clarify re-employment rights and job protections for National Guard servicemembers performing an initial period of active duty for training for up to six months.

Protecting the National Guard

- NGAUS advocacy defeats Pentagon proposal to fold the Army National Guard into the Army Reserve.

1959

Burial Rights Expansion

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize national cemetery burial rights to National Guard servicemembers who die during training, during travel to and from training, or while under treatment for injuries and illnesses contracted while training or traveling.

1956

First Female Officers

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to approve Public Law 845, which authorized female officers in the National Guard.

1954

USPFO Status

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to approve Public Law 477, which authorized official active-duty status for U.S. Property and Fiscal Officers (USPFOs) in every state.

1950

First Dedicated Funds for Armory Construction

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to approve the first armory construction legislation, which provided federal funds amounting to 75% of the cost of new armories on state land and 100% of the cost if the facility is needed due to federal force structure changes.

1948

First Reserve Component Retirement Benefits

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to include the first comprehensive retirement benefits for National Guard and Reserve servicemembers within Public Law 810.

1947

Creation of the Air National Guard

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to authorize creation of the Air National Guard as part of the standalone United States Air Force within the National Security Act of 1947.

1944

Protecting the National Guard

- NGAUS advocacy defeated plans to relegate the National Guard to a state-only role after the end of World War II without role or force structure within the planned Air Force.

1933

National Guard Duty Status Standardization

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to streamline National Guard servicemember transition between state and federal status through creation of the National Guard of the United States, where servicemembers simultaneously serve as members of and transition between two separate, but overlapping organizations: their state National Guard and the National Guard.

1920

National Guard Duty Status Clarification

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to require that National Guard servicemembers discharged from active duty automatically revert to their previous state status and reaffirm the National Guard's role as the principal combat reserve of the Army.

1916

Employment and Training Standardizations

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to pass the National Defense Act of 1916, which included:
 - Officially changing the term "state militia" to "National Guard."
 - Guaranteeing the National Guard status as the primary reserve force of the Army.
 - Providing authority to the President of the United States, in the case of war or national emergency, to mobilize the National Guard for the duration of the crisis.
 - Authorizing drill pay for the first time, increasing the annual number of training weekends from 24 to 48, and extending annual training periods from five to 15 days.

1908

Militia Act of 1908

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to pass the Militia Act of 1908, which removed time and geographic limits to service, specified National Guard units deploy as units, and created the Division of Militia Affairs, today known as the National Guard Bureau, within the War Department, as well as increased National Guard appropriations to \$4.0 million annually.

1903

Militia Act of 1903

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to pass and President Theodore Roosevelt to sign into law the Militia Act of 1903, also known as the "Dick Act," replacing the Militia Act of 1792, requiring National Guard unit conformity to federal training standards, and including:
 - Transformation of all militia units into organized regiments of the National Guard.
 - Increased federal funding and equipment for National Guard units.

1900

Enhanced National Guard Funding

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to increase the total militia appropriation from \$400,000 annually to \$1.0 million annually.

1887

First NGAUS Win

- NGAUS advocacy led Congress to double the total militia appropriation from \$200,000 annually, passed continuously since 1808, to \$400,000 annually.

1879

Initial National Guard Advocacy

- NGAUS advocacy led to educating Congress across multiple years on how low federal subsidies impacted the militia and recommended changes to update the Militia Act of 1792.

1878

NGAUS Establishment

- Concerned about antiquated federal laws and limited funding, Civil War veterans from the North and South met for the first time in Richmond, Virginia, to develop collective solutions to their common problems and establish the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS).