

# THE VOICE

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## TREA FOUNDERS

George Skonce, 1915 – 2000  
Dean Sorell, 1921 – 2004

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# CONTENT



## TREA GIVES MAKING GOOD THINGS HAPPEN

TREA's charitable arm, TREA GIVES, has been hard at work making a difference in the lives of enlisted veterans/retirees/active duty/Guard & Reserve and their families.

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**THE VOICE is the flagship publication of TREA: The Enlisted Association, located at 12200 E. Briarwood Ave, Suite 170 Centennial, CO 80112**

*Views expressed in the magazine, and the appearance of advertisements, do not necessarily reflect the opinions of TREA or its Board of Directors, and do not imply endorsement. The magazine (ISSN 1527-0467) is published quarterly by TREA, a nonprofit organization.*

### Magazine Staff

The magazine staff can be reached by email at editor@trea.org. Editor-in-Chief, Debbie Osborne  
Creative Director/Graphic Designer, Gabriela Schechter.

### Editorial Office

Please send all written communication to TREA Headquarters at 12200 E Briarwood Ave, Suite 170 Centennial, CO 80112

### Submissions

The VOICE accepts articles and photographs on a continual basis, but does not pay for submissions. Please send all articles and photos via email to editor@trea.org or by mail to 12200 E. Briarwood Ave., Ste 170, Centennial, CO 80112. There is no guarantee that any submission will be published. Photos must be high quality in order to be printed in the magazine. Low quality photos will not be printed.

### Deadlines

For copy and photos (with captions, please) the deadline is the 15th day, two months prior to magazine release. Next deadline is March 15th, 2024.

### Advertising

By their appearance, ads must not imply or infer any kind of TREA representation, warranty, or endorsement. For ad rates and a media kit, please email us at editor@trea.org or call 303-752-0660. Postmaster (address change) Please send address changes to The VOICE, 12200 E. Briarwood Ave, Suite 170 Centennial, CO 80112 or by email to treahq@trea.org. Periodicals postage paid at Englewood, CO and other mailing offices.

The VOICE of the Enlisted magazine is a benefit of membership with TREA. A dollar (\$1.00) of all membership dues is restricted for the publication of this magazine.

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Deb Oelschig, National President



First of all 'Happy New Year'. Hoping that 2024 is filled with health and happiness for you and your family.

Both TREA and our Foundation, TREA GIVES, have worked relentlessly to support our Veterans/Active Duty Servicemembers/Retirees and Guard & Reservist. We understand their struggle, because it's our struggle too. We served together and we will fight together to make sure that the people in Washington understand that freedom is not free – We, paid for it!

As we enter a new year, we are faced with amazing opportunities. We are anxiously awaiting the placement of our second service dog through our TREA GIVES program. This is a life changing event not only for the veteran, but for his/her family, friends and community as well. We are actively making plans to take the TREA GIVES program 'on the road'. It's such a wonderful program that we want to share it with as many people as we can. There is more information about our plans on page 5. Make sure that you check your emails because we will let you know when we will we will let you know when we are in your area, we would really like to have you join us in our efforts to support and provide for our fellow veterans and active duty members.

This is a pivotal time for TREA. We, like other VSO's and all membership based organizations, continue to experience decreased membership numbers. This is more than a drop in membership dues, it goes hand-in-hand with the power we wield in Washington and our ability to make things happen. Don't get me wrong, our Legislative advocacy is as robust as ever, (read through the Washington Update on pages 7, 8 & 9 to see all that we are involved in) but it does become harder when we don't have your support. There is strength in numbers, especially in Washington. We promised to never stop fighting for your earned benefits, and we won't, but we do need your support to make things happen.

As I enter my second year as your National President, I encourage you to get involved. We need many of us to win the fight that Washington has pitted against us. That said, your National Board will have several openings this year. All positions are seeking candidates. Please consider joining us in our mission to fight the erosion of your earned benefits. I vow to stand strong and tall alongside you – together we are mighty and we CAN make good things happen for those who so bravely and honorably served our country.

We are here for all who served: past, present & future – please consider joining us in our fight.

Deborah Oelschig  
National President

**UNITED WE STAND**





## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Garry Turks, National 3rd Vice & Chaplain

Treat your life like a jigsaw puzzle

1. Work from outside in – controlling and establishing your environment, will help you work on the 'inside'.
2. When things aren't going well, take a break. Things usually look better when you return.
3. Embrace and include family & friends – this makes the experience more enjoyable.
4. The creator gave you the picture as a guide – God gave you the Bible.
5. Don't force things. If something is meant to be, it will come together naturally.
6. Perseverance pays off. Every puzzle goes together bit by bit, piece by piece, minute by minute.
7. Anything worth doing takes time and effort. A great puzzle can't be rushed; a great life can't be hurried.

BE PATIENT! A good puzzle doesn't come together overnight – much like a good life, it takes time, patience and effort. If you are eager and impatient, you end up forcing pieces in where they do not fit and should not be. This usually causes one to be frustrated, and in the end, abandon the effort. Patience is the key! A completed puzzle is beautiful and the journey was enjoyed. Make this your life's goal.

May the New Year bring you Comfort, Peace and the Patience needed to enrich your life, leading you to Spiritual fulfillment.

"Patience leads to abundant understanding, but impatience leads to stupid mistakes." Proverbs 14:9

## CHANGE HAS BEGUN

The New Year brings change. This change started at the TREA National Headquarters last month with a new office space. IT advancements of the past few years have made it possible to work more streamlined, and efficient. In addition, we are moving to a paper-less environment, although not quite there yet, but the efforts in this direction have resulted in the need for less physical space. We have been able to reduce our physical footprint and move into a smaller, more cost-effective space. We are still in the same building, but we are now in Suite #170, instead of Suite #250. Please make note of this change.

To help draw attention to this change, we are doing a 'fun' incentive. The first 20 donations (\*) sent to Suite #170 will be entered into a drawing for a \$25.00 VISA gift card. The winner will be announced in the May issue of The VOICE of the Enlisted magazine.

(\*) The donations can be made out to either TREA (for Legislative advocacy) or TREA GIVE (for veteran support and services) and must be at least \$25.00 to qualify for the drawing.



## TREA GIVES – ON THE MOVE!

Debbie Osborne, National Executive Director

With a successful year of providing much needed assistance to our fellow veterans and active-duty service members and their families, TREA GIVES is going mobile. We are tried and true locally and are ready to ‘spread our wings.’ In the next 18 months, the TREA GIVES program will be traveling throughout the country to expand our support. Our goal is multi-faceted:

- To provide assistance on a much larger scale. Offering services and supplies on-site at hosted Stand-Downs throughout the country.
- To draw attention to the work that TREA GIVES, and TREA is doing for our veterans/retirees/active duty & Guard & Reservists. The more people who know about us and what we do, the more people we can help. The plan is to grow!
- To attract corporate and business sponsorships. We need to do good things to get the attention of those who can financially support our programs. Being seen is the way to make that happen.
- Share our program and resources with other programs & organizations throughout the country so that together, we can do more – for more.

There will be a lot of work behind the scenes to make this successful. Planning, planning, and more planning. We will be very diligent and methodical in our choices of where to be and when to be there. This will be done to accomplish the most of our times and efforts. We will schedule meetings with local government representatives and VA offices at every location, ensuring that the program and mission of TREA GIVES, as well as TREA is known. One of our biggest problems throughout the years is that nobody knows who we are. This plan is aimed to fix that.

You can be a part of the momentous journey with us. We need your support and assistance. We will be reaching out to all TREA members in every area that we will be in and asking if anyone would like to stand with us at events and attend meetings with us. This is a wonderful opportunity for TREA members to get active and involved in their local community. This could have a beneficial aspect for TREA Chapters as well.

To remind everyone of what the TREA GIVES program does, we:

- Provide emergency financial assistance to retirees/honorably discharged veterans/Guard & Reservist and their families to prevent eviction & utility shut off.
- Our ‘Halt the Hunger’ campaign focuses on food insecurity and provides food cards to military & veteran families facing quality, nourishing food shortages.
- Provide a much deserved ‘Thank You’ to wounded and deployed military families through our annual Holiday Program. This program provides food, gifts, clothing, and personal communications, letting them know that their service and sacrifice to our country is appreciated and valued.



## **TREA GIVES – ON THE MOVE! (CONT)**

Debbie Osborne, National Executive Director

- Provide a trained service dog to a deserving veteran to empower them to live a life of dignity and independence.
- Educate veterans and active-duty members on financial control strategies by partnering with various licensed and highly trained financial counselors throughout the country. Many of which are trained specifically to work with veterans and military members.
- Engage in personal communications with individual veterans who are looking for a personal connection. This is done through personal letters or even phone calls – just to stay connected and let them know that they and their service have not been forgotten.
- Participation in local and national events organized to assist and support veterans, such as Stand Downs, RAD's, military fairs & events and seminars aimed at education, resources, and assistance. The more we know, the more we can do with our resources.

### **We will do the work – will you provide the support?**

We cannot do this alone. There is obviously a cost associated with these efforts. We have weighed the cost against the expected results, and we feel strongly that we can, and will, make a difference. Maybe not to everyone, but to some, and that is better than being stagnant and doing nothing, making a difference to no one. Our desire and efforts will be real – please consider joining those efforts by sending in your tax-deductible donation today. You can even donate to a specific program such as: Service Dog, Food Card, Education, Holiday Program, Scholarship or Legislative (\*). Your generosity will not be in vain. You will be making a positive difference in the life of a fellow veteran, and their family – this is something to be proud of.

**Go to [www.trea.org](http://www.trea.org) to donate today.**

(\*) donations directed to Legislation will be deposited into the TREA account. Still tax-deductible but kept separate for legal and accounting purposes.

## **TREA GIVES & COMMUNITY REWARDS**

TREA GIVES is now enrolled in the King Soopers/City Market Community Rewards Program.

There is absolutely no cost to you, and it benefits the TREA GIVES program, allowing us to continue to help Veterans/Active Duty/Retirees and Guard & Reserve in times of need.

All you need to do is go to <http://www.kingsoopers.com/> (for King Soopers) or <http://www.citymarket.com/> (for City market).

Once you are logged in search for TREA GIVES or use code 'HU416' and click Enroll. You do need to have a loyalty card, if you do not have one, you can sign up for one during the process. Thank you for your continued support of this worthy program. Every bit makes a difference!



## WASHINGTON UPDATE

Deb Oelschig, TREA National President

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### Veterans Day 2023

On November 11th, 2023, President Oelschig was honored to join President Joe Biden, First Lady Jill Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, Second Gentlemen Doug Emhoff, and members of the Presidential Cabinet at an event honoring our nation's Veterans at The White House.

Directly preceding the event, President Oelschig joined Vice President Walt Coley and TREA headquarters staff to participate in ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, where they heard from President Biden, Secretary of Defense Llyod Austin, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dennis McDonough. After the ceremony, TREA was honored to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on behalf of enlisted service members, Veterans, and their families.



*In line to lay the Wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown. (L-R) 1st Vice Walt Coley, Director Doug Osborne, Membership Coordinator Melissa White, Executive Director Debbie Osborne & National President Deborah Oelschig*



## **WASHINGTON UPDATE (CONT)**

Deb Oelschig, TREA National President

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### **United States Congress**

Before Congress began its winter recess, several key measures moved forward in the legislative process. On December 5, 2023, the following pieces of legislation were passed out of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs:

H.R. 5938, Veterans Exam Expansion Act of 2023

H.R. 5890, Every Veterans Claim Act of 2023

H.R. 3722, Daniel J. Harvey, Jr., and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act

H.R. 1753, Jax Act

H.R. 522, Deliver for Veterans Act

H.R. 3738, To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes

H.R. 5914, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processes to approve programs of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes

H.R. 5785, Edith Nourse Rodger's STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act

H.R. 3790, Justice for ALS Veterans Act of 2023

H.R. 4016, Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act

H.R. 4190, Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act

These bills seek to improve the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), the delivery of education benefits to student Veterans, fix the survivor benefits process for Veterans living with ALS and their caregivers, and to modernize the overall disability claims process.

### **FY24 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)**

On December 22, 2023, President Joe Biden signed H.R.2670 / S. 2226, The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 into law. Out of the many provisions, TREA is pleased to report that military service members will receive a historic 5.2% boost in compensation! The raise will be the largest in 22 years, with junior enlisted troops receiving an additional \$1,500 annually and thousands more for higher ranks. In addition to the 5.2% raise in basic pay for active-duty, Guard and reserve members in 2024, Veterans and retirees will receive a 3.2% cost of living adjustment (COLA).

For military families, the bill also expands servicemember eligibility to receive reimbursement for qualified spouse relicensing or business costs when the servicemember transfers from a regular component to the Selected Reserve or Ready Reserve of a uniformed service.



## **WASHINGTON UPDATE (CONT)**

Deb Oelschig, TREAs National President

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In total, the 63rd annual NDAA authorizes \$883.7 billion in fiscal year 2024 funding for service members, military families, and national defense.

### **TREAs Backed Resolutions Passed**

We are proud to share that not one, not two, but three TREAs-backed Resolutions were passed by the United States Senate in the fall!

On September 21st, S.Res 208 was agreed to by the U.S. Senate, which officially established November 12th as “National Warrior Call Day.” The Resolution recognizes the importance of connecting service members and Veterans to the support structures that are necessary to transition from the battlefield, especially peer-to-peer connection, focusing on mental health and well-being.

On September 19th, S.Res 238 was agreed to by the U.S. Senate, which officially established September 20th as “National Service Dog Day.” The Resolution recognizes the life-saving impact Service Dogs have on military servicemembers and Veterans in the United States, especially those suffering from the invisible wounds of war. TREAs has remained committed to supporting alternative treatment modalities for Veterans with invisible wounds of war and has since sponsored the training of two Service Dogs from K9s For Warriors and SemperK9 Assistance Dogs.

On September 18th, S.Res 348 was agreed to by the U.S. Senate, which officially designated the week of September 24th - September 30th as “Gold Star Families Remembrance Week.” The Resolution recognizes the sacrifices of fallen servicemembers and the Gold Star military families who will never be forgotten.

May we forever reflect and celebrate these special days in support of our military servicemembers, veterans, and their families!

### **The Year Ahead**

Since the 118th Congress has returned from its winter recess, lawmakers have continued to negotiate FY24 appropriations bills ahead of the pending Continuing Resolution deadline. Most notably, the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees have put together a “Veterans’ package” that will include 20 bills in support of the Veterans Benefits Administration and 10 bills in support of the Veterans Health Administration. As we continue to monitor legislative progress on Capitol Hill, we will remain steadfast in ensuring your voices are heard.

### **Social Media**

TREAs has several social media platforms we use to stay connected with our members and highlight our legislative and programmatic efforts. If you are on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter, make sure you are following along.

# AUXILIARY



## FROM THE NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Happy New Year, to you and your family! 2023 was a prosperous and exciting year. This year the TREA Auxiliary Midterm meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 1st, 2024, at TREA Chapter 3, located at 1599 Dayton St, Aurora, Colorado 80010. This is a crucial time for us to make a difference in the future of our TREA National Auxiliary. We are looking for a few good “WOMEN” who are willing and able to keep our organization moving forward. Let me also say that MEN can also become members of the Auxiliary and become members of the Board of Directors (BOD) as well as to offer services to a committee. A major action in 2024 is the election of President, Vice President, Treasurer as well as three directors.

We will also appoint a Secretary and Parliamentarian. This will create a new board, with valuable new visions, views, and insights. Should you see yourself or another member in good standing as part of this new team, I am asking for you to take a moment and think about how you can make the difference to help further the impact, operation, growth, and development of the Auxiliary. We need to keep the Auxiliary alive to support and help our Retired Military community.

Those interested are asked to submit your resume for a position on the Auxiliary Board of Directors to our Nomination Chairperson, Sheldria Wallace by completing your resumes and submitting it on “TREA Auxiliary Form 100-3A Resume of Candidate for elective office.” This form is on the TREA.org website under National Auxiliary. Complete and submit your resume to Sheldria Wallace, 13887 W. Cambridge Ave, Goodyear, AZ, 85395. All resumes must be submitted and received no later than June 21st, 2024. Our Official Call for Resumes will also be sent out to the Chapter Presidents and PNP’s. Please be on the lookout for this important information.

Let us not forget any proposed amendments or additional recommendations to the existing subjects, this information needs to be submitted to TREA National Auxiliary Bylaws/Standing Rules Committee for review. Submit your suggestions on TREA Auxiliary Form 100-6A, which can be found on the TREA website. Deadline for submissions is according to The National Auxiliary Standing Rule 8, item #3, remember the deadline is 45 days prior to the Midterm Meeting. This needs to be done by email no later than March 16th, 2024. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Parliamentarian/Chairperson Reta Ward at [wardreta@hotmail.com](mailto:wardreta@hotmail.com).

Join in and let us make April TREA Auxiliary Membership month! Please reach out to members of your military community who might be eligible to join the Auxiliary.

Many people have asked the question, when will an invitation be extended for them to join? And this is truly a fair question! The TREA National Auxiliary is the one organization solely dedicated to the spouses and survivors of active and retired enlisted men and women.

We have a new Brochure with a membership application form. To receive a brochure, please contact the membership Chairperson, Sheldria Wallace via email [deebillupswallace@gmail.com](mailto:deebillupswallace@gmail.com) or Auxiliary President McCray at [mccraya@aol.com](mailto:mccraya@aol.com). So, let us get out and recruit some new members.

Additionally, the Auxiliary offers an opportunity for awarding Scholarships. The Scholarship application information has been posted online at [TREA.org](http://TREA.org), with an open period through June 1st, 2024. This



site provides application procedures, and the student eligibility requirements. Our Chairperson is Rose Milon, who can be reached at [rose.milon@aol.com](mailto:rose.milon@aol.com).

The essay title on the application is “Reflect on something that someone has done for you as well as made you happy, thankful, or surprised you in any way? How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?”

The Auxiliary Scholarship funds are extremely low, if you would like to send a monetary donation you can mail your donations to our Treasurer, Peggy Carlson at [328plc@gmail.com](mailto:328plc@gmail.com).

The WEF/Benevolent program is seeking requests for assistance from those in need. Funds are available to support widows/widowers of deceased service members. We remind everyone that we provide support for dental, hearing, vision and other medical or benevolent needs. You may contact APNP Barbara Coley, Chairperson of the WEF/Benevolent Committee at [barbcoley@cox.net](mailto:barbcoley@cox.net).

In closing I would like to thank Chapter 34, Glendale, AZ for the invitation to their holiday party, the event was wonderful

**UNITED WE STAND**

Sincerely,  
Audrey McCray, TREA National Auxiliary President



## **AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN - BARBARA COLEY**

Greetings members, and welcome to a new year, 2024. It has been said that the only constant is change, that everything flows, and nothing stands still. We look around us and that seems to be true. Seasons change and people age. Civilizations rise and fall. Is there anything truly consistent? Is there any firm truth we can hold on to in a world that is always shifting? Yes! God Himself tells us that He does not change (Malachi 3:6) (NLT) and will always do what He says He will do (Numbers 23:19) (NLT). Time does not affect God.

He is still the same holy, amazing, and kind God that He was when He created the world. No matter how uncertain your life looks, you can trust in God’s constant love and faithfulness. He has always been here, and He always will be. God remains the same yesterday, today, and forever. Yes, and Amen.

Barbara Coley  
Chaplain and Past National President





The Senior Citizens League (TSCL) is an affiliate of TREA: The Enlisted Association (TREA), governed by TREA members and consists of hundreds of thousands of active senior citizens concerned about the protection of their Social Security and Medicare benefits.

Ed Cates,  
TSCL Chairman

## 80 Percent of Retirees Want Better Inflation Protection

Since 1975, the Social Security COLA has been calculated annually using the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). Still, oddly enough, that index does not survey the costs of retired households over the age of 62. Today, there are other consumer price indexes to choose from that better reflect inflation experienced by older Americans. Launched in 1983, the CPI-E surveys the cost changes of households aged 62 and older.

The 3.2% Social Security cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2024 is well above the 2.6% average over the past two decades. Still, according to a new survey by The Senior Citizens League (TSCL), 80 percent of retirees think Congress should beef up inflation protection by providing a COLA that more closely reflects inflation experienced by older adults. Some senior advocates, including TSCL, support using the CPI-E or the higher of the two methods.

If the CPI-E were the law today, the COLA in 2024 would be almost a percentage point higher - 4% versus 3.2%. TSCL bases that estimate on the rate of increase in the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E).

Failing to adequately protect Social Security benefits from inflation can lead to a loss of buying power in benefits over time and lower growth in Social Security benefit income throughout retirement. Older and disabled Social Security recipients spend their money differently than younger working adults. Retirees tend to spend a more significant share of their incomes on housing and medical costs - two spending categories that tend to rise more quickly than overall inflation. Meanwhile, younger working adults tend to spend more on commuting costs and energy while spending considerably less on healthcare than older adults. According to annual research by The Senior Citizens League, Social Security benefits have lost about 36% of buying power since 2000.

When COLA increases under current law are compared with COLAs calculated using the higher of the CPI-W or the CPI-E over the past ten years, the analysis found that an average Social Security benefit of \$1,294 in 2014 would grow to \$1,692.20 in 2024 using the CPI-W. Using the higher of the two benefits, the \$1,294 benefit in 2014 would be significantly higher —\$1,749.8 in 2024 or \$57.60 more per month more, than under current law. In addition, the analysis found that this calculation method would have provided an additional \$3,787.80 more in Social Security income from 2014 through the end of 2024. The table illustrates how monthly benefits compare by estimating what the COLA would have been using the CPI-E.

## How Much More Would Social Security Recipients Receive If Paid the Higher of the CPI-W or CPI-E?

Year	Monthly Benefit	COLA CPI-W Method	Monthly Benefit	COLA CPI-E Method	Monthly Benefit	COLA using Higher Methodology
2024	\$1,692.20	3.20%	\$1,720.40	4.00%	\$1,753.20	4.00%
2023	\$1,639.80	8.70%	\$1,651.10	8.00%	\$1,682.50	8.70%
2022	\$1,508.50	5.90%	\$1,528.80	4.80%	\$1,547.80	5.90%
2021	\$1,424.50	1.30%	\$1,458.80	1.40%	\$1,461.60	1.40%
2020	\$1,406.20	1.60%	\$1,438.60	1.90%	\$1,441.40	1.90%
2019	\$1,384.00	2.80%	\$1,411.80	2.60%	\$1,414.50	2.80%
2018	\$1,346.30	2.00%	\$1,376.00	2.10%	\$1,376.00	2.10%
2017	\$1,319.90	0.30%	\$1,347.70	1.50%	\$1,347.70	1.50%
2016	\$1,316.00	0.00%	\$1,327.80	0.60%	\$1,327.80	0.60%
2015	\$1,316.00	1.70%	\$1,319.90	2.00%	\$1,319.90	2.00%
2014	\$1,294.00		\$1,294.00		\$1,294.00	
Total income 2015-2024	\$172,241.70		\$174,930.90		\$176,029.50	

\*Source: The Senior Citizens League

CPI-W: Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

CPI-E: Consumer Price Index for The Elderly

TSCl supports four reforms to protect the buying power of Social Security benefits:

- Provide a modest boost to the benefits of all retirees to better protect them from falling into poverty and to strengthen retirement income.
- Tie the annual COLA to a seniors' consumer price index such as the Consumer Price Index for Elderly (CPI -E). This index tends to show inflation growing at a modestly faster rate than the CPI-W in many years.
- Guarantee a minimum COLA of no less than 3%. The guarantee is fundamental in years when inflation goes negative, and no COLA is payable at all.
- Adjust the income thresholds that subject Social Security benefits to taxation for inflation to allow beneficiaries to keep more of their benefits.

Take the Senior Citizens League (TSCl) [2024 Senior Survey](https://seniorsleague.org/2024-senior-survey/). Your responses to the League's survey help millions of others understand issues of importance to Social Security and Medicare beneficiaries and evaluate popular support for solutions to some of its stickiest problems. Your answers also help TSCl provide better services to meet your needs and priorities. The results will help craft TSCl's legislative agenda and represent your interests on Capitol Hill, and results will be widely used in our Public Education campaigns. Your answers are vitally important and will be kept anonymous. <https://seniorsleague.org/2024-senior-survey/>



## BYLAWS & STANDING RULES

Walt Coley, National 1st Vice & BLSR Committee Chair

Your Bylaws and Standing Rules change every year at the annual meeting, right? Yes, they do! But did you know that The Parliamentarian and I are responsible for checking both documents for consistency and clarity? Why? To make sure the changes we all vote on make sense with what already exists.

Article 14, Section 4 of our Bylaws assigns that responsibility to us to do the checking and fixing through TREA headquarters staff. It's a continual process we take seriously. We can't change the meaning of anything unless the change just approved changes it.

For example, this happened when a change in our voting process – from in-person and proxy voting changed to one person-one vote online and mail-in. That changed our convention to a business meeting where voting was completed before the meeting began. This was a complex change done to allow more members to participate in TREA governance.

Some of you may remember a few years ago, it was normal that we had a lot of very small changes brought to the floor at our Convention (now the Annual Business Meeting) that took up a ton of time. Now, the Bylaws and Standing Rules Committee fixes those things that don't change the meaning (or modified meaning) of our rules.

Our Organizational Bylaws and Standing Rules, Chapter Rules, and Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) cover our governance – with state and local laws taking precedence where applicable.

If after reviewing our Bylaws and Standing Rules, and you have a proposal to make a change, please submit your change to this committee on TREA form 100-16 no later than 31 March 2024 for review by the committee and time for adjustment. After that, changes are much harder. See TREA Article 14 Sections 1 through 3 for the actual rule. We have to be done to support our voting system.

If you'd like to be part of this committee, contact me at [1stvice@trea.org](mailto:1stvice@trea.org). Our first meeting was in January 2024 via Zoom. We would love your input. – Sincerely, Walt Coley



## TREA NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP 2024/2025 Applications Open

Butch Liebaert, National Director & Scholarship Committee Chair

TREA is slated to give away up to \$20,000 in scholarship awards this academic year.

TREA Scholarships are open to the children and grandchildren of all TREA members (in good standing), including those who are no longer with us, provided they were members in good standing at the time of their passing.

TREA Scholarships are based on the following criteria:

Grade Point Average (GPA), Extra-Curricular School activities, Extra-Curricular Non-School Activities, Community Service (especially veteran related) and a written essay.

This year the essay topic is: “What do you think about the benefits given to illegal immigrants compared to US Citizens and Veterans who have served our country?”

We are asking applicants to tell us their non-political opinion on the issue.

All applications must be postmarked by March 31st. Go to [www.trea.org](http://www.trea.org) for an application.





## A NOTE FROM THE NATIONAL 1ST VICE

Walt Coley

I like to look at every situation as an opportunity to improve and evolve, but first I have to find the truth of the situation; only then can I identify the opportunities.

As I begin to write this, my thoughts are focused on all that's been done by our Fraternal organization and others to improve the lives of veterans and their families and how we members of this community should be content in all we have done, but really concerned about the future of TREA and how we should effectively advocate for our people.

Here are just a few facts: Those who serve make up less than 1% of the population. Those in veteran's fraternal organizations aren't getting new members like we used to 10 or even 5 years ago. Most work for veteran's organizations is being done not by fraternal organizations like ours, but by standard non-profits who can and are supported by large corporations and donors. Our chapters are failing due to age and low activity – Those who ran the chapters in the past, are retiring or passing away.

Our advocates in Washington, DC, and elsewhere, are receiving information in presentations and briefings that confirm these facts. They are also getting it in other ways; through their dwindling access to Congress and their staff members. We need to rebuild our advocacy.

Situation: we are failing, dying. Opportunity?: How do we evolve with the culture and survive?

So what are the opportunities? We still need to leverage our membership organization, but since our chapters are folding, we need to find other ways to organize. We need funding from corporations which we can only access from doing good works in our communities. We need TREA GIVES to do good things and grow. Publicity can create influence, which will create access; especially if we are partnering with others; like the Military Coalition.

Opportunities to make a difference in the lives of the enlisted and their families, that is and must remain our focus. In this, we must remain united! On this, we must stand!

UNITED WE STAND

## ARE YOU A TREA CHAPTER MEMBER?

Our chapters are important to us, it's important that they stay strong and active. This is why we updated the old, antiquated Chapter Affiliation Agreement and sent it out to the board members of every chapter.

As a chapter member, you hold your chapter board accountable – this is one of those times, that we are hoping that you can help us with that. Board members can get busy, easily overwhelmed and sometimes just put things on 'the back burner'. This updated Chapter Affiliation Agreement may be one of those things that get pushed aside 'until later'.

There is a signature deadline that must be met. Help your chapter by reminding your chapter board that action is required on this document.

Thank you.

TREA National Board of Directors



# LOOKING FOR CANDIDATES TO RUN FOR NATIONAL BOARD POSITIONS

Walt Coley, National 1st Vice & Nominations & Credentialing Committee Chair

2024 is a big election year where we will elect a National Board of Directors, in addition to our yearly revision of our Bylaws and Standing Rules. All Board positions are open – President, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Vice President, Treasurer, and 2 Directors.

If you are interested in running for TREA national office, please make sure to familiarize yourself with TREA Bylaws, Article V - National Officers, Article VI – Duties of National Officers, and Article IX – Nominations and Elections. Here are the eligibility requirements from Article 9 section 2 of our Bylaws. All positions are for two-year terms.

To be eligible for election, candidates must be regular TREA members. Spouse members are not eligible to run for National positions. To submit your resume for a Board position by mail or email, use TREA Form 100-3, Resume for Elected Office. This form can be found on our website ([www.trea.org](http://www.trea.org)) under Membership, then Form and Documents, or you can reach out to TREA Headquarters and request that a form be sent to you. The forms are available in fillable PDF and printable Word formats. The deadline for resumes is June 15, 2024. This is a hard deadline; any resume received after 5 PM on June 15, 2024, will not be accepted.

Additionally, the following criteria must be met for each position:

President - Must be a TREA member in good standing for at least three consecutive years. Must be a current member of the National Board of Directors.

Vice Presidents - Must have been a TREA member in good standing for at least two consecutive years.

Treasurer - Shall have accounting knowledge and an understanding of computer concepts, or an associate or higher degree in business or management.

Directors - Must have been a TREA member in good standing for at least one year.

All candidates – Candidates shall ensure their membership status will not expire during the term of office and 30 days for the position they are seeking. If their membership expires during the term of office, they need to renew their membership before submitting their resume.

All candidates – Eligibility requires confirmation that the applicant has not been convicted of a felony within 2 years of the date of application. If previously convicted of a felony, all restitution and/or societal debt has been paid more than 2 years ago.

All resumes will be reviewed and approved by the nominations and credentials committee to ensure that eligibility is met as defined by TREA National Bylaws. Voting will be done via mail-in and online ballots through Elections America, an independent, third-party vendor with no internal ties to TREA the organization. This ensures a fair and equal process for all. All voting information and instructions will be printed in the August issue of the VOICE magazine. All TREA members will receive a printed copy of that issue containing a one-time use code unique to each member for voting. It will ensure a fair election. We are hoping to have an unprecedented voting turnout and with your participation, we will make this happen. This is YOUR organization; let YOUR vote lead the way into the future.

UNITED WE STAND!

Active-Duty Service Members, Military Retirees, and their families have earned the highest quality pharmacy care. To enhance delivery of specialty services, the Department of Defense (DoD) is expanding TRICARE Home Delivery, which includes specialty pharmacy services provided by Accredo, a nationally accredited specialty pharmacy.

Beginning March 1, 2024, TRICARE beneficiaries who take specialty medications will gain access to expanded specialty pharmacy services at no additional cost beyond the TRICARE cost-share. In addition, some beneficiaries will benefit from lower mail order copays for certain medications. Expanded specialty pharmacy services include:

- 24/7 beneficiary access to pharmacists, nurses, and clinicians who are trained to provide personalized clinical care to patients.
- Individualized support from Accredo's Therapeutic Resource Centers (TRCs), comprised of dedicated staff who specialize in different health conditions, including:
  - Advanced Pulmonary Conditions
  - Hepatology
  - Asthma and Allergy
  - Immune and Complex Conditions
  - Blood Disorders
  - Neurology and Multiple Sclerosis
  - Cystic Fibrosis
  - Oncology
  - Endocrine Disorders
  - Rare Diseases and Gene Therapy
  - Fertility
  - Rheumatoid Arthritis and Inflammatory Conditions
- Lower mail order copayments and up to 90-day refills for TRICARE-defined specialty drugs when beneficiaries choose TRICARE Home Delivery.
- Access to social workers, patient care advocates, and dieticians who can provide holistic support to patients navigating specialty conditions.
- Convenient new digital tools and apps that allow beneficiaries to customize their care when and how they need it, including order tracking and online payments, selecting specific delivery dates, refills by text, and dose reminders.

## TRANSITIONING TO TRICARE HOME DELIVERY BY ACCREDO: IMPROVING BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

TRICARE beneficiaries who currently receive their specialty medications through TRICARE Home Delivery will automatically transition to the enhanced services with no action required on their part starting March 1, 2024.

- These changes will not impact beneficiaries' choice to fill their specialty medications at in-network retail pharmacies or military pharmacies. However, in some cases, future DoD formulary decisions may require beneficiaries to fill medications through TRICARE Home Delivery or at a military pharmacy.
- To help make this transition as seamless as possible, and to minimize the risk of missed therapies, a comprehensive communication campaign will be implemented to educate TRICARE beneficiaries transitioning to TRICARE Home Delivery by Accredo.
  - Beneficiary and provider outreach and education is expected to begin in January 2024.
  - Mail and digital notifications will be sent at least 30 days prior to implementation.
- Beneficiaries will be provided a toll-free number to reach transition specialists by phone 24/7.
- This approach is estimated to avoid \$9.5 billion in costs to the DoD through 2029.

\*A specialty medication is used to treat chronic, complex conditions. Specialty medications include oral solids, or medications that can be injected, infused, or inhaled and may require special handling such as refrigeration. TRICARE defines what is considered "specialty medication" through the DoD Pharmacy and Therapeutics (PT) process and maintains the specialty drug list. The TRICARE specialty drug list can be found at [tricare.mil/coveredservices/isitcovered/specialtydrugs](http://tricare.mil/coveredservices/isitcovered/specialtydrugs)





## FIND OUT WHAT YOUR TRICARE PHARMACY COSTS WILL BE IN 2024

If you get prescription drugs through the TRICARE Pharmacy Program. Copayments for most beneficiaries are changing. The new costs will start Jan. 1, 2024.

A few factors affect your pharmacy costs. Your beneficiary category is one of them.

- **Active duty service members (ADSMs):** You'll pay nothing for covered drugs from military pharmacies, retail network, and home delivery.
- **Survivors of ADSMs and medically retired service members and their family members:** Your co payments won't change in 2024.
- **All other beneficiaries:** Your copayments will increase in 2024.

TRICARE has several categories of covered drugs. The drug category affects cost, as shown in the *TRICARE Pharmacy Program Overview Fact Sheet*. *Generic formulary drugs* are the least expensive and most widely available. This is followed by *brand-name formulary drugs and non-formulary drugs*.

Your costs also depend on the type of pharmacy you use. You'll pay nothing for prescriptions from military pharmacies. See the new copayments for other pharmacy types below. New costs are in bold.

### **TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery (Up to a 90-day supply)**

- Generic formulary drugs will increase from \$12 to \$13.
- Brand-name formulary drugs will increase from \$34 to \$38.
- Non-formulary drugs will increase from \$68 to \$76.

### **TRICARE retail network pharmacies (Up to a 30-day supply)**

- Generic formulary drugs will increase from \$14 to \$16.
- Brand-name formulary drugs will increase from \$38 to \$43.
- Non-formulary drugs will increase from \$68 to \$76.

Note: If you aren't an ADSM, you can't refill certain maintenance drugs after two refills at retail network pharmacies unless you pay full cost for the drug. If you live in the U.S. or U.S. territories, you must refill them at a military pharmacy or through home delivery after two refills.

### **Non-network pharmacies (Up to a 30-day supply)**

Do you have a *TRICARE Prime health plan*? If so, your *non-network pharmacy* costs will stay the same. With a TRICARE Prime plan, you'll pay a 50% cost-share. This will happen after you meet your *point-of-service* deductible for covered drugs.

For other TRICARE plans, you'll pay a copayment or cost-share after you meet your annual deductible. These costs are as follows:

- Generic and brand-name formulary drugs will cost \$43 (up from \$38) or 20% of the total cost, whichever is more.
- Non-formulary drugs will cost \$76 (up from \$68) or 20% of the total cost, whichever is more.



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- **Membership:** Any honorably discharged enlisted person – retired, active duty, National Guard or Reserve, or the spouse/widow/widower of an honorably discharged enlisted person - retired, active duty, National Guard or Reserve shall be eligible for membership. Membership entitles the person to all privileges of membership including attending business meetings, making motions and holding office.

New Member       Renewal      Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Grade/Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Served: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter Information: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Affiliation: I wish to be assigned to Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_, I wish to be a Member-at Large (MAL)

Service:     Air Force     Army     Navy     Marines     Space Force     Coast Guard     Guard/Reserve

I am :     Retired     Veteran     Active Duty     Spouse/widow/widower of a veteran

By submitting payment, I acknowledge that I am an Enlisted U.S. Armed Forces Veteran and as such qualify to be a member of TREA: The Enlisted Association (if joining as a veteran spouse/widow/widower, your payment acknowledges the veteran status of your spouse).

***Proof of eligibility falls on the applicant and not TREA.***

I agree to abide by the TREA National Bylaws & Standing Rules as written. X

Membership Dues (Does not include Chapter dues, if applicable)

- One Year - \$30  
 Two Years - \$55  
 Three Years - \$75

Payment:

Visa  
Master Card  
Discover  
American Express

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CCV: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: TREA)

**Please return your completed application to:**

TREA: The Enlisted Association - 12200 E. Briarwood Ave, Suite 170 - Centennial, CO 80112

E-mail: treahq@trea.org

303-752-0660 www.trea.org



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