

TALKING POINTS: Answering Tough Questions

Q: Who is AMRA and what does AMRA do?

A: AMRA is a membership organization comprised of career military retirees, those medically retired, those 100% totally and permanently disabled by the VA and the surviving spouses of these eligible groups.

AMRA's primary mission is protection of federal benefits. We have a National Legislative Director who works with Congressmen and Senators in Washington to prevent further erosion of the benefits you earned. We have a weekly electronic newsletter and a quarterly online newspaper that provide legislative news and a variety of other news related to health care and topics of interest to our members and their families. We also have a CAPWIZ tool on our website that facilitates contact with Members of Congress. The tool allows you to search the issues that AMRA is working on, learn the facts and AMRA's position on each one of them, and makes sending a letter to your Congressman or Senators as easy as 1-2-3. You will click on a pre-written letter (which you can edit if you wish), fill in a brief contact information form that will direct your letter to the lawmakers who represent you (as well as the President and the Vice President) and click SUBMIT...three clicks, and you will receive an acknowledgement when your letter is sent.

Q: What makes AMRA different from VFW, Legion, MOOA, etc.?

A: AMRA directs 99% of its attention to the needs of the military retirees, 100% Totally & Permanently disabled and surviving spouses who comprise our membership. We pursue your interests relentlessly and have had some legislative successes for our members in the last couple of years. You can view what efforts we

are taking on your behalf on the Advocacy page of our website (www.amra1973.org). While many groups have military retirees within their ranks and do legislative work on their behalf, they may focus the majority of their efforts on their main constituency (combat vets, paralyzed vets, officers or enlisted) who are the primary reason for their existence. AMRA accepts those who meet eligibility requirements from all branches and all ranks and works diligently on issues of importance to those members.

Q: How come I've never heard of you?

A: AMRA is still much smaller and less well known than larger VSOs you are familiar with. Like other associations that have specific eligibility requirements, like combat vets or Purple Heart recipients, AMRA's niche is military retirees. We also cover individuals with a 100% total and permanent disability rating from the VA. And our Founding Fathers stipulated that surviving spouses be included so that their spouses would be able to remain a part of the military retiree community, have access to important information about their benefits and assistance from the association when they need it. With a much smaller membership base we are not able to mount huge advertising campaigns so we come right to the potential members at events like this to tell the AMRA story.

Q: Why should I join AMRA when I belong to several other VSOs?

A: As a military retiree, you are unique and so are your benefits. AMRA keeps up with the changes and passes the new information along to keep you up to date. Your voice is important to our advocacy efforts! We actually encourage individuals who can do so to also join other VSOs they are eligible for. You can amplify the voice of the entire veterans' community by belonging to and supporting several veterans' organizations.