



Coalition and Valued Associates Advocacy and Actions...

Coalition valued associate organizations continue to shine light on veterans and military families mental and behavioral health care challenges. In addition to testifying before Congress on the challenges veterans, military families, and their children face during combat, reintegration, and transition, Military and Veterans service organizations are also hosting symposiums and briefings to help focus attention on these critical issues and the work that is being done to address them.

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) co-sponsored the *2014 Warrior-Family Symposium (WFS)* this week in Washington, D.C. The focus of this year's annual symposium addressed the needs that currently serving, veterans, their children, spouses and caregivers face when navigating the transition from the military into a civilian environment while managing challenges of combat/ operational stress, mental health or behavioral health care concerns.

The key note speaker for the event was Senator John Boozman from Arkansas and a member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. His father was a Master Sergeant in the Air Force. During his remarks, Senator Boozman talked about expanding educational benefits for veterans and families of the fallen, and the success rate of getting people off the "battle field" and into medical facilities.

Senator Boozman also told those in attendance that he is opposed to the proposed cuts to the commissary budget and stressed that, "Military families rely on the commissary."

The National Military Family Association and the UnitedHealth Group will be co-hosting a Congressional briefing on *Growing our Own: Meeting the Behavioral Health Needs of Military Families* on Capitol Hill next week. The program will examine behavioral health challenges faced by military families and highlight innovative solutions to improve access to behavioral health care and meet the increasing demand for qualified behavioral health providers.