

September 13, 2022

The Honorable Raphael Warnock
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Warnock and Moran,

On behalf of our military survivor community, we thank you for your leadership in introducing the **“Love Lives on Act of 2022.”** The proposed legislation is the first comprehensive approach to allowing eligible military surviving spouses to retain survivor benefits upon remarriage prior to age 55. There have been several previous bills related to remarriage, but none were as comprehensive as this bill and large populations of military survivors were excluded.

The **“Love Lives on Act of 2022”** will ensure surviving military spouses retain eligibility for survivor benefits from the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), if they remarry before age 55. It also removes archaic and punitive language regarding ‘holding oneself out to be married’.

Current law terminates certain benefits for surviving military spouses if they remarry before the age of 55. Given that many military surviving spouses today have lost their loved ones as a result of illnesses and suicides related to their military member’s service, often while deployed in combat operations, they are younger than 55. Many have children and teens that they must now raise alone. These beneficiaries do not remarry out of concern for the financial stability of their surviving children, an unjust situation that must be addressed and rectified. This restriction is imposed on military surviving families but not on the surviving families of first responders. For example, most U.S. surviving spouses of fallen firefighters and law enforcement officers are allowed to remarry before age 55 and maintain survivor pensions and benefits. The living legacies of our nation’s fallen military heroes deserve no less.

We fully endorse the **“Love Lives on Act of 2022”** and we are grateful for your leadership and support of this critical legislation. We appreciate your continued efforts to honor and strengthen our Nation’s Gold Star Families and look forward to working with you to pass this important legislation.

For further questions, please contact Candace Wheeler or Ashlynn Haycock-Lohmann at 202-588-8277 or policy@taps.org.

Respectfully,

Air Force Sergeants Association

American Legion

AMSUS

AMVETS

Blue Star Families

Chief Warrant Officers Association of the United States Coast Guard

Commissioned Officers Association of the United States Public Health Service

Elizabeth Dole Foundation

Fleet Reserve Association

Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

Jewish War Veterans

Military Chaplains Association

Military Child Education Coalition

Military Officers Association of America

National Association of State Approving Agencies

National Military Family Association

Non Commissioned Officers Association

Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)

Student Veterans of America

The Enlisted Association

The Independence Fund

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)

The Warrior's Journey

Vietnam Veterans of America