

Have you ever been confused whether you're supposed to put your hand over your heart or if you're authorized to salute when the U.S. Flag passes or the national anthem is played?

Current law (Section 9 of title 4, United States Code) says that veterans and service members not in uniform should put their hands over their hearts. It doesn't expressly say they're not authorized to salute the Flag -- but it doesn't say they can, so that's the implication.

That's a sore spot for many veterans, for whom the salute is a point of pride in their service. Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK) and Rep. Dan Boren (D-OK) introduced legislation (S. 1877 and H.R. 3380, respectively) to change the law to state that those present in uniform "should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute."

Last month, on July 25, the Senate approved S. 1877 by unanimous consent, and it has been forwarded to the House for consideration.

MOAA fully supports this change. Please note that it does not mandate the salute for members and veterans not in uniform, but simply clarifies that they are authorized to honor the Flag with a salute rather than the hand over the heart if they prefer.