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The Voice is the e-mail newsletter of The Special Needs Alliance. This installment was written by Special Needs Alliance member [Kelly A. Thompson](#). Kelly has been a lawyer for 37 years, practicing law in Arlington, Virginia for the last 21 years. She is a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) and a frequent lecturer on special needs planning. Her clients include many military families and she was active in lobbying for passage of the Disabled Military Child Protection Act. Her practice focuses on planning for individuals with disabilities and the elderly, special needs trusts, trust administration and estate planning.

Disabled Military Child Protection Act Policy Issued

On December 31, 2015, the Department of Defense released its policy implementing the Disabled Military Child Protection Act, providing guidance on who may assign survivor benefits to a special needs trust and the procedure for doing so.

President Obama signed the Disabled Military Child Protection Act on December 19, 2014. This law allows a military parent to provide a survivor benefit for a child with a disability, and have it paid to a special needs trust for that child's benefit. Until this law was enacted, military parents of children with disabilities faced a serious dilemma at retirement - whether or not to choose the military Survivor Benefits Plan (SBP) retirement option for their children. The dilemma was that under prior law, the benefit could not be assigned to a special needs trust and