

September 24, 2014

The Honorable Buck McKeon
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2310 Rayburn HOB
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2264 Rayburn HOB
Washington DC, 20515

Re: Support the Senate's Reserve Retirement Correction Language

Dear Messrs. McKeon and Smith,

We, as members of the National Military and Veterans Alliance, and on behalf of our 3.5 million members, strongly pledge our support for the Senate Armed Services Committee's current language (Section 623 of S.2410, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015 (NDAA)) to modify the calculation of Reserve Component Retirement. Currently, the House version of the NDAA does not contain a similar provision. We believe your support on this issue during any final legislative negotiations will make the difference.

Section 623 of the SASC NDAA is a common sense solution to a very real problem that affects personnel in our nation's Reserve Component. Current law dictates only consecutive periods of service within the same fiscal year totaling 90 days may count toward early retirement. Thus, if a 90 day or more deployment spanned two fiscal years and less than 90 days occurred in one (or both) of the years, that Reserve Component member would not receive early retirement pay credit for either portion of service. Likewise, if two different deployments totaled more than 90 days but less than 180 days in a Fiscal Year, that Reserve Component member would receive credit for up to only half of the time served.

Section 623 authorizes early reserve retirement credit for cumulative 90 day periods of active duty over two consecutive fiscal years. We, as members of NMVA, believe this is a better approach that more accurately and fairly accounts for service while on active duty. To treat any period of service in support of contingency operations differently between two Reserve Component service members, even though those periods of service may be in exactly the same contingency operation zone and involve exactly the same duties, is not only patently unfair but arbitrary and capricious. We must ensure these personnel do not lose credit for early retirement pay they have rightfully earned.

Our all-volunteer Reserve Component force answered the call without hesitation in its transformation from a strategic reserve force to an operational reserve force called upon for multiple tours of active duty in contingency operation zones. This great sacrifice must be matched with a great commitment to ensuring fairness regarding the receipt of earned benefits. We strongly urge you to support the Senate's language in the final version of the NDAA.

Very Respectfully,

National Defense Committee

National Guard Association of the United States

Reserve Officers Association

The Retired Enlisted Association

National Association for Uniformed Services

The Flag and General Officers Network

American Military Retirees Association

American Logistics Association

Military Order of Foreign Wars