



National Military and Veterans Alliance

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December 17, 2014

The Honorable John McHugh
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Room 3E700
Washington, DC 20301-0101

Re: United States Army Officer Reductions Affecting Previously Enlisted Soldiers

Dear Secretary McHugh:

We, as members of the National Military Veterans Alliance, write to urge you to allow prior enlisted officers, who as a result of the Enhanced Selective Early Retirement Board (E-SERB) are being forced to retire at their highest enlisted rank, to retire at their officer grade.

These officers were selected from the enlisted ranks due to their professionalism, commitment to service, technical and tactical competence, and the Army's need to expand the officer corps to meet the leadership requirements resulting from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

After having honorably served in both the enlisted ranks and the officer corps and after multiple combat deployments as officers, these men and women would be forced to forfeit what will amount to more than a million dollars in retirement pay over the course of a forty year retirement. This translates to approximately one thousand dollars monthly. This is unjust, unacceptable, and is an egregious breaking of faith with those who were selected by the Army to become officers.

Under current law and in accordance with Title 10 USC 3911(b)(1), an officer with twenty years of active service but less than eight years of service as an officer must retire at his or her last enlisted rank. However, the career officers that the E-SERB is affecting are not choosing to retire nor have they been passed over for promotion or been selected due to misconduct. These are officers who would continue their service and, under normal circumstances, retired at an officer grade. Furthermore, and in accordance with MILPER 13-356, there is no appeal process or method for redress by these officers and all decisions are final.

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We submit that the Army could modify the E-SERB policy to allow these officers to continue their service until they are in compliance with current law and retire at the rank they have earned. Alternatively, and because many of these officers and their families are already well into the planning process for life in the civilian sector, you should recommend to Congress a legislative solution that would reduce the eight year requirement and provide for a retroactive re-instatement of retirement rank and any lost pay resulting from the current policy.

These officers did not ask to be placed in this life altering predicament; neither did their families nor their survivors that depend on them. According to the Army Human Resources Command, these officers are being separated in spite of being fully qualified and after having “rendered quality service to the nation.”

We thank you for your consideration of our request and implore you to honor their service and their sacrifice and allow them to retire as officers.

Sincerely,

Member Organizations, National Military and Veterans Alliance (NMVA)

American Logistics Association	Military Order of Foreign Wars
American Military Society	Military Order of the Purple Heart
American Military Retirees Association	Military Order of the World Wars
American Retirees Association	National Association for Uniformed Services
Army Navy Union	National Defense Committee
Gold Star Wives of America	The Flag and General Officers Network
Japanese American Veterans Association	The Retired Enlisted Association
Korean War Veterans Foundation	Vietnam Veterans of America