



National Military and Veterans Alliance
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The National Military and Veterans Alliance

before the

Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations

ORAL Statement by

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Co-Director,

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SD-192 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Thank You, Chairman Inouye, Senator Cochran, members of the committee.

The National Military and Veterans Alliance is honored to again testify. The Alliance represents thirty-five military, retiree, veterans and survivor associations with over 3.5 million members.

The NMVA supports a strong National Security. The challenges of the deficit and an adequately funded defense are to the forefront of discussions in Congress.

While the Alliance is well aware that the committee faces certain budget constraints, the NMVA continues to urge the President and Congress to increase defense spending to 5 % of Gross Domestic Product during times of high utilization of the military, to cover procurement, prevent unnecessary personnel cuts, and afford needed benefits for serving members and retirees. With the U.S. military taking action in four different countries, no one can deny that it is being decidedly used.

It is crucial that military health care is funded. NMVA is concerned that as new programs are initiated they won't receive the funding that they need. Treating PTS and TBI shouldn't be on

the cheap, and alternative treatments should be explored, so that our serving members can return to a normal life.

The Alliance is concerned that the President's DoD Health Care budget continues to undercut the military beneficiaries' needs. We ask that you continue to fully fund military health care in FY 2012.

It is also important, that we have parity in equipment and training for the new operational Guard and Reserve. Cuts in the strength of the Reserve component seem counter intuitive to prevent any unforeseen strategic event.

The willingness of our young people, today to serve in future conflicts will related to their perception of how the veterans of this war are being treated.

The NMVA thanks this committee for funding the phased in Survivor Benefit Plan - Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset. But widows of members who were killed in the line of service are continuing to be penalized. Even under the present offset the vast majority of our enlisted families receive little benefit from this new program, because SBP is almost completely offset

by DIC. The NMVA respectfully requests that this Subcommittee find excess funding to expand this provision.

The Alliance also hopes that this committee will fully fund the \$67.7 million authorized by the Senate Armed Services Committees for the two Armed Forces Retirees Homes.

As the overseas contingency operations wind down, the challenges faced by our Active and Reserve serving members will not go away. The Alliance is confident of your ongoing support of national security, and that you will keep the budgeting burden off the shoulders of the warriors, the retirees, their families and survivors. The NMVA would like to thank the subcommittee for its efforts and this opportunity to testify.