



T H E M I L I T A R Y C O A L I T I O N

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MILITARY COALITION PRESENTS TOP AWARDS TO HILL ADVOCATES

Alexandria, Va.....The Military Coalition (TMC), an influential Washington, DC-based consortium of 35 military and veterans groups, presented its highest awards on Oct. 2 to four legislators and two congressional staff members who have championed the causes of health care and survivor benefits for military families. The awards ceremony was held at the Reserve Officers Association Building on Capitol Hill.

Senators Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Chuck Hagel (R-NE) and Representatives Vic Snyder (D-AR) and Tom Davis (R-VA) received TMC's 2007 Award of Merit. Lautenberg and Hagel were recognized especially for their leadership in protecting military health benefits. Snyder was honored for his support of the military community as Chairman of the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee, and Davis for championing legislation to improve the National Guard and improve military health benefits.

The Military Officers Association's Colonel Steve Strobridge (USAF-Ret), Co-Chairman of The Military Coalition, lauded Lautenberg's and Hagel's efforts to protect military beneficiaries.

"Senator Lautenberg has championed the fight to stop disproportional health fee increases for military retirees and improve assistance for wounded warriors with traumatic brain injuries," he said. "Senator Hagel joined Sen. Lautenberg in that bipartisan effort, and also has been a key sponsor of legislation to fix inequities concerning military survivor benefits and the GI Bill. The Coalition is extremely grateful for their strong leadership on these important issues."

Mr. Joe Barnes, also a TMC Co-Chairman and National Executive Secretary of the Fleet Reserve Association, praised Snyder and Davis for exerting leadership in their respective congressional committees to improve conditions for servicemembers and their families.

"They've set great examples in building bipartisan support for a range of important initiatives," said Barnes. "Their efforts have helped Congress maintain perspective on what needs to be done to ensure our all-volunteer force can continue to meet national defense needs in this high-deployment environment."

TMC also presented its annual Freedom Award to Ms. Debra Wada, senior staffer for Chairman Snyder on the House Armed Service Military Personnel Subcommittee, and Ms. Grace

Washbourne, senior staffer for Rep. Thomas on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, for their work in promoting support for military issues behind the scenes.

“The legislators are the champions,” said Mike Cline, TMC President and Executive Director of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard, “but their staffs expend huge amounts of effort in crafting the legislation, working with the military associations to fill in the details, and coordinating our mutual efforts to get other legislators and the public on board. Debra Wada and Grace Washbourne have been great supporters on a wide variety of key issues affecting the military community.”

TMC represents the interests of more than six million members around the world, including active duty, National Guard, Reserve, and retired members and veterans of the seven uniformed services, plus their families and survivors.

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