



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

201 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 838-8113

May 23, 2005

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Majority Whip, House of Representatives
H-107 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Blunt:

The Military Coalition, a consortium of nationally prominent uniformed services and veteran's organizations representing more than 5.5 million current and former members of the seven uniformed services, plus their families and survivors, thanks you for introducing the Guard and Reserve Benefits Improvement Act.

Since 9/11, our nation has activated over 470,000 National Guard and Reserve members. Additionally, more than 40 percent of our military force in Iraq and Afghanistan consists of Guard and Reserve members. It is clear that our reserve component members play a crucial role in providing for the national defense and homeland security.

Your legislation would increase special pays and allowances and permit Guard and Reserve "gray area" retirees who are not yet receiving retired pay to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). The burial provision is an important first step in codifying all the ANC eligibility rules in public law. Additionally, the study you have requested will provide much needed information about the employers of reserve component members.

The Military Coalitions thanks you for your support of America's reserve component servicemembers. Thank you for introducing this legislation and please do all you can to bring this important initiative to enactment this year.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition
(Signatures Enclosed)