



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

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May 10, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John P. Murtha
Ranking Member, Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lewis and Ranking Member Murtha:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of nationally prominent military and veterans organizations, representing more than 5.5 million members plus their families and survivors, urges you to adopt the 'Durbin Amendment', the "Reserve Pay Security Act," in HR 4939, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006.

The Durbin Amendment -- Section 1312, of the Senate passed version of H.R. 4939 -- would eliminate any pay gap experienced by a member of the Reserve component who is employed by the Federal government. A recently published Department of Defense survey indicates that more than half of the men and women in the Guard and Reserves lose income as a result of their activation. Of the 1.2 million Reserve members serving our country, more than 10 percent -- 120,000 -- are Federal employees. According to the survey, mobilized reservists who do experience a wage gap lose \$368 per month, and 11% report losing more than \$2,500 per month.

This income loss hurts retention and adversely affects recruitment, already under enormous strain. Fortunately, many patriotic employers in America, such as Sears and Home Depot, provide differential pay. Thirty state governments also provide differential pay. TMC believes that the federal government should lead the nation as a model employer, not follow the private sector.

Reservists must meet their financial obligations based upon their normal civilian income. When military pay falls short, they take on additional sacrifice while protecting this nation.

The Comptroller General of the United States has stated that the U.S. Government is not leading by example or practicing what it preaches in connection with employer support for Guard and Reserve members.

The Military Coalition supports the Durbin Amendment and recommends favorable consideration in conference action on HR 4939. TMC appreciates your leadership enacting legislation to improve quality of life benefits for our military members and their families.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition
(signatures enclosed)

Air Force Association
Air Force Sergeants Association
Air Force Women Officers Associated
American Logistics Association
AMVETS (American Veterans)
Army Aviation Association of America
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States
Association of the United States Army
Chief Warrant Officer and Warrant Officer Association, U.S. Coast Guard
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
Marine Corps League
Marine Corps Reserve Association
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Guard Association of the United States
National Military Family Association
National Order of Battlefield Commissions
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Naval Reserve Association
Non Commissioned Officers Association
Reserve Enlisted Association of the United States
Reserve Officers Association
Society of Medical Consultants to the Armed Forces
The Retired Enlisted Association
United Armed Forces Association
United States Army Warrant Officers Association
United States Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
Veterans' Widows International Network