



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

March 18, 2009

The Honorable Bill Nelson
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of nationally prominent military and veterans organizations, representing more 5.5 million members plus their families and survivors would like to thank you for your sponsoring S. 535 which will repeal the law requiring a dollar-for-dollar deduction of VA benefits for service connected deaths from the survivors' SBP annuities. The elimination of this survivor benefit inequity is a top legislative goal for TMC in 2009.

We strongly believe that if military service caused a member's death, the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) the VA pays the survivor should be added to the SBP benefits the disabled retiree paid for, not substituted for them. In the case of members who died on active duty, a surviving spouse with children can avoid the dollar-for-dollar offset only by assigning SBP to the children. That forces the spouse to give up any SBP claim after the children attain their majority – leaving the spouse with only a \$1,154 monthly annuity from the VA. Those who give their lives for their country deserve fairer compensation for their surviving spouses.

The Military Coalition again thanks you for sponsoring this legislation to restore equity to this very important survivor program and encourages your colleagues to add their names as co-sponsors.

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
Fleet Reserve Association
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
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 Association for Uniformed Services
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 States Army Warrant Officers Association
United States Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States