



April 14, 2020

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member, Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2216 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Trent Kelly
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Personnel
Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2216 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Members Thornberry and Kelly:

The Military Coalition (TMC), representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members, veterans, and their families and survivors, wishes to express its support for H.R. 6489, the Military Family Readiness Improvement Act. We support this important legislation's focus on DOD and the need for a common definition of "family readiness" to ensure standardization of services and assistance. In addition, it would require DOD to report to Congress on their response to these recommendations.

Moreover, this bill would require the Services to develop better direct communication with military family members, so they are not solely reliant on the service member passing along information. Finally, the proposal requires DOD to develop a bi-annual survey that measures the effectiveness of elements including communication, education, spousal employment, and TRICARE.

We intend to leverage your comments in our advocacy:

Congressman Thornberry, "Family readiness is a major component of military readiness. Servicemembers shouldn't have to worry about whether their next duty station can support the medical needs of their family or whether they will be able to afford safe, reliable childcare."

Congressman Kelly, "I am proud to co-sponsor a proposal that will address many areas that have been highlighted in recent months, including the Exceptional Family Member Program, behavioral health, opioid abuse and childcare."

TMC has long believed that family readiness is crucial to overall readiness of the Total Force. We thank you both for this important legislation, which addresses important challenges with priorities such as: Defining, Communicating and Measuring Family Readiness; the Exceptional Family Member Program; Childcare, Education; the Autism Demonstration Project; Behavioral Health Staffing; Opioid Abuse; and Spousal Employment.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Coalition for continued support.

Sincerely,

Jack Du Teil
President,
The Military Coalition

See attached list of organizations

Air Force Association (AFA)
American Veterans (AMVETS)
Association of the Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS)
Chief Warrant Officers Association of the US Coast Guard (CWOA)
Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)
Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)
Iraq Afghanistan Veterans Association (IAVA)
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV)
Marine Corps League (MCL)
Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA)
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America (MCA)
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
Military Order of the Purple Heart (MPOH)
National Military Family Association (NMFA)
Reserve Officers Association (ROA)
Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)
The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)
United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)
USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Vets First, United Spinal Association (VetsFirst)
Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)