



November 29, 2022

The Honorable Lloyd Austin
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1300 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1300

Dear Secretary Austin:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of organizations representing 5.5 million service members, veterans, their families, and survivors, writes to support your certification to Congress of Section 602 in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), regarding equal payment of incentive pays to members of the reserve components when compared to those issued to active-duty service members.

This legislation specifically addresses growing concerns in recent years, with retention in the ranks of trained personnel in all services – both RC and AC; aviators are an excellent example. In July 2020 the *Military Times* reported, "... the entire Air Force finished fiscal 2019 short about 2,100 pilots — 950 in the active-duty Air Force, 650 in the Air National Guard, and 500 in the Air Force Reserve."

As reported on August 21, 2020 – by Jennifer H. Svan of *STARS AND STRIPES* – the Army announced an increase in the service obligation for new pilots from 6 years to 10. Explaining, Ms. Svan further reported "...the Army's pilot attrition rate grew to a record 10 percent of its force [the previous year], due largely to aging aviators and competition from commercial airlines." Meanwhile, Army National Guard sources continue to report they remain critically short of their authorized strength.

This important legislation is intended to incentivize critical RC personnel to remain by appropriately compensating them for their valuable skillsets and operational experience. Incentives would also encourage departing AC service members to continue their service as members of the National Guard and Reserve. Moreover, this will also prove more than cost-effective, when compared with training new personnel, from an ever-dwindling pool.

Earlier this year, RAND released "Payment of the Full Rate of Special and Incentive Pays to Members of the Reserve Components," a report as required by Sec. 653 from the Fiscal Year 2020 NDAA. While the report did have some valuable information, their conclusion failed to consider many important factors. One example is that their modeling of Air Force pilots shows implementing this change would have a less than 1% change in AC pilots and a net positive effect for the RC, by retaining 7.2% more pilots who would otherwise likely retire.

The Coalition truly appreciated your support of RC Incentive Pay Parity, in testimony to Congress last year; moreover, we appreciate your commitment to the men and women serving in uniform, particularly those serving in the RC who are already going beyond the one weekend a month and two weeks a year that RC duty requires. Achieving pay parity will support our skilled RC troops in everyday life so they can continue to serve effectively and contribute to a strong national defense.

On this, and other important issues, we stand ready to continue working with you to ensure the preservation of our RC uniformed services as the operational force-multipliers they are.

Sincerely,



President,
The Military Coalition

Enclosure: Reserve Component Incentive Pay Parity Discussion Paper

TMC Organizations:

Air Force Association (AFA)

Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)

Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA)

Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS)

Chief Warrant Officers Association of the US Coast Guard (CWOA)

Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)

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)

National Military Family Association (NMFA)

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA)

Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA)

Reserve Organization of America (ROA)

Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)

United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)

USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)

Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)