



June 16, 2021

The Honorable Jack Reed
Chairman, Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James Inhofe
Ranking Member, Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman, Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Ranking Member, Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Reed and Smith and Ranking Members Inhofe and Rogers:

The Military Coalition (TMC), representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members, veterans, and their families and survivors, writes to express its support of authorizing repeal of the requirement for those retiring from military service to wait 180 days before entering DoD civil service General Schedule (GS) positions for GS13 and below.

The FY 2021 NDAA included a temporary repeal with a 3-year pilot program for depots and industrial activities and we commend you for that inclusion. While this is a first step, there is more work to be done. TMC supports inclusion of the *Retain Skilled Veterans Act of 2021* in the NDAA FY22 to permanently authorize military retirees to transition to DoD GS13 and below positions for all DoD facilities (not just depots).

Section 3326 of United States Code Title 5 currently requires a waiting period of 180 days after retirement, before a retired member of the Armed Forces can be appointed into the Civil Service within DoD. This time restriction forces many who wish to continue national service towards other careers. Although DoD has the authority to grant waivers to this rule, the average processing time for the legacy personnel system is 6 months to approve a waiver.

The 180-day waiting period has resulted in a talent management problem for hiring officials who are grappling with an antiquated hiring process that takes too long to hire a qualified candidate with a current security clearance. It is also an injustice for those in DoD's retirement transition assistance program to apply for a GS position as a curriculum requirement, only to discover they are automatically screened out of the candidate pool.

The intent of this "180-day rule" is to prevent senior military officers in positions of influence from creating GS14, GS15, or Senior Executive Service positions for themselves upon retirement. However, the current scope of the 180-day rule severely restricts the ability of DoD hiring officials to attract quality talent for GS13 and below positions that require military experience and a current security clearance.

Recent DoD initiatives in talent management have identified a growing “war for talent” that requires information age solutions. As DoD modernizes weapons systems in support of the National Defense Strategy, the services must also modernize personnel hiring procedures. Permanent repeal of the 180-day rule (GS-13 and below) will support efforts to improve the quality of the talent pool competing for GS positions and restore the reputation of the professional civilian workforce.

We appreciate your leadership on this issue and your commitment to America’s military and veterans. Please support this legislation and ensure it is incorporated into the NDAA. We look forward to working with you and your staff to effect this change.

Sincerely,



Jack Du Teil
President,
The Military Coalition

The Military Coalition:

Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA)
Air Force Association (AFA)
Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)
American Veterans (AMVETS)
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS)
Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS)
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 (MOPH)
National Military Family Association (NMFA)
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA)
Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA)
Reserve Organization of America (ROA)
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)
The Independence Fund (TIF)
United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)
USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
VetsFirst, United Spinal Association
Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)
Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)