



May 14, 2021

The Honorable Mark Takano, Chair
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
335 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Bost, Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
1211 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Takano and Ranking Member Roe:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of uniformed services and veteran's associations representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members, military retirees, survivors, and their families, thank you and the committees for your support of our Uniformed Services. The Coalition shares its support for H.R. 2195, Protecting the Employment Rights Of Service Members Act (PERSA). This important, straightforward, bipartisan bill ensures our service members can enforce their rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

USERRA prohibits discrimination based on Reserve and National Guard military service and states they are entitled to the reemployment rights and benefits of their civilian job after serving in the military. Returning service members must be promptly reemployed as if they had they not been absent for military service. If an employer doesn't offer the same pay, benefits, or status when a service member returns from duty, USERRA allows the service member to hold the employer accountable for these violations in court.

However, some service members have been unable to exercise their USERRA rights due to increased use of forced arbitration clauses hidden in the fine print of employment contracts and personnel policies. Usually presented on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, these clauses preclude access to the judicial system. Instead of an unbiased review of their case, service members are forced into private arbitration systems set up by the very employer they are bringing charges against. PERSA gives service members the ability to pursue USERRA claims in court while preserving the option to enter into an arbitration agreement after a dispute arises.

The attached list of Coalition organizations strongly urges Congress to quickly pass H.R. 2195, Protecting the Employment Rights of Service Members Act. The men and women in our nation's Uniformed Services must be guaranteed the right to exercise the USERRA protections Congress passed into law.

Sincerely,

Jack Du Teil
President
The Military Coalition

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)

Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)

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

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)

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)

VetsFirst, United Spinal Association

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)