



ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

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General Gordon R. Sullivan
United States Army (Ret.)
President

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As Congress considers ways to reduce the nation's deficit, I write to urge that military retirement and healthcare benefits not be deemed bill payers to address the current fiscal crisis.

I am very concerned that recent proposals from the Defense Business Board (DBB) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) relating to the military retirement system and health care benefits may be swept up into congressional negotiations leading to Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction recommendations. Both proposals show a complete failure to understand the enormous difference between a soldier's career in the profession of arms and the corporate job environment.

Military service requires extraordinary sacrifice by those serving and their families over two to three decades – in essence, they write a blank check to the United States for an amount up to and including their life. The unique nature of military retirement and healthcare benefits plays a key role in inducing high quality people to serve a full career under arduous conditions that civilians do not face.

As you work to correct the nation's fiscal crisis, please remember that our government imposes no limits on the sacrifices of those who serve a career in uniform – less than one percent of our population – and in turn it must provide a substantial and predictable compensation package. The richest nation on earth can afford to continue the current retirement system and health care benefits for those few who defend it with a lifetime of service, if we as a nation are truly committed to those who are willing to carry our colors into battle.

Sincerely,

GORDON R. SULLIVAN

General, USA Retired