



April 28, 2021

The Honorable Rob Portman
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Johnson
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20150

The Honorable Dean Phillips
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Portman, Senator Warren, Representative Johnson and Representative Phillips:

The Military Coalition (TMC) represents more than 5.5 million service members, retirees, veterans, their families, and survivors. One of our goals is to extend the TRICARE retiree health care benefit to Reserve Component retirees who receive early retirement pay due to deployment credits. Thank you for sponsoring S. 829 and its companion H.R. 1997, the *TRICARE Fairness for National Guard and Reserve Retirees Act*, which would address this eligibility gap.

Currently, Reserve Component retirees under age 60 are not eligible for the TRICARE retiree benefit even if they are receiving retirement pay. Those who want TRICARE coverage must purchase TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR), a premium-based plan. Monthly premiums for TRR are steep – for 2021, the cost is \$484.83 for the member only or \$1,165.01 for the member plus family. This is a clear and unacceptable inequity versus all other uniformed services retirees who receive retirement pay and are also eligible for retiree TRICARE coverage.

While the National Guard and Reserve have always played important roles, heavy reliance on the Reserve Component over the past year underscores the need to fix this TRICARE parity issue. Reserve Component servicemembers played key roles in wildfire rescues, natural disaster emergency relief, and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and civil disturbances throughout 2020. National Guard and Reserve members continue to be deployed in large numbers in service to our nation.

TMC appreciates that the *TRICARE Fairness for National Guard and Reserve Retirees Act* addresses this inequity in Reserve Component compensation by extending the TRICARE retiree health care benefit to Reserve Component retirees receiving early retirement pay. Reserve Component members who have earned early retirement pay through deployment credits should receive the full retirement package, including health care coverage.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue and for all you do to support military families.

Sincerely,

Jack Du Teil
President
The Military Coalition

See attached list of organizations



Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)

AMSUS, the Society of Federal Health Professionals

Association of the United States Army (AUSA)

Commissioned Officers Association of the US Public Health Service (COA)

U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association and Enlisted Association (CPOA)

Chief Warrant and Warrant Officers Association, United States Coast Guard (CWOA)

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS)

Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)

Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)

Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV)

Military Chaplains Association (MCA)

Marine Corps League (MCL)

Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA)

Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)

Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)

National Military Family Association (NMFA)

Reserve Organization of America (ROA)

The Enlisted Association (TREA)

The Independence Fund (TIF)

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)

VetsFirst