



*ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY*

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

1 April 2009

On behalf of the more than 105,000 members of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), I write to express AUSA's great appreciation and strong support for H.R. 1804, which would provide substantial benefit improvements for military survivors and for currently serving military and federal civilian personnel.

Under current law, 55,000 military widows whose military sponsors died of service-connected causes suffer significant financial penalties because their military Survivor Benefit Plan annuities are reduced by the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation they receive from the VA. Two years ago, Congress took a first step to ease that penalty by authorizing a modest \$50 monthly allowance for the affected widows, rising to \$100 in the outyears. Your proposed legislation would take a more aggressive step to help these deserving survivors by raising that special allowance to \$95 next year and to \$345 in the outyears.

AUSA also strongly endorses the bill provisions that would give military and federal civilian personnel employees the same Roth option for their Thrift Savings Plan that most corporate employees already enjoy.

AUSA is most grateful for your joint initiative in pursuing these very important benefit upgrades for the military and federal civilian community.

Sincerely,

GORDON R. SULLIVAN

General, USA Retired