



*ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY*

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

August 6, 2009

On behalf of the more than 105,000 members of the Association of the United States Army, I write to urge you to preserve the unique identity and role of the military TRICARE and VA health care systems – including their non-taxable status – under any national health care plan that Congress may enact.

Congress has provided military and veterans health care benefits in recognition of the nation's unique responsibility to those who served in uniform and the Defense Department's special employer responsibility to those who spent decades in military service. These are benefit programs uniquely earned through service to the rest of the American people and must continue to be distinguished from programs available to other Americans who did not share that burden of sacrifice.

The systems are designed to fulfill specific mission requirements which are not shared by the private sector. Each system is focused on the unique needs of the service member or veteran and is critical to sustaining a career all-volunteer force.

AUSA strongly believes that our Nation must maintain these unique departmental programs and ensure that proposed health care reform legislation does not in any way disadvantage these extraordinary populations.

Sincerely,

GORDON R. SULLIVAN  
General, USA Retired