

## **Resolution No. 405**

### **LINK MILITARY PAY INCREASES TO PRIVATE-SECTOR INCREASES**

WHEREAS, military pay raises are linked by law to the increase in private-sector wages, as measured by the Employment Cost Index (ECI). The Administration's military pay raise request, however, can be more or less than the ECI, with Congress having the final approval; and

WHEREAS, Congress erased the double-digit pay gap of the 1990s by directing military pay raises from fiscal years 2000-2006 to be a half-percent above private-sector wage increases, and raises from FY 2007-forward to match the ECI, although more could be authorized; and

WHEREAS, the 1.7 percent military pay raise for FY 2013 matched the ECI, but the Department of Defense — in its continuing campaign to slow the growth of military compensation due to budget constraints and the sequester — recommended that future pay increases be limited; and

WHEREAS, over the objections of the VFW but with the approval of Congress, the “slow the growth” initiative resulted in military pay raises of 1 percent in FY 2014 and 2015, and 1.3 percent in FY 2016, with the cumulative result being less than the ECI; and

WHEREAS, the 2.1 percent raise in FY 2017 and 2.4 percent raise in FY18 were improvements and the proposed FY 2019 2.6 percent pay raise would be the largest pay raise in nine years; and

WHEREAS, changes to military pay and benefits is the top concern of military service members and their families. Continued efforts to slow the growth of military compensation, combined with a better civilian job market, and a sustained intense operational tempo have already impacted recruiting and retention, which jeopardizes the continued existence and viability of the All-Volunteer Force; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense is already facing a shortage in key fields, such as pilots and maintenance personnel, and must develop competitive pay and benefit scales to recruit emerging talent in high-tech fields, such as cyber; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, that we call upon Congress to maintain military base pay comparability with private-sector wages by ensuring annual military pay raise percentages match or exceed annual ECI increases.

Submitted by Commander-in-Chief  
To Committee on NATIONAL SECURITY & FOREIGN AFFAIRS