

## **Resolution No. 414**

### **PROVIDE EQUITY IN BENEFITS TO ALL RESERVE COMPONENT MEMBERS**

WHEREAS, America's reliance on its Reserve Component (RC) has been unprecedented in our nation's history. According to the Defense Department, more than 900,000 RC members have served on active duty since 9/11, contributing a quarter of all ground forces deployed into Iraq and Afghanistan over the past 13 years, and half of all Air Force airlift, and with a third of them serving multiple tours; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense's new "total force" concept, relies on the intentional integration of RC forces across the full spectrum of conflict, including all current and future homeland defense, domestic disaster, and overseas steady state and contingency operations, as an operational reserve, as opposed to the traditional strategic reserve; and

WHEREAS, Reserve Component members have been and are currently being activated under authorities, such as 12304b and 12301h, which do not provide them with the benefits comparable to their active duty counterparts or other reserve members activated under different authorities, although they may be deployed to the same location, with the same mission; and

WHEREAS, eligibility for VA benefits is based on presenting proof of active military service in the form of a DD Form 214. According to Title 10, U.S. Code, a member of the Guard or Reserve can only receive a DD-214 if they serve 90 days of continuous active duty, although Service Secretaries have the authority to issue the forms for shorter time periods; and

WHEREAS, RC retirees are normally eligible to receive military retirement pay at age 60, but a 2008 National Defense Authorization Clause, lowered their retirement pay eligibility age by three months for every 90 days served on active duty in an eligible status after Jan. 29, 2008. And the FY 2015 NDAA amended the earlier language by including a carryover clause for RC members activated after Sept. 30, 2014. But the new law did not extend the carryover provision back to Jan. 29, 2008, or grandfather any early retirement credits back to 9/11; and

WHEREAS, there exist other significant discrepancies in the policies, available programs, and eligibility for benefits between the Active and Reserve Components; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, that we urge Congress to eliminate the discrepancies that discount the dedication and sacrifice of our Reserve Component members serving at home and abroad.

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