



**Legislative Alert #113-9: SUPPORT H.R. 679 & S. 629, Honor America’s
Guard-Reserve Retirees Act
VETERANS**

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Issue Background: As it currently exists in the U.S. Code, a Reservist can successfully complete a Guard or Reserve career but not earn the title of, “Veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States,” unless that member has served on Title 10 Active Duty for “other than training purposes.” Title 38, U.S. Code, excludes from the definition of “Veteran career,” those reservists who have not served on Title 10 Active Duty for “other than training purposes.” Drill training, annual training, active duty for training, and Title 32, U.S. Code, duty are not deemed qualifying service to meet the requirements for “Veteran” status.

For example, the service of our Guard and Reserve members in Operation Noble Eagle (ONE) would not qualify them to earn the status of “Veterans of our Armed Forces” because it is technically a “training” status, nor would disaster relief or border security missions. Many Guard and Reserve Active Duty tours, especially as it pertains to the Navy Reserve Component, are written as “training-status” orders. These circumstances should in no way diminish the sacrifice our Reservists make and honor as “Veterans of our Armed Forces,” they rightfully deserve.

Action Required: Contact your Representatives and Senators and urge them to support and cosponsor H.R. 679, introduced by Representative Tim Walz (D-MN-01), and S. 629, introduced by Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR), the Honor America’s Guard-Reserve Retirees Act, which would amend Title 38, U.S. Code, to recognize the service in the Reserve Components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as Veterans under law.

Details (To Be Put Into Letter):

Currently, as it exists in the U.S. Code, a Reservist can successfully complete a Guard or Reserve career but not earn the title of, “Veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States,” unless the member has served on Title 10 Active Duty for other than training purposes. Title 38 excludes from the definition of “Veteran career,” those Reservists who have not served on Title 10 Active Duty for other than training purposes. Drill training, annual training, active duty for training, and Title 32 duty are not deemed qualifying service to qualify for “Veteran” status. For example, the service of our Guard and Reserve members serving in Operation Noble Eagle (ONE) would not qualify them to earn the status of “Veterans of our Armed Forces” because it is technically a “training” status. It is important that Members of Congress move to make changes in the language of the U.S. Code, in

order to properly bestow the men and women who so deserve such honor.

H.R. 679 and S. 629 are wonderful bills that would rightfully grant full Veteran status to members of the Reserve Component who have served at least 20 years, but have not been called up for the active duty required under the current definition. This affects over 280,000 Reservist Component members and, particularly, over 45,000 Navy Reservists across the country. The men and women who have served in uniform for 20 or more years in the Guard or Reserve should be recognized as military Veterans. This legislation corrects this injustice, at no cost to taxpayers as the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has scored the bill at zero cost. Additionally this legislation has the potential to help combat high levels of unemployment amongst the Reserve Component community, providing “Veteran” status for them to be hired by employers that actively seek Veterans in the workplace.

Take Action: Click the “Take Action” link at the top of the Alert to immediately email and/or write to your Senators and Representatives. This is the quickest and most effective method of expressing your views to Congress. You can also write and/or e-mail the ‘Details’ section or edit as you desire for a more personalized communication . Also, contact friends and family and urge them to use the Contact Congress feature on AUSN’s website as well. Please direct any questions concerning this issue to our Director of Legislation, Anthony Wallis, at 703-548-5800 or at Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org.