

# Reserve Organization of America special presentation: 2025 Leaders Conference

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*Thank  
you*



# Your national gov. affairs team

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Military Policy
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Fellow
- ❖ Peter Donlon, Senior  
Policy Fellow
- ❖ Hannah Miller, Defense  
Fellow





# ROA 118<sup>th</sup> Congress Achievements: (1/3)

- Extended TRICARE Reserve Select coverage for reserve component survivors from six months to three years.
- Secured parental leave parity across all branches of the Armed Forces, including the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve.
- Allocated approximately \$1 billion for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation in consecutive years.
- Expanded the Secretary of Defense's authority to provide pay parity with the active component for all Special and Incentive Pays.
- Influenced the promotion of more than 400 general and flag officers across the services.
- Advocated for the grounding of the CV-22 Osprey following fatal crashes, prioritizing safety improvements.
- Increased liquidated damages to the greater of \$50,000 or actual damages when an employer willfully violated USERRA.

# ROA 118<sup>th</sup> Congress Achievements: (2/3)

- Doubled the accession bonus for reserve component nurses to address critical workforce shortages in the medical field.
- Extended dual Basic Allowance for Housing for single reserve component members on Active Duty for Training from 140 days to fewer than 365.
- Established an individualized preseparation track within TAP for reserve component members.
- Prohibited the retirement of F-15E aircraft and the reduction of KC-135 aircraft in the U.S. Air Force Reserve.
- Advocated for the recapitalization of tactical fighter aircraft in the U.S. Navy Reserve.
- Removed the term “noncareer” from USERRA’s first statutory purpose to ensure clearer judicial interpretation regarding permissible absences from civilian work for uniformed service.

## ROA 118<sup>th</sup> Congress Achievements: (3/3)

- Prohibited denying injunctive relief to plaintiffs on the grounds that an employee may have been awarded "wages unearned" after unlawful termination.
- Mandated the award of reasonable attorney fees, expert witness fees, and other litigation expenses to plaintiffs in cases before the Merit Systems Protection Board.
- Required a GAO report to assess how the Secretary of Labor processed USERRA relief actions, including identifying errors in dismissed actions, referrals to the Department of Justice, and trends.
- Mandated a GAO report to evaluate USERRA compliance within certain federal intelligence agencies.
- Directed the Secretary of Labor to review the Veterans' Employment and Training Service Investigations Manual, updated it as necessary, and submitted a report to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs.

ROA's  
advocacy  
program by  
the numbers:  
118<sup>th</sup>  
Congress

- 8 statements for the record.
- Invited to testify before Congress 3 times.
- 20+ letters to leaders sent.
- Influenced introduction of 12+ bills.
- 200+ meetings taken and set.
- First ever “Hill day” hosted.
- Released 21<sup>st</sup> Century government affairs readiness resources.
- Revitalized congressional staff award program.
- Published special edition *Reserve Voice* publication, *The ROA Story: Power through partnership*, **at no additional cost.**









Reserve Voice Magazine Special Edition



# The ROA Story: Power through partnership



## Answering the wake up call

An inside look into the  
creation of the U.S. Public  
Health Service Ready  
Reserve Corps with Rear  
Admiral Joan Hunter



The ROA Story:  
Fighting for the U.S.  
Public Health Service  
Ready Reserve



## ROA on the road: Seeing more at Seymour-Johnson



A conversation with Rear  
Admiral Denise Hinton



## Feedback from the field

“ I thought this day was amazing  
and impactful. I was proud to be a  
part of it.

*\*Capt. Barbosa Mason\**





Total Force History:  
American Revolution → World War I



# Total Force History:

## *Secretary of War Plan for the Reduction of the Army of the United States*

*(December 12, 1820)*

“... to prepare the country to meet a state of war, particularly at its commencement, with honor and safety, much must depend on the organization of our military peace establishment. . .”

[ 21 ]

### REPORT

OF

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

OF A

PLAN FOR THE REDUCTION

OF THE

ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES.

Made in pursuance of a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 11th of May last.

DECEMBER 12, 1820.

Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

WASHINGTON:

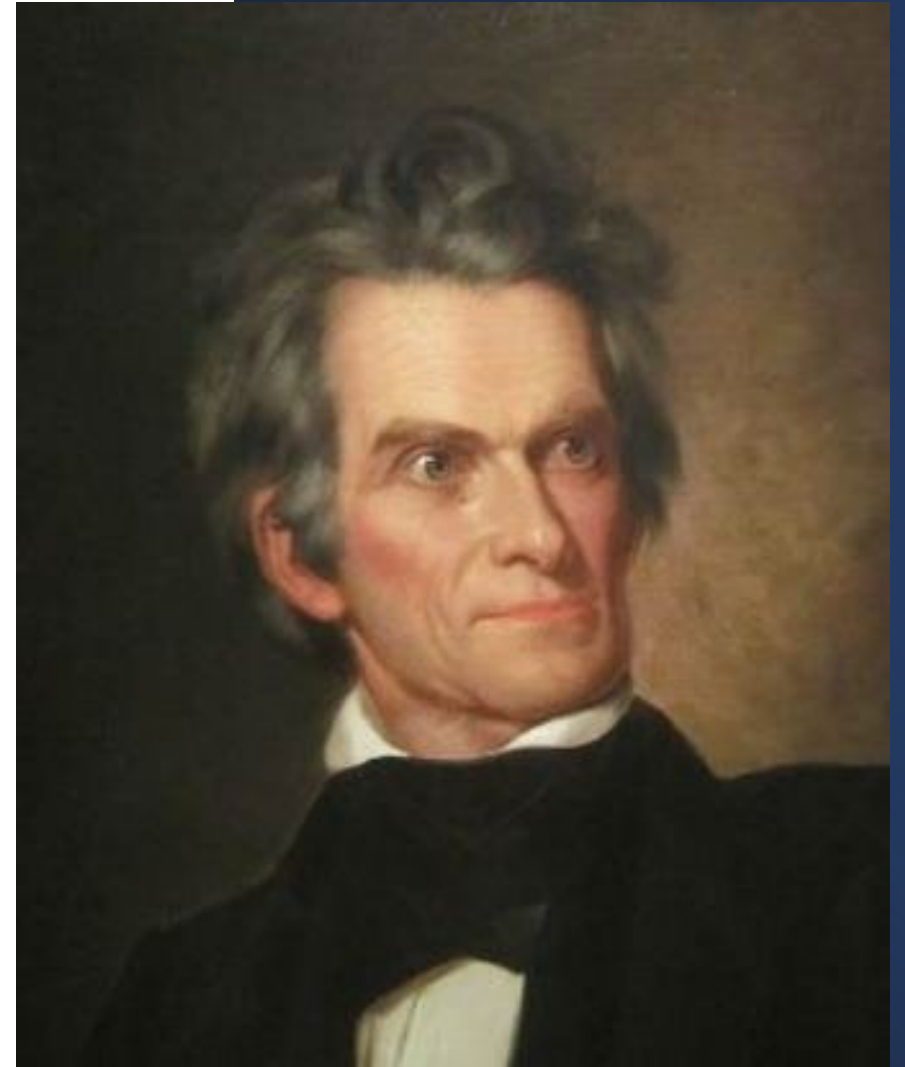
PRINTED BY GALE & SEATON.

1820.



# John C. Calhoun, *Plan For the Reduction of the Army of the United States*

“I have thus presented an organization which I deem most effective, and which, in the future exigencies of the country, may be of the utmost importance. A different one, requiring for the present an expenditure something less than that proposed, might, in some respects, be more agreeable at this moment; but, believing that nothing in our situation or in our relation with other powers, however pacific at the time, can give a certain assurance of uninterrupted peace. . . I have deemed it my duty to present that organization which will most effectually protect the country against the calamities and dangers of any future contest in which it may be our misfortune to be involved.”

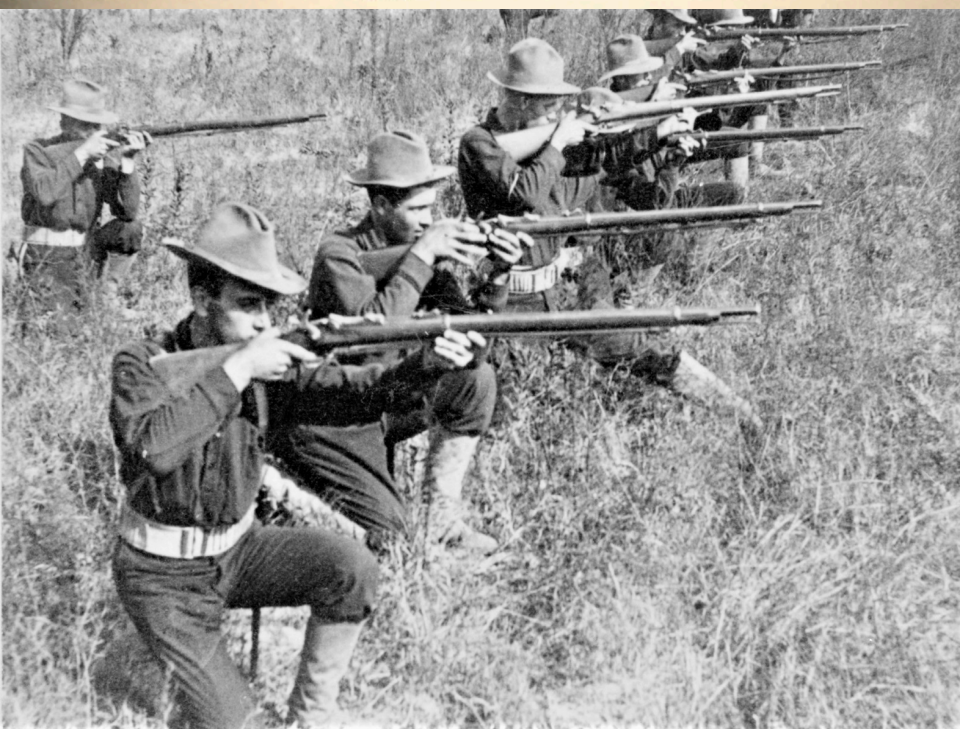




among the captains of the company.  
APPROVED, July 17, 1862.

CHAP. CCI. — *An Act to amend the Act calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections, and repel Invasions, approved February twenty-eight, seventeen hundred and ninety-five, and the Acts amendatory thereof, and for other Purposes.*

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That whenever the President of the United States shall call forth the militia of the States, to be employed in the service of the United States, he may specify in his call the period for which such service will be required, not exceeding nine months; and the militia so called shall be mustered in and continue to serve for and during the term so specified, unless sooner discharged by command of the President. If by reason of defects in existing laws, or in the execution of them, in the several States, or any of them, it shall be found necessary to provide for enrolling the militia and otherwise putting this act into execution, the President is authorized in such cases to make all necessary rules and regulations; and the enrolment of the militia shall in all cases include all able-bodied male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, and shall be apportioned among the States according to representative population.*



CONSCRIPTION ACT

OF

1863.

PHILADELPHIA:

A. WINCH, 505 Chestnut Street.

Publication No. 4

THE "DICK" BILL  
AND  
COMMENTS

H. R. 11,654

"A Bill to Promote the Efficiency of  
the Militia and for Other  
Purposes"

TO SUPERSEDE THE ARCHAIC MILITIA LAWS  
ENACTED IN

1792

Published by  
THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE INTERSTATE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION  
February, 1902

Total Force History:  
American Revolution → World War I



“Those who  
cannot  
remember the  
past are  
condemned to  
repeat it.”

- *George Santayana*  
(*The Life of Reason*, 1905)

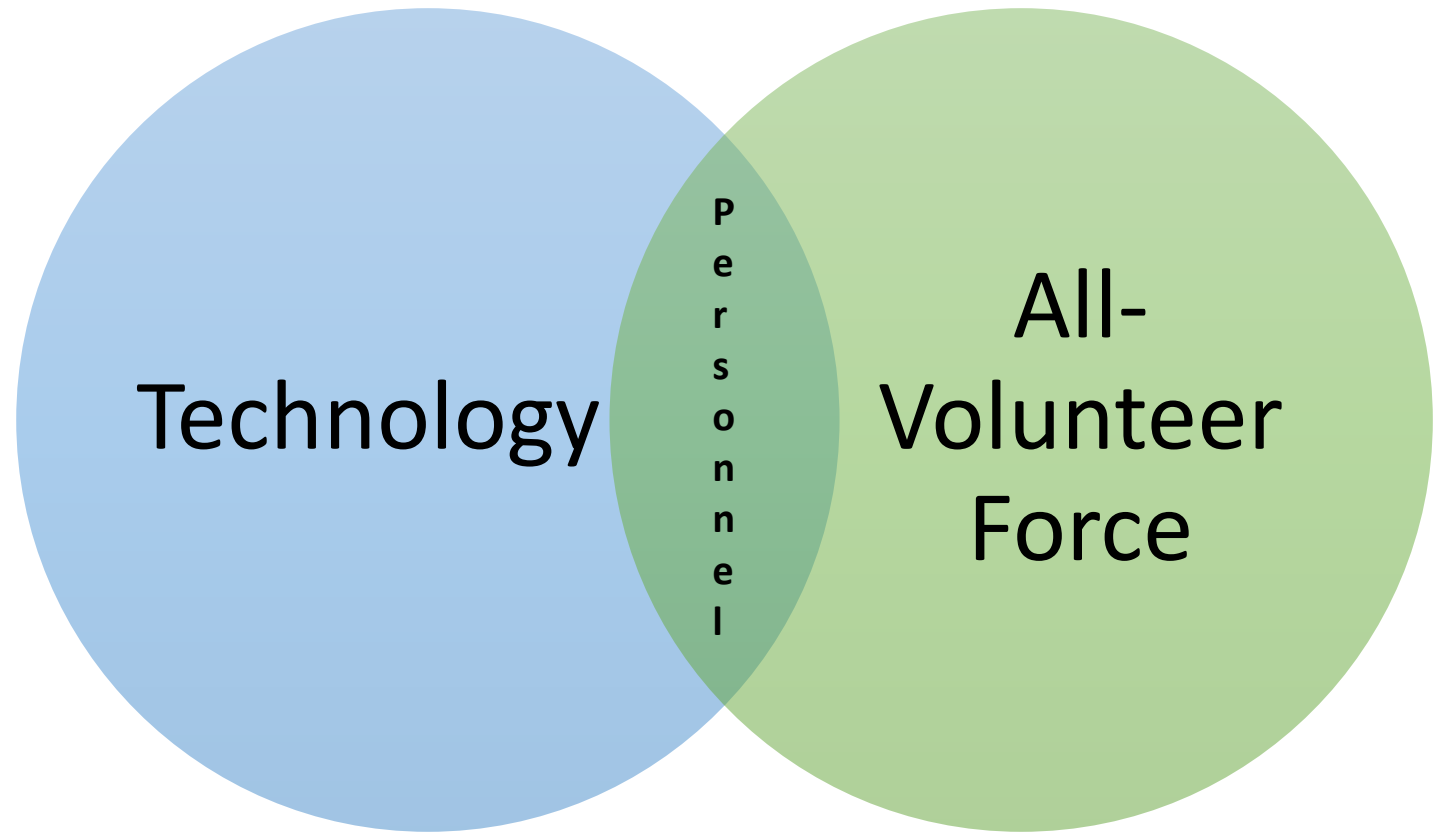
# Total Force History:

## *Recurring themes*

- Law and policy lags national security needs.
- Adequate end-strength ensures readiness.
- Multi-theatre posturing promotes deterrence.
- Mobilization law and policy must be modernized accordingly.
- Personnel and equipment interoperability between components ensures preparedness.



Total Force  
History:  
*Changing times  
or more of the  
same?*



End  
Strength  
Economics

# U.S. Defense spending:

## *fast facts*

- Current U.S. military spending is higher than at any point of the Cold War in inflation-adjusted terms, but relatively low as a percent of national income.
- DoD's FY 2025 budget request called for a 0.9% increase in total top-line spending, and a nearly 2% decrease for the reserve components.
- Personnel costs account for nearly half of all defense spending.
- Roughly [\\$170 billion is earmarked for procurement](#), and about [\\$143 billion for research, development, testing, and evaluation](#).
- Despite constituting more than 45 percent of the Total Force, the reserve component allocation of defense appropriations for equipment procurement is less than 10% of the total defense allocation.
- DoD has started 13 of the last 14 FYs under a Continuing Resolution.



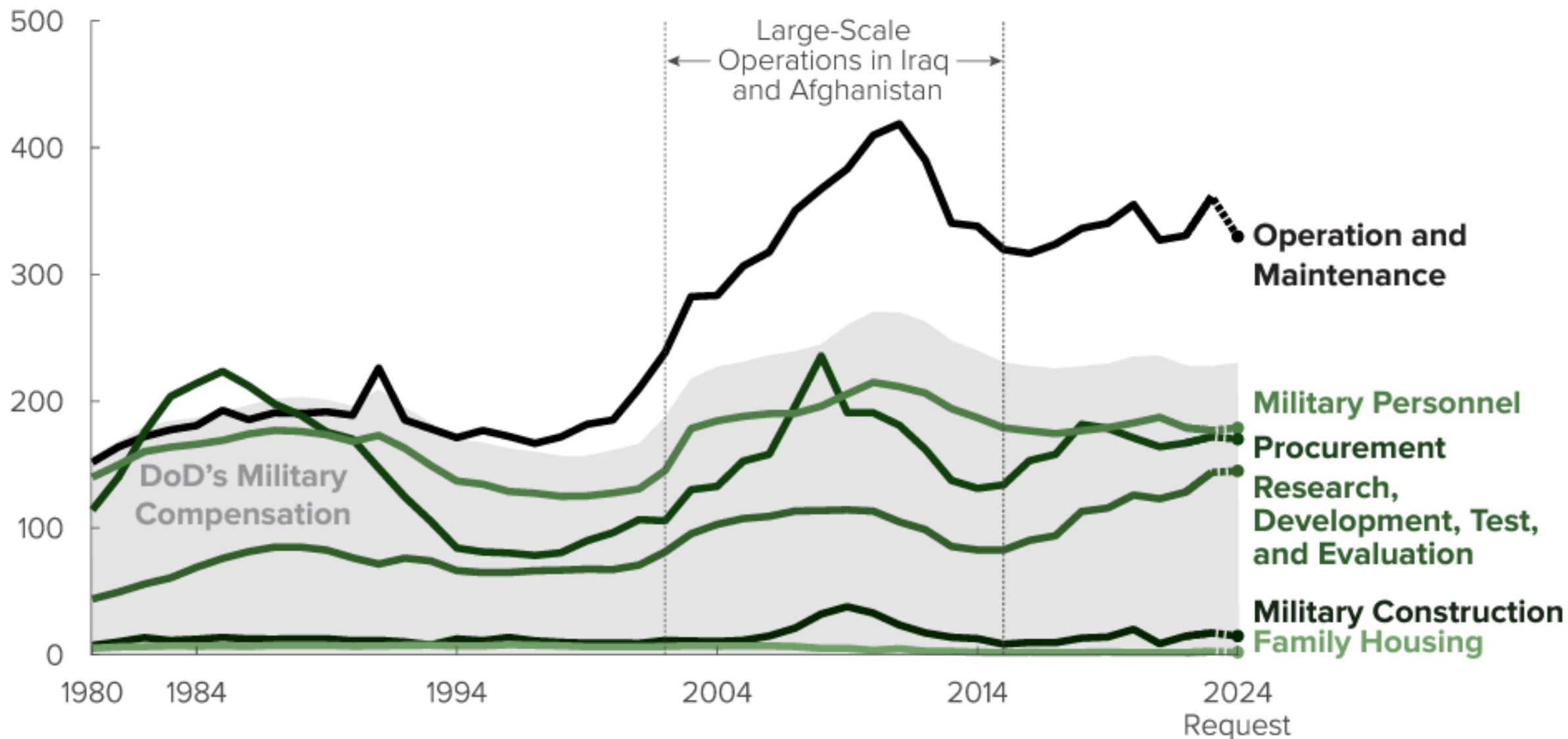
**Figure 1.3. Defense Outlays as a Percent of Gross Domestic Product, FY 1953 – FY 2029**



# Budget of the Department of Defense

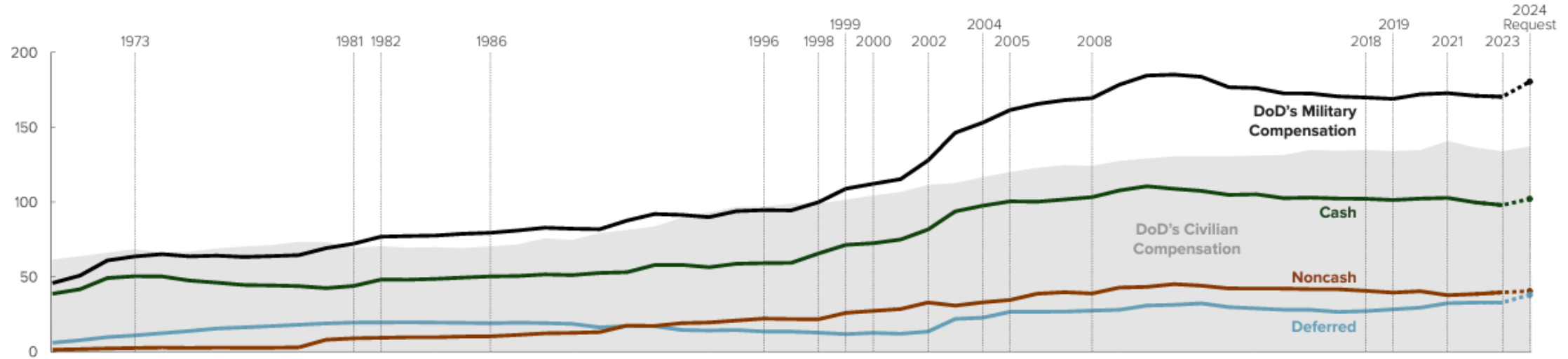
Source: *Atlas of Military Compensation*, Congressional Budget Office, 2023.

Billions of 2024 Dollars



# Timeline of DoD's Compensation and Landmark Events, 1970 to 2024

Thousands of 2024 Dollars per Person



**1973. Ended the Draft:** Switched from a conscripted force to an all-volunteer force in the United States.

**1981. Raised Pay by 11.7%:** Boosted pay and allowances one time to make military pay commensurate with civilian wages.

**1981. Adjusted Retirement to High-3 Formula:** Shifted from a retirement annuity based on final pay to one based on the highest three years of pay to reduce the cost of pension benefits and increase cash compensation.

**1982. Raised Pay by 14.3%:** Boosted basic pay one time to improve retention and help the military services achieve their staffing objectives.

**1986. Enacted the Military Retirement Reform Act:** Put in place legislation that resulted in what is referred to as the Redux military retirement system, which reduced the multipliers in the defined benefit plan for service members with less than 30 years of service.

**1996. Created the Military Housing Privatization Initiative:** Formed a public-private partnership to improve the quality of military family housing. Private contractors are granted very long leases and financial assistance to build and maintain housing on military bases. Service members use their basic allowance for housing (BAH) to pay rent to the contractors

managing the housing areas.

**1998. Adjusted BAH:** Legislated a new formula for computing BAH: The allowance was set to cover 85 percent of service members' housing costs (rent, utilities, and insurance) if they rented housing that was equivalent to the housing they would get on a military base.

**1999. Repealed Redux:** Made enrollment in Redux optional. Service members who joined after August 1, 1986, could choose whether to retire under the pre-Redux system or opt for Redux plus an immediate \$30,000 cash payment.

**2000. Reformed Pay Table:** Began an initiative to adjust military pay targeted to members at certain pay grades and with certain lengths of service. Over the next 10 years, the Congress would go on to adjust pay tables, pay raises, and bonuses to retain talented personnel once they reached mid-career.

**2002. Created TRICARE for Life:** Provided additional coverage to military retirees and their families who are eligible for Medicare. Paid most of the costs that would otherwise have been paid by retirees out of pocket under Medicare alone.

**2004. Established Concurrent Receipt:** Allowed some retired military personnel to receive military retirement pay without any offset for disability compensation received from VA. The benefit was phased in over time.

**2005. Increased BAH to Cover All Housing Costs:** Reduced to zero service members' out-of-pocket expenses for housing. Applied only to those not living in government-owned-and-operated quarters.

**2005. Eliminated Social Security Offset:** Increased the benefit paid to spouses of deceased service members, age 62 or older, from 35 percent to 55 percent of the deceased service member's retirement pay.

**2008. Changed Reservist Retirement:** Lowered the age of eligibility for some reservists to start receiving retirement pay based on periods of active-duty service in support of contingency operations.

**2018. Established Blended Retirement System:** Created a new retirement system for those who joined after 2017. Major changes included matching contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan and reducing the multiplier (from 2.5 percent to 2.0 percent) for the defined benefit plan.

**2019. Reduced BAH:** Set BAH to 95 percent of service members' housing

costs (for those not living in government-owned-and-operated quarters).

**2021. Repealed Survivor Benefit Offset:** Eliminated gradually the loss of any portion of the annuity for survivors of deceased military members who were awarded VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

**2023. Added Inflation Adjustments for DoD:** Increased appropriations across all categories of military compensation in response to unexpectedly high inflation.

**2024. Proposed Pay Increase:** Would increase cash compensation (pay raise and BAH) and noncash compensation to address uncharacteristically high inflation as part of the President's budget request.

**2024. Proposed Increase in Bonuses:** Would raise recruitment and retention bonuses included in the special pay category of noncash funding to address shortfalls as part of the President's budget request.

**2024. Proposed Adjustment in Military Retirement Accounts:** Would adjust the payments into the military retirement accrual fund as part of the 2024 budget request. The normal cost percentage paid by the Treasury for future concurrent receipt payments would increase, and the normal cost percentage paid by DoD for future nonconcurrent receipt costs would decrease.

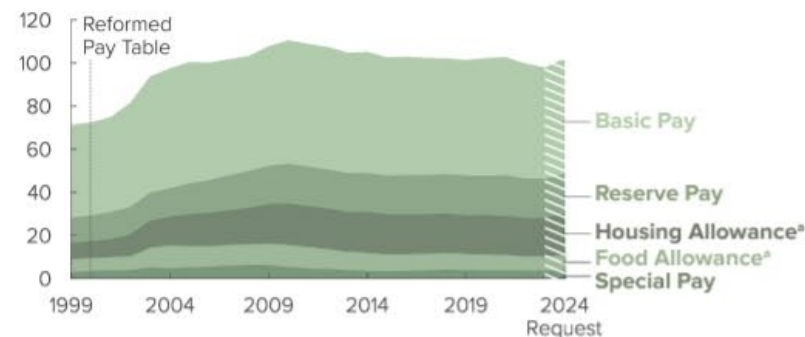
Source: *Atlas of Military Compensation*, Congressional Budget Office, 2023.



# A Detailed Look at the Categories of DoD's Compensation

## Cash

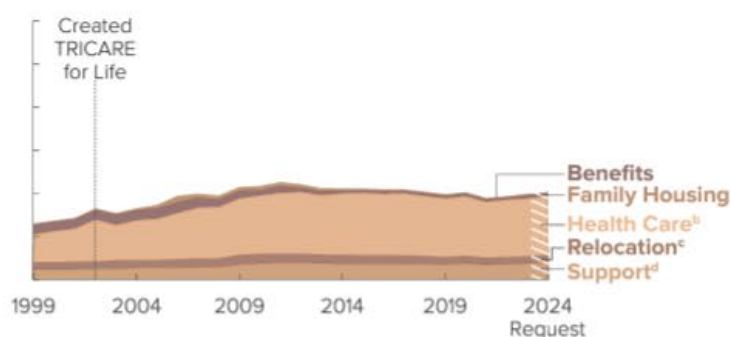
Thousands of 2024 Dollars per Person



a. The allowances for housing and food are not taxed, increasing the cost of military compensation in the federal budget, not shown here.

## Noncash

Thousands of 2024 Dollars per Person



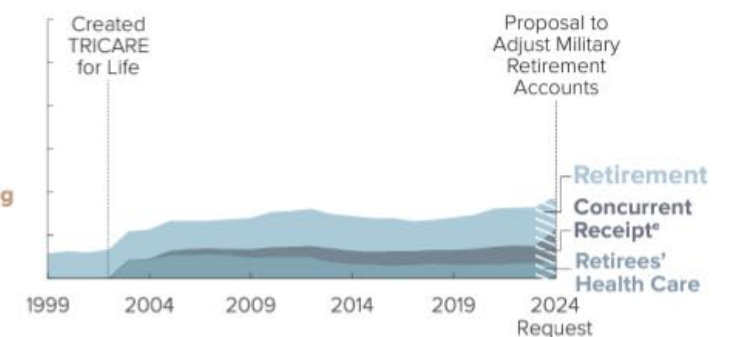
b. Health care is funded out of the operation and maintenance accounts.

c. When service members are required to change geographic location for their job.

d. Programs that improve the quality of life for service members and their families. Examples are DoD's schools, commissaries, child care, and welfare and recreation.

## Deferred

Thousands of 2024 Dollars per Person



e. The cost of paying retired military personnel their military retirement pay without any offset for disability compensation received from VA.

Source: *Atlas of Military Compensation*,  
Congressional Budget Office, 2023.

# ROA's solution:

*Strong and ready  
reserve components*

ROA presents an organization which it deems most effective, and which, in the future exigencies of the country, may be of the utmost importance. A different one requiring something less than proposed might in some respects be more agreeable at this moment. But believing that nothing can give a certain assurance of uninterrupted peace, ROA has deemed it its duty to present that organization which will most effectually protects the country against the calamities and dangers of any future contest.

# ROA's Defense Policy Portfolio: *119<sup>th</sup> Congress* (1/4)

- More clearly define the role of the reserve components in the National Defense Strategy.
- Strengthen and enhance Total Force policy to ensure reserve component assets and capabilities remain an integral element of the Total Force.
- Ensure DoD's funding is at no less than 5 percent of GDP, until such a time that a lesser amount can support an adequate national security.
- Budget for required and modernized equipment in the reserve components.
- Oppose Continuing Resolutions; establish a permanent solution that ensures government shutdowns or partial government shutdowns do not prevent the Coast Guard from receiving mission-essential funding and Coast Guard members receive their pay.

# ROA's Defense Policy Portfolio: *119<sup>th</sup> Congress* (2/4)

- Implement duty status reform.
- Fund the Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) programs to fully meet the strength and training levels of 100 percent of the validated authorized positions.
- Provide enough paid training days to maintain proficiency for members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) with critical wartime specialties.
- Pay for all authorized reserve component full-time support and exempt reserve component military technicians from future furloughs.
- Provide continuity of TRICARE coverage to reserve component members regardless of duty status.
- Grant exception(s) to policy as required by the services for military technicians to be eligible for incentives and develop incentives that are comparable to the civilian maintenance technician sector.



# ROA's Defense Policy Portfolio: *119<sup>th</sup> Congress* (3/4)

- Ensure proper Federal Reserve Force' representation within DoD and its senior joint and service staffs; mandate a representative from one of the forces of the federal reserve be appointed to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Joint Requirements Oversight Council; appropriate senior staff positions on the joint staff and services' senior staffs, with rank commensurate with each position as if they were held by an active component individual.
- Increase the position of Assistant to the Chairman for National Guard Reserve Matters to Lt Gen. or Vice Admiral; alternate membership of the Joint Chiefs of Staff between reserve force chiefs.
- Amend the Selective Service Act to require the registration of women ages 18-26.
- Ensure NOAA is adequately manned, trained, and equipped to execute its mission and jointly-operate with the other uniformed services to ensure military readiness.
- Include the life-cycle costs of reserve component service members in Fully Burdened Life Cycle Cost (FBLCC) models.

# ROA's Defense Policy Portfolio: *119<sup>th</sup> Congress* (4/4)

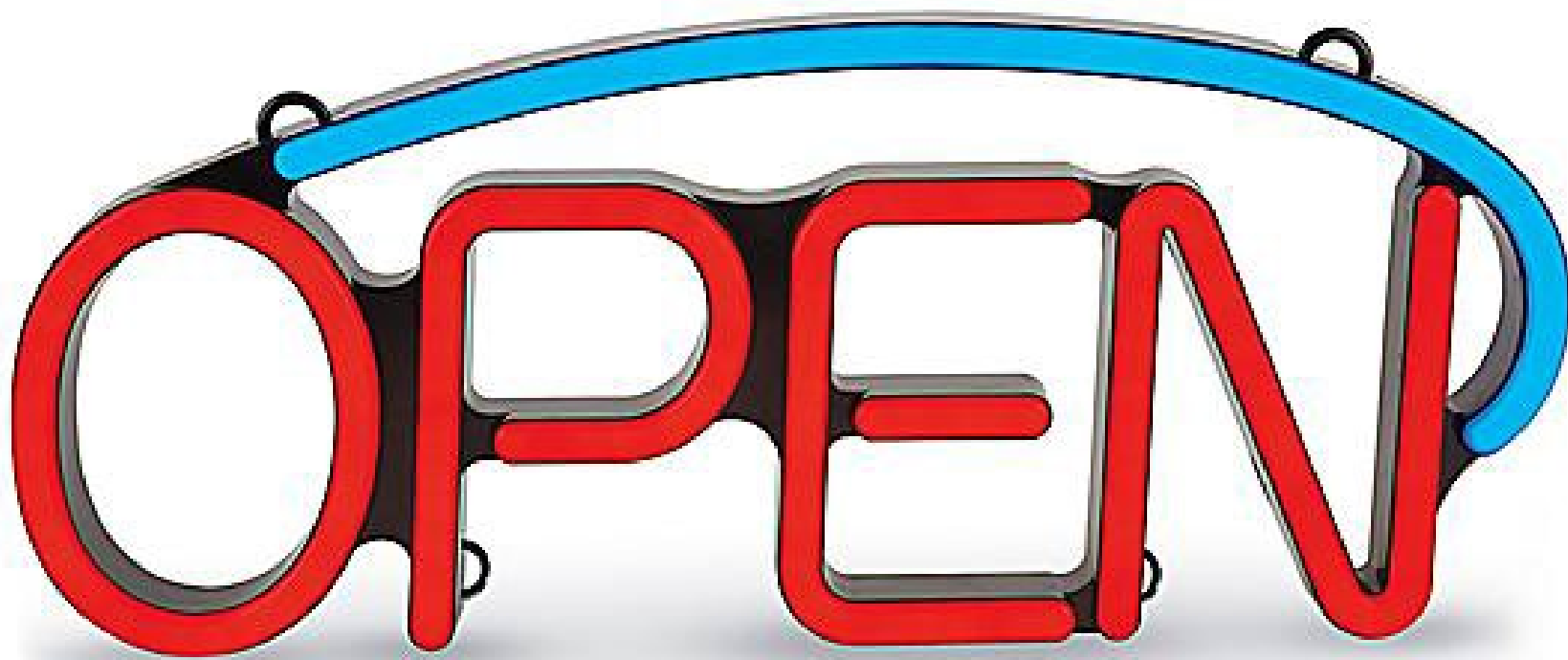
- Modernize the Joint Travel Regulations.
- Increase the differential wage payment tax credit in alignment with the economy and national security environment.
- Ensure programs such as the Transition Assistance Program and Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program are structured, funded, and staffed to ensure the unique needs of reintegrating reserve component service members and their families are met.
- Require the uniformed services reserve components to report on the effectiveness of their child-care programs (as it relates to child-care accessibility and affordability) and provide recommendations for improving child-care access.
- Empower the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services to recruit, retain, train, and mobilize an elite and sufficient force of uniformed USPHS Ready Reserve officers.
- Ensure the implementation of DoD Instruction 1336.01, *Certificate of Uniformed Service (DD Form 214/5 Series)* through the issuance of the DD Form 214-1.



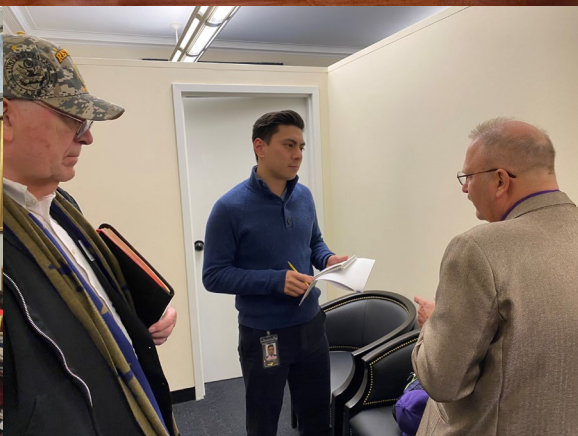


# ROA's Advocacy Program











Thank  
you

