



# AMERICAN MILITARY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

YOUR "HOME BASE" IN RETIREMENT

January 28, 2014

The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chairman  
Committee on Veterans Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

The American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) wishes to extend its strong support for **S.1950** and express its appreciation for your care of, and concern for, America's veterans.

This omnibus bill will affect all veterans and ease the stress placed on military retirees recently with the threat of a 1% reduction in annual COLAs for all those under age 62. As you know, retirement from a 20, 30 or more year military career requires an individual to start from a point he/she should have started at in their early 20's – often near the bottom of the pay scale in their new "working career", so annual COLAs are important to them and their families. In addition, the bill would provide advance funding for all mandatory accounts to ensure that veterans and their survivors and dependents continue to receive their compensation, even in the face of a government shutdown.

**S.1950** brings forward long-delayed issues such as the expanding of benefits for surviving spouses; dental coverage for veterans; honoring certain career Reserve members eligible for reserve retired pay as "veterans", in recognition of their admirable service even though they will receive no additional federal benefit; expanding the current caregiver law to include all generations of veterans; requiring states to recognize the experience of veterans in issuing licenses and credentials (as a condition of receiving federal grants or contracts). This bill would require that hearing loss, a huge problem for veterans, would be reviewed by requesting that VA report on whether hearing loss from causes not currently on the MOS list should be eligible for treatment at the VA and whether more alternative treatments would be considered so that all veterans have the health care they deserve.

Thank you for taking this enormous step to resolve so many issues that have been neglected for too long. We appreciate your efforts and will do all we can to assist you in getting this bill passed.

Sincerely,

Ronald K. Kneppshield  
National President

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