



## **FRA is Working for the Active Duty Military!**

**What is the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)?** The Association has for more than 95 years represented enlisted perspectives for active, reserve, retired and veterans of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. In 2018 there are significant threats to major pay and benefit enhancements. When you join FRA you are lending your voice to issues such as:

**Active Duty Pay** – Secure annual active duty pay increases that are *at least* equal to the Employment Cost Index (ECI).

**Health Care Coverage** – Congress is continuing to restructure the Military Health System (MHS) and FRA will advocate that current level of coverage of beneficiaries should be the “floor” for any changes in current benefits.

**Keep 12 Year Bonus and Portable TSP** – Oppose Pentagon effort to delay the start of employer matching contribution for the newly created “portable” Thrift Savings Plan (TSP-401 K) from after 3 years of service, to after 5 years of service. Will also oppose Pentagon effort to eliminate mandatory 12 years of service bonus (minimum 3 months’ pay) if service member signs up for 4 more years of service.

**Ensure Early Retirement Benefits for Involuntarily Separated Personnel** – Early retirement and other benefits must be authorized for service members involuntarily separated with less than 20 years of service – including the temporary early retirement authority (TERA) program to minimize the impact of end strength reductions on career personnel.

**Military Resale System** – Ensure adequate funding for the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) and oppose privatization to preserve the value of the current benefit and access for all patrons, and oppose consolidation or closure of military exchanges.

**End Strengths** – Track active duty and Reserve end strengths to ensure there are adequate personnel available to meet operational requirements, and work to minimize expanding deployment periods and reduced dwell times.

**BAH** – Oppose cuts to Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) payments. Reform enlisted housing standards by allowing E-7s and above to reside in separate homes, track BAH to ensure it is commensurate with actual housing costs, ensure housing privatization programs are beneficial to service members and their families.

**PCS Reform** – Track the PCS process; ensure adequate funding of the Transition and Relocation Assistance Programs, and authorization of increased PCS mileage rates and higher household goods weight limits for senior enlisted personnel. Also advocate for shipment of a second POV for accompanied overseas assignments.

**Stop Child Custody Changes While Service Member is Deployed** - work to provide protection of child custody arrangements for parents who are deployed.

**Help Special Needs Families** – Military healthcare for special needs families often fall short, especially for families frequently relocating. Military healthcare should align its services under the Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) with state Medicaid waiver programs.

**Improve Pediatric Care** – In some cases TRICARE has told pediatric providers and families that certain care is covered and then refuses to pay after care is provided. TRICARE has acknowledged this and other problems with pediatric care for more than four years and has done nothing to correct it.

**USFSPA** – Encourage the introduction and enactment of legislation to eliminate inequities in the Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act (USFSPA).

**Tuition Assistance (TA) for Navy and Marine Corps Reserves**- Support TA benefit for Navy and Marine Corps Reservists. Currently all service branches provide TA benefits for reservists except for Navy and Marine Corps.

**SCRA Enforcement / Predatory Lending Protections** – Ensure that the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) is enforced by regulatory agencies, and work to ensure that active duty personnel are protected from predatory lenders.

**Impact Aid Program** – Ensure that the Department of Education has adequate funding to reimburse local school districts for educating military children and that the DoD budget includes sufficient supplemental funds to provide support for highly impacted school districts.

**Defense Budget** – Advocate for a Defense (DoD) Budget that is at least five percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to ensure adequate funding for both personnel and weapon programs.

FRA Action Center ([www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org)) provides grassroots advocacy for you to effectively represent your concerns on these issues and other pocketbook issues before Congress and appropriate federal agencies. The Center provides prewritten letters that can be edited or you can compose your own.