



# NCOA<sup>®</sup>

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **NCOA COMMENDS INCLUSION OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL ON MILITARY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS IN NDA**

*Organization encouraged to see recognition of enlisted representation*

**Washington, D.C., May 5** -- The Non-Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA), the voice of enlisted personnel in the Armed Forces, Active Duty, National Guard, Reserves, and Veterans (separated and retired), is extremely pleased that the House Armed Services Committee's Personnel Subcommittee has inserted language into the Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act H.R. 4909 that in the future will guarantee enlisted representation on boards, councils and committees making recommendations on Military Personnel Issues. The specific language is included in Section 592 – assuring nearly 83% of the military, over 18 million former and present service men and women, will now be represented in decisions that directly impact their families and their lives.

“This is a significant milestone in ensuring appropriate representation of the millions of enlisted service members past, present and future on all congressionally directed boards, panels, commissions, or task forces established to review personnel policies. On behalf of the Non Commissioned Officers Association, thank you for your leadership,” said President and National Commander of NCOA H. Gene Overstreet, 12<sup>th</sup> Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (ret.).

The NCOA took up the charge to assure representation on all panels after the recent Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) delivered recommendations on military benefits that made significant changes to the current military compensation system. Unfortunately, the board membership was conspicuously missing a Veteran with senior enlisted experience.

“We owe a huge thank you to Congressman and Veteran Duncan Hunter (CA-50), Congressman and Veteran Paul Cook (CA-8), Congressman and Veteran Chris Gibson (NY-19), Congresswomen and Veteran Martha McSally (AZ-2), Congressman and Veteran Seth Moulton (MA-6), Congresswomen Jackie Walorski (IN-2), Congressman and Veteran Tim Walz (MN-1), and Congressman and Veteran Joe Wilson (SC-2) for their support,” said Jon Ostrowski, Director of Government Affairs for NCOA. “We are extremely grateful that they understand the need for our enlisted personnel to have an advocate with senior enlisted experience to render recommendations that affect the millions of enlisted personnel who serve our nation. We will alert our nearly 60,000 members to show their support for these exceptional legislators and to encourage others to support this critical effort.” As the Bill is expected to come to the House floor the week of May 16<sup>th</sup>, it is important our membership contact their Member of Congress and US Senator now urging support of this provision, both in the House and the Senate, so that it can surely survive and emerge intact in the final conferenced FY17

NDAAs are expected to be completed later this year. Senator Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma, a long time advocate of our men and women in uniform and senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee is spearheading a parallel effort in the Senate.

NCOA has made enlisted representation on such panels one of its core policy priorities for 2015-2016 and has been working with members of the House and Senate to find the most appropriate and effective avenues for that representation. NCOA believes that any change in compensation, benefits or working conditions should have input from those it impacts the most – the enlisted personnel.

*The NCOA has been the premier organization representing the enlisted of our military since 1960, founded to enhance and maintain the quality of life for noncommissioned and petty officers. The voice of the Active Duty, National Guard, Reserves, Veterans (separated and retired), widows, and their families, NCOA leads efforts on Veterans and Spouse Employment, Capitol Hill, and at the Veterans Administration on behalf of our nearly 60,000 members.*