



Position Paper
Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act

Issue: Under current law, Reserve and National Guard service members who are eligible for retirement but who have not served on Active Duty under Title 10 orders for other than training purposes are not designated as veterans.

Background: In order to receive the distinction of being considered a veteran, a Reserve component service member must serve on active duty for two years or for the designated length of an activation period under Title 10 orders for other than training purposes. In accordance with current law, a Reserve component service member who has not met this requirement can serve honorably for twenty or more years, earning the right to retire, yet not be considered a veteran.

Approximately 200,000 members of the Reserves or National Guard have served for 20 or more years yet were never activated under Title 10 for other than training purposes. These service men and women stood ready to perform any duty required of them yet, due to the needs of their units or the branches they served in, were never mobilized to serve on active duty. However, they did serve honorably and met the requirements to retire from the military.

After 20 or more years of service reservists and guardsmen are qualified to retire and are eligible to receive military health care, shop on base, receive some VA benefits including VA guaranteed home loans, and at age 60 they are entitled to receive retirement pay. However, under current law, they are not considered to be veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States.

AMRA Position: The distinction of being classified as a veteran is a great honor and it should not be granted without careful consideration. However, in the case of those who serve honorably in the Reserves or National Guard for 20 or more years and who have met the requirements to retiree, this is an honor that should be granted. AMRA supports current legislation that would grant the distinction of being considered a veteran to Reserve and National Guard retirees.

Current Legislation:

H.R. 1384: Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act, Rep. Walz (D-MN-1)

Honors as a veteran any person who is entitled to retired pay for nonregular (reserve) service or who, but for age, would be so entitled. Provides that such person shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of such recognition.

S. 743: Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act of 2015, Senator Boozman (R-AR)

Honors as a veteran any person who is entitled to retired pay for nonregular (reserve) service or who would be so entitled, but for age. Provides that such person shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of such recognition.