

## **The Retired Enlisted Association – Fighting for YOU in our nation’s capital.**

For over 40 years, TREA – The Retired Enlisted Association – has been on the frontlines in Washington, D.C., in the fight to protect and enhance the promised and earned retirement benefits of enlisted personnel who spent their careers in the Armed Forces of the United States.

TREA has been a part of nearly every major victory that military retirees won during those years. Here are just a few of those battles we have helped win:

### **In the 1990’s:**

- When the Secretary of Defense wanted to charge military retirees an access fee of \$934 per year for using military hospitals and clinics, TREA almost single-handedly stopped the proposal before it ever got off the ground;
- Successfully fought Administration plans to cut the defense health care budget by \$3.6 billion over 5 years, which would have devastated health care options for military retirees;
- When Congress passed legislation that would have delayed our COLAs for 39 months over a 5 year period, we fought and won the battle to restore our COLAs;
- When a bill was introduced in Congress to delay our COLAs every other year, we fought and killed that bill;
- We fought for passage of legislation that established the TRICARE for Life program for military retirees;
- Won the battle to have Medicare subvention demonstration programs at ten military hospitals;
- Won the fight for Survivor Benefit Plan improvements, which included an option to withdraw after two years in the program and a one-time option for those retired more than two years to withdraw from the program;
- Won the fight for the TRICARE Pharmacy program.

### **In 2001 to present:**

- Consistently fight proposals to eliminate commissary subsidies, thereby raising commissary prices and effectively eliminating the commissary benefit;
- Won the fight for Combat-Related Special Compensation;
- Won the fight to give concurrent receipt to all military retirees with VA ratings of 50 percent or greater;
- Won the fight for TRICARE Reserve Select for qualified reserve component members;
- Won the fight for major increases in the Montgomery GI Bill;
- Won the fight to end the SBP - Social Security offset, so SBP payments no longer drop to only 35% of base pay when the recipient reaches age 62.

### **Legislative battles we have been involved in thus far in 2006:**

- Won the fight to stop the imposition of VA health care enrollment fees for category 7 & 8 veterans;
- Won the fight to stop the imposition of TRICARE Standard enrollment fees for military retirees under age 65.
- Won the fight to stop the imposition of TRICARE Prime increase for retirees under age 65.
- Fought for and won the fight to stop the budget of the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center from being slashed in half;
- Fighting to win passage of these bills:

*Veterans Identity and Credit Security Act of 2006*

*Fairness in Asbestos Injury Resolution Act -- FAIR Act*

*The Freedom to Display the American Flag Act of 2005*

*Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006: Section 1312 – Durbin Amendment (Eliminates the pay gap of activated Reservists who are employed by the Federal Government)*

*National Defense Authorization Act of 2007*

*Section 570A – Post-Service Reserve Montgomery GI Bill Eligibility*

*Section 653 - Guard/Reserve Retirement Age*

*Section 682 - Transition Assistance for Returning Guard/Reserve Members*

*Section 648 - Concurrent Receipt for Individually Unemployables*

*Combat-Related Special Compensation for military personnel with less than 20 years of service who were medically-retired because of their combat-incurred disabilities (H.R. 1366).*

*Full concurrent receipt immediately for those with VA disability ratings of 50 percent or higher.*

*Full concurrent receipt for those with VA disability ratings of 40 percent and below.*

*Repeal of the reduction in military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities by the amount of any survivor benefits payable from the VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) program. (SBP-DIC offset) (S.185) (H.R. 808).*

*A two-year acceleration of the implementation date for paid-up SBP coverage.*

*Modify former spouse protection act by basing the divorce award on the grade at the time of the divorce, not on grade at the time of retirement.*

*Full funding of VA medical care.*

*Improve the Montgomery GI Bill and the National Guard and Reserve GI Bill.*

We also attend hearings of various Congressionally appointed commissions that review military benefits, including the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission and the Commission on the Guard and Reserve.

In addition to our battles in Washington, D.C., we are working in the individual states to enhance the benefits of military retirees, including a campaign to eliminate state income tax on military retirement pay.

***UNITED WE STAND***

**The Retired Enlisted Association**

**Legislative Office**

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