

July 13, 2017

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Cicilline
2244 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal and Congressman Cicilline:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of uniformed services and veterans' associations representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members, their families and survivors strongly supports S.646 /H.R. 2631, the "Justice for Servicemembers and Veterans Act", introduced by Senator Blumenthal and Congressman Cicilline. This important bi-cameral bill is a concise, straightforward bill which ensures that our service members and veterans can enforce the rights afforded to them under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Under USERRA veterans and service members, including members of the Reserves and the National Guard, are guaranteed the right to be free of discrimination based on their military service and the right to return to their civilian jobs after serving in the military. Returning service members must be promptly reemployed in the same position they would have attained had they not been absent for military service. If an employer doesn't offer the same pay, benefits or status when a service member comes back from duty, USERRA allows the service member to hold the employer accountable for these violations in court.

However, some service members have been unable to exercise their USERRA rights due to increased use of forced arbitration clauses buried in the fine print of employment contracts. Usually presented on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, these clauses preclude access to the judicial system and instead funnel service members' employment discrimination or wrongful termination USERRA claims into private, costly arbitration systems set up by the same employers. The "Justice for Servicemembers and Veterans Act" gives service members the ability to pursue their USERRA claims in court while preserving the option to enter into an arbitration agreement after a dispute arises.

The Military Coalition strongly urges Congress to quickly pass the "Justice for Servicemembers and Veterans Act." It is important for Congress to guarantee that the men and women who serve in our nation's Uniformed Services can exercise the rights Congress has intended them to have but are currently denied.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition
(Signatures enclosed)

Copies to:

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
131 Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Phil Roe
336 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jon Tester
311 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
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The Honorable Tim Walz
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