

To the Congress of the United States:

My Administration fully supports the underlying objectives of the recommendations that the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (the "Commission") offered in January. These recommendations represent an important step forward in protecting the long-term viability of the All-Volunteer Force, improving quality-of-life for service members and their families, and ensuring the fiscal sustainability of the military compensation and retirement systems.

As I directed in my letter of March 30, my team has worked with the Commission to further analyze the recommendations and identify areas of agreement. At this time I am prepared to support specific proposals for 10 of the Commission's 15 recommendations, either as proposed or with modifications that have been discussed among the Department of Defense, other agencies, and the Commission. These include the following:

- Survivor Benefit Plan
- Financial Education
- Medical Personnel Readiness
- Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs Collaboration
- Child Care
- Service Member Education
- Transition Assistance
- Nutritional Financial Assistance
- Dependent Space-Available Travel
- Report on Military Connected Dependents

In some instances, the Department of Defense is already taking actions to implement these recommendations, and I will direct the Department to develop plans to complete this implementation. In those areas where legislation is required, I expect the Secretary of Defense to transmit to the Congress on my behalf the relevant legislative proposals, which I recommend be enacted without delay.

With respect to the remaining recommendations, given their complexity and our solemn responsibility to ensure that any changes further the objectives above, we will continue working with the Commission to understand how the following proposals would affect the All-Volunteer Force:

- Blended Retirement System
- Reserve Component Duty Statuses
- Exceptional Family Member's Support
- Commissary and Exchange Consolidation

I believe there is merit in all of these recommendations and that they deserve careful consideration and study. I will ensure that the Congress is kept apprised of this ongoing work.

Finally, I agree with the Commission that we need to continue to improve the military health care system. The health care reforms proposed in my Fiscal Year 2016 Budget are a good first step and offer service members, retirees, and their families more control and choice over their health care decisions. This remains a critical issue, and my Administration will work with the

Commission and interested Members of Congress in the coming months to develop additional reform proposals for consideration as part of my Fiscal Year 2017 Budget.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, April 30, 2015.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:27 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 651. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office".

At 4:13 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 43. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds, the rotunda of the Capitol, and Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for official Congressional events surrounding the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to the United States Capitol.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 651. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1498. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Kenneth E. Floyd, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1499. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Department of Energy Process to Consider LNG Export Applications"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1500. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2015-0519); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1501. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of de-

fense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2015-0517); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1502. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14-142); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1503. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Phenol, 2-(2H-benzotriazol-2-yl)-6-dodecyl-4-methyl-; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9925-78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1504. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Azoxystrobin; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9926-24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1505. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "General Permits and Permits by Rule for the Federal Minor New Source Review Program in Indian Country for Five Source Categories" ((RIN2060-AQ95) (FRL No. 9919-85-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1506. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designate Facilities and Pollutants; Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, and the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico; Control of Emissions from Existing Sewage Sludge Incinerator Units" (FRL No. 9927-00-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1507. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to the State Implementation Plan; Stage I Regulations" (FRL No. 99247-10-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1508. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Arkansas; Revisions to the State Implementation Plan; Fee Regulations" (FRL No. 9926-91-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1509. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)" (FRL No. 9926-81-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.