

Senate, and have continuously fought to uphold the promises we have made with the men and women who served on behalf of our Nation. I am continually looking for opportunities to improve the lives of our veterans who have served honorably and have sacrificed, sometimes with their lives, in support of our country.

They deserve every benefit they earned and what we have promised them, but they have suffered a grave injustice in this body. Late last year the Senate, without my support, agreed to a budget that cut retirement benefits of our veterans, reducing the cost-of-living adjustment. I certainly could not support this provision.

Veterans and the American people are rightly upset. I want to share some of the letters I have received from our veterans and other Arkansans. David Mullins from Jonesboro wrote:

I am a 20 year veteran of the United States Army. I retired as a Sergeant First Class and I am currently drawing military retirement. I joined the Army when I was 18 years old and I wouldn't do anything different. Even though it was very hard at times, I know that was what I was supposed to be doing. Less than 1% of the American population serves in the military and of those only about 13% actually retire with 20 years or more of service. So we are talking about less than .02 percent of the population. It is really appalling that, after sacrificing my freedoms to protect those of my fellow citizens, this is how we are treated. America is out of touch.

I agree with David. In a letter I sent to the Armed Services Committee leadership in the House and Senate, I equated retirement compensation cuts to reaching into these individuals' retirement accounts and taking that money from them. This is unconscionable.

Diane from Hot Springs, AR, said in a letter:

I am truly disgusted by the new deal that cuts military pensions but doesn't touch benefits for any of the politicians. I would have no problems if it was an across the board cut. This is the best example of what is wrong with our government. Cut benefits for those that make real sacrifices for their country. They take lower pay and separation from family.

I agree with Diane. It is not fair. Our veterans should not be the ones bearing the burden for irresponsible spending. We need to cut spending and put our country on the path of fiscal responsibility, but it should not come at the expense of our Nation's military retirees. These are the only Americans who are being asked to sacrifice under the budget agreement. It is wrong to single out our servicemembers for what amounts to \$6 billion over 10 years, representing a .02-percent reduction. We need to right this wrong so our military retirees and their families have one less thing to worry about.

Terry Williamson from Jacksonville, AR, wrote:

I just retired from 26 years of active duty serving my country in the Air Force. I must say I was shocked and disappointed to learn that the pay of retirees are being offered up

to be reduced by 1% cost of living as part of the budget deal. I feel that I have lived up to and beyond my part in serving my country. I have not even received my first retirement check and yet already my government is short changing me and all veterans who have served and fulfilled their end of the deal, defending this great nation. I ask you to do what you can to not allow this to happen to a small portion of society that gave more to their country than most.

Terry, we are working to make sure you get the full retirement you earned. We are seeking ways to undo this cut and fully restore military pay.

In January Congress took the first step toward restoring veterans' COLAs with the passage of the Omnibus appropriations bill. This exempted medically retired disabled veterans and survivors from the COLA reductions. But there is more work to do. The good news is we are on your side.

Senator AYOTTE introduced the Keeping Our Promises to Our Military Heroes Act that repeals the COLA reduction for all military retirees. I am certainly proud to support that legislation.

Arkansans want Congress to fully restore military retiree benefits as soon as possible. I am committed to raising this priority at every possible opportunity until justice is realized for these military families. While there has been much discussion about restoring these benefits in future legislation, this should be done at the earliest opportunity in order to provide certainty for our military retirees' financial future.

To our Nation's military retirees, I am committed to this fight. You have earned these benefits. Congress must correct the wrong and restore your full retirement pay. As always, thank you for your service to our country.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HILL FARMSTEAD BREWERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is home to hundreds of world-class small businesses, each of which dots our economic landscape with their unique and often award-winning offerings. Our reputation for quality has made the "Vermont brand" one that is valued and sought after by consumers across the Nation—and increasingly also across the globe. One burgeoning

industry in Vermont is that of craft beer. In fact, the State is becoming almost as well known for its craft beers as it is for its maple syrup.

One such successful small brewery, the Hill Farmstead Brewery, was featured in the January 18, 2014, edition of the New York Times. After a planned expansion next year, the brewery's owner, Shaun Hill, plans to cap production at 150,000 gallons per year. His successful business model, and highly sought after brew, as the article states, "offers lessons in how limiting production can bring success."

Vermont's small-State appeal attracts business owners large and small. The Hill Farmstead Brewery is just one example of the successes Vermont's economy boast. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of "Craft Beer, the (Very) Limited Edition," from the January 18 New York Times be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to appear in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Jan. 18, 2014]
CRAFT BEER, THE (VERY) LIMITED EDITION
(By Claire Martin)

Two weeks ago, a beer drinker in Fresno, Calif., called Hill Farmstead Brewery in Vermont to ask where he could buy its craft beers. "You have to drive to the airport, get a ticket, fly to Burlington, rent a car and drive an hour and a half to the brewery," the owner, Shaun Hill, replied with a laugh. But he wasn't joking.

Hill Farmstead, in the hamlet of Greensboro, produces just 60,000 gallons of beer annually. The beer is available for purchase only at the brewery and in roughly 20 Vermont bars. In addition, Mr. Hill sends 12 kegs to distributors in New York City and Philadelphia a few times a year.

Next year, after several buildings are expanded and new equipment is installed, Mr. Hill plans to cap production at 150,000 gallons a year—forever. (For context, the Russian River Brewing Company, a craft brewery in California, made 437,100 gallons last year, and Dogfish Head Craft Brewery in Delaware produced 6.3 million gallons.)

Hill Farmstead is one of at least three Vermont craft breweries that are churning out small batches of highly sought-after beers and have owners with firm plans to keep the operations small. Mr. Hill's story offers lessons in how limiting production can bring success.

Mr. Hill, 34, has been honing his brewing technique for nearly 20 years. He first learned to make beer for a high school science-fair project, then started a homebrew club in college and later worked as the head brewer at two other Vermont breweries, the Shed and the Trout River Brewing Company, as well as one in Copenhagen, Norrebro Bryghus.

Two beers created during Mr. Hill's tenure at Norrebro Bryghus won gold medals in 2010 at the World Beer Cup, an international beer competition, and a third earned a silver medal.

Several months before these accolades, Mr. Hill returned to Vermont to begin construction on Hill Farmstead Brewery on a former dairy farm that he and his brother, Darren, a woodworker, inherited from their grandfather. "I wanted to make beer, I wanted to live in this place and I wanted to help my family and make sure I had the finances available to take care of this land in perpetuity," Mr. Hill says.