



CHAIR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
RESERVE FORCES POLICY BOARD

5109 Leesburg Pike, Suite 501
Falls Church, VA 22041

February 28, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hegseth:

On behalf of the Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB), thank you for your leadership in supporting the recently re-submitted Reserve Component Duty Status Reform (DSR) legislative proposal to the Office of Management and Budget.

Our nation is increasingly reliant upon the Reserve Component (RC) to support Homeland Defense, Southwest Border security, and other national security priorities. However, today's RC duty status system is overly complex, slow, and not standardized across components. DoD's DSR reform proposal provides overdue and meaningful changes to RC duty statuses that will greatly benefit the Department and over 1 million RC Service members. Once enacted, the proposal will eliminate many of today's pay and benefit inequities and addresses other longstanding problems associated with the current system.

The RFPB has long advocated for DSR as a crucial legislative priority. Since 2013, we have supported the Department's efforts to streamline the current system. As the demand for flexible, integrated force employment continues to grow, enacting DSR will be the most consequential piece of legislation designed to fully optimize the Total Force since 1973.

Key reasons for immediate Duty Status Reform:

1. Operational Readiness and Flexibility

- 30 duty statuses creates unnecessary complexity which interfere with Joint Force Commanders' ability to efficiently activate, train, and deploy reserve personnel.
- Complex and non-standard processes slow access to needed capabilities.

2. Increasing Homeland Defense Mission Requires a Unified Approach

- The increasing focus on defending the homeland requires seamless integration of personnel from across the Total Force.
- A reformed duty status system will allow Department leaders to deploy and redeploy the right mix of forces to achieve success with fewer bureaucratic delays.

3. Cost Efficiency and Bureaucratic/Administrative Streamlining

- The complexity of managing multiple duty statuses results in administrative inefficiencies, delayed compensation, and unnecessary costs to the Department.

3. Service Member Benefit Unity; Enhancing Recruiting and Retention

- Reservists and National Guard members frequently perform the same missions yet receive disparate pay, benefits, and legal protections based solely on the authority under which they were activated.
- Standardizing duty statuses facilitates fair treatment for service members and their families, improving recruiting and retention.

Thank you for your leadership in re-submitting DSR as one of your top legislative priorities. The RFPB stands ready to assist the Department and will continue to advocate for its enactment to ensure the Total Force is optimized to fight and win.

If you have questions or would like additional information, I can be reached directly at (703) 717-8676 or by email at lisa.s.disbrow@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa S. Disbrow', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Hon. Lisa S. Disbrow
Chair