

## 5/10/2005 Moran Continues Work on Behalf of Kansas Guard and Reservists

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Sponsors Legislation to Lower Retirement Age, Improve Retirement Opportunities

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced that he is continuing his efforts to better provide for members of the Kansas National Guard and Reserve and their families by sponsoring legislation to lower the retirement age and help troops in combat save for retirement. Today, nearly 40 percent of the troops currently serving in Iraq are from the reserve component.

"Today's soldier, fighting to keep our country safe from terror, is not just enlisted men and women - it's the local teacher, banker or small business owner who is part of the National Guard and Reserves," Moran said. "As we call upon these citizen soldiers more and more to serve in the line of fire, we need to make sure that the benefits they receive reflect their sacrifice."

Moran is a sponsor of H.R. 783, which lowers the age for receipt of retirement pay for Guard and Reservists from 60 to 55. Guard and Reserve members are currently ineligible to receive retirement pay until they reach age 60, regardless of the age they actually retire. However, active duty forces have no age restrictions once their 20 years of service is complete. This legislation would allow members of the National Guard and the Reserve to qualify at age 55 for retirement pay, thus making the system fairer. It will also help recruit and retain reserve component members by offering a more equitable retirement compared to their active component counterparts.

Moran has also sponsored H.R. 1499, the Heroes Earned Retirement Opportunities (HERO) Act. This legislation makes adjustments in the federal tax code to allow combat soldiers to make contributions to their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). Currently, wages paid to soldiers serving in a combat zone are not eligible for IRA contributions. As deployment times have grown longer, many soldiers' compensation consists entirely of hazard pay. The HERO Act works to ensure that the men and women defending our country are not excluded from planning for their retirement by making hazard pay eligible for contribution to retirement accounts.

"Despite ranking thirty-third nationally in population, Kansas ranks eighth nationally in number of troops per capita deployed from the Guard and Reservists," Moran concluded. These citizen soldiers deserve our support."

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