



Military Officers Association of America
New Hampshire Chapter
P.O. Box 712, Dover, NH 03821

Army

Navy

Air Force

Marine Corps

Coast Guard

NOAA

USPHS

February 17, 2019

The Honorable Margaret W. Hassan
330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Senator Hassan,

We are writing on behalf of our 700-member organization to seek your commitment to help us prevent disproportional TRICARE For Life fee increases.

CBO recently published its annual list of budget strategies for you to consider in this year's budget deliberations. The report lists TRICARE For Life as a target for significant fee increases to help reduce the deficit and offset readiness and other programs.

We have been repeatedly told by Congress and the Defense Department (DoD) that retiree health care costs are spiraling out of control and we don't pay enough for our own health care. This is simply not true.

DoD's own data shows about one-third of the defense budget is allocated to personnel and health care costs – the same share it has been for more than 38 years. That's no more affordable now than in the past. The difference is attributable to rising institutional and readiness costs. This is why Congress – not DoD – should determine appropriate TRICARE fees.

Even more telling, since 2011 OMB's own data shows personnel and health care growth has not just slowed but actually declined. Yet calls for more cuts continue. And this does not even address the non-quantifiable factor that military retirees, through our service and sacrifice, have paid in full for our TRICARE For Life benefits.

Throughout our long careers we have witnessed other attempts to balance the budget on the backs of service members and our families. And each time the impact was predictable: recruiting, retention and morale suffered and the cost to recover from those mistakes far exceeded the cost of maintaining quality personnel and health care programs in the first place.

We believe the nation desires and cherishes its all-volunteer-force. We also believe the American people are willing to pay for an all-volunteer-force. Chipping away at personnel and health care programs saps morale, breaks trust with those who send us into harms way, and takes us down the slippery slope toward something less than a professional, all-volunteer-force.

Thank you for your continued support of our New Hampshire veterans. We look forward to your response and help in protecting TRICARE For Life.

Sincerely,

F. Warren Coulter
Captain, USN (Ret.)
President