



Dear Save Our Benefit Member:

The Senate Armed Services Committee's version of the Defense bill drastically cuts critical commissary funding and makes legislative changes enabling these cuts... and goes further in setting in motion privatization of these operations.

Attacking this benefit is just plain wrong! This benefit is important to military families. They save on average 30 percent on their groceries, and at some locations as much as 50 percent or even higher. It is critical to helping military families make ends meet while providing their families with wholesome and healthy food.

The Senate Committee's actions **will destroy this benefit that the military has provided for over 100 years, putting thousands of military family members out of work** at the same time the Administration and the Department of Defense is instituting programs to get more family members and veterans hired.

The Committee also **plans to privatize the stores to outside profit making grocery chains**, squandering billions of dollars worth of commissary stores that military families have paid for out of their own pockets. We fear private industry will cherry-pick the larger military grocery stores and set the smaller ones adrift, disrupting the existing supply chain that anchors support for overseas and remote U.S. stores.

We understand the need to reduce costs and commissaries have done just that – reducing the cost of operations nearly 40 percent. If all Defense programs were this efficient, we wouldn't have a budget problem.

The Committee action ignores and is in direct opposition to a Commission that the Committee ***itself*** authorized to look at the problem just over one year ago, and after thorough analysis concluded that the benefit was valued and worth preserving.

The cuts occur without the benefit of a report that the Committee ***itself*** requested and hasn't yet been provided to Congress.

The Committee actions also **threaten the financial viability of exchange operations**, which will see a near 75 percent drop in earnings and a \$200 million drop in dividends – affecting their ability to finance a multitude of military community support programs.

We continue to urge Congress to study the facts, and assess the broad range of direct and indirect consequences before allowing radical and irreversible changes to these critical EARNED benefits!

Please urge your Senators to:

- Maintain commissary funding at its current level and reject the plan for privatizing the commissary system and pilot program.
- Support Senator Inhofe's amendment calling for a report to assess the viability of privatizing the commissary system prior to the development of any plans to pilot programs to privatize commissaries without careful analysis.

We've written the letters for you and it only takes 60 seconds. Every voice counts!

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