



E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U. S. NAVY (RET.)

19 April 1988

The Honorable Sam Nunn
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Nunn:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support in amending some aspects of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, specifically, certain provisions affecting joint officer management.

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend a briefing in the Pentagon on the provisions of Title IV and was impressed with the commitment, evident in all quarters, to the implementation of that particularly exacting law. As a former Service Chief, it is my considered judgment that you have successfully impressed the leadership with the essentiality of quality performance within the joint arena.

I am personally concerned, however, at the unplanned, yet potentially real negative impact on warfighting capability and knowledge that I believe is likely to result from the lengthy time that must now be devoted to joint education and joint assignments. A 10-month education requirement (more likely 12 months given associated travel and leave requirements) followed (immediately for one-half of the joint education graduates) by a 3-1/2 year tour of joint duty means that the aspiring joint specialty officer will have been away from his/her Service for a minimum of 4-1/2 years. The rapidity with which weapons and doctrine change

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today argues that such a hiatus in Service experience will have officers considerably behind the power curve. While I understand the critical occupational specialty latitude you have built into the 1987 amendments, I believe that provides a 2 year vice 3-1/2 tour opportunity for only a relatively small number of the total officers assigned to Joint Duty billets. Further, many of these COS officers will have to return later to joint duty to satisfy the "pay-back" for their prior earlier release.

I would ask you to consider restoring some increased flexibility to the Services so that they can continue to perform their mission and to develop their officers operationally as well as through joint education and experience. I strongly support the reduction of tour lengths to a maximum of 3 years for O-4 - O-6 personnel and to 2 years for flag officers. I personally would have asked for even greater flexibility of 2-3 months on either end of those tours, based on operational needs and the need for latitude to manage the more than 300,000 officers now serving in all Services.

Further, I recommend that you favorably consider the OSD request to grandfather officers who serviced joint tours prior to the enactment of the law in order to allow them credit under the rules that prevailed during the time of their assignment. Otherwise, the law will work an injustice to those officers, create a negative morale factor and potentially preclude from consideration for flag/general officer some top notch folks. Clearly this problem will be eliminated with the passage of time, but, in the near term, your decision to grandfather will make a big difference to your military constituents who are trying to measure up to the law's stipulations.

In conclusion, I am concerned about the likely synergy of the specific provisions of Title IV. Because of its level of detail, unforeseen and unforeseeable consequences that can be extremely detrimental to the quality of our officer corps and to our Service capabilities may ensue. In your deliberations I ask you to

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be particularly mindful of that potential and to consider, alternatively, providing OSD your broad objectives and allowing the Department and its Service components to build workable plans to achieve your goals. Based on my observations, you have the commitment of the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman, and Service Chiefs to meet your goals in spirit and to the absolute letter of the law.

Sincerely,



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bc. RADM Roberta Hazard, USN

Same letter sent to: The Honorable Bill Dickinson
The Honorable John Warner
The Honorable Les Aspin
The Honorable Sonny Montgomery
The Honorable Marvin Leath
The Honorable Ike Skelton
The Honorable Larry Hopkins
The Honorable Herb Bateman
The Honorable Beverly Byron