

23 JULY 1981

STATEMENT BY  
REAR ADMIRAL SIDNEY B. VAUGHN  
U. S. COAST GUARD

BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

U. S. SENATE  
FIRST SESSION, 97th CONGRESS

ON

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS AND THE  
ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL IN OUR ARMED FORCES

MR. CHAIRMAN, IT IS A PLEASURE TO APPEAR BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE TO TESTIFY ON THE TOPIC OF EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVES FOR OUR RESERVISTS.

LET ME BEGIN BY SAYING THAT THE COAST GUARD STRONGLY ENDORSES APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVES THAT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE SECURITY OF OUR NATION'S FUTURE BY ATTRACTING AND RETAINING QUALITY PEOPLE FOR MILITARY SERVICE.

I BELIEVE THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR RESERVE COMPONENTS AS A PART OF OUR TOTAL FORCE CONCEPT HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR IN RECENT YEARS. THIS WAS GRAPHICALLY DEMONSTRATED IN 1980 WHEN OUR COAST GUARD RESOURCES WERE STRAINED BY THE DEMANDS OF THE CUBAN REFUGEE OPERATIONS IN THE STRAITS OF FLORIDA. BETWEEN JUNE 3, 1980, WHEN THE PRESIDENT APPROVED AN INVOLUNTARY RECALL OF COAST GUARD RESERVISTS, AND SEPTEMBER 30, 1980, WHEN RESERVE PARTICIPATION WAS OFFICIALLY TERMINATED, OVER 1,800 INDIVIDUAL COAST GUARD RESERVISTS, VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY, AUGMENTED COAST GUARD FORCES IN MEETING THIS CRISIS. WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THEIR PERFORMANCE WAS CLEARLY OUTSTANDING.

THIS IS THE CALIBER OF PEOPLE WE WANT IN THE COAST GUARD RESERVE; THESE ARE THE PEOPLE TO WHOM CAREER INCENTIVES MUST BE DIRECTED.

WHEN CONSIDERING LEGISLATION THAT WILL PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVES TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE COMPONENTS, I WOULD URGE YOU TO REMEMBER THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF THEIR SERVICE. WITHIN THE COAST

GUARD RESERVE THERE IS A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION THAT HAS NO PRIOR ACTIVE DUTY. THIS IN NO WAY DETRACTS FROM THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO MOBILIZATION READINESS. THEY ARE SELECTIVELY RECRUITED TO MEET SPECIFIC SKILL REQUIREMENTS AND ARE EQUALLY WORTHY OF YOUR CONSIDERATION.

THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS WILL FAVORABLY AFFECT RESERVE MANNING. IN DEVELOPING THESE INCENTIVES WE MUST BE SURE THAT THEY ARE ORIENTED TO SELECTIVELY ATTRACTING AND RETAINING QUALITY PEOPLE TO RESERVE SERVICE IN A VERY COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT.

THE ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDS THAT NO ACTION BE TAKEN UNTIL THE RESULTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TESTS AND STUDIES OF THE POST-VIET NAM ERA EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. THE COAST GUARD WILL CAREFULLY EXAMINE THOSE RESULTS AS THEY MAY APPLY TO THE RESERVE PROGRAM.

MR. CHAIRMAN, THAT CONCLUDES MY PREPARED STATEMENT. I WILL BE PLEASED TO RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.