



June 4, 2015

The Honorable James Inhofe
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Inhofe and Senator Mikulski:

The National Military Family Association has long been an advocate for improving the quality of life of service members and their families, who have sacrificed greatly in support of our Nation. One of our highest priorities is protecting military families' earned benefits, including the savings achieved by shopping at the commissary. For this reason, we support your amendment to S. 1376, *the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016*, which would require a report assessing the viability of privatizing the commissary system before implementing any such changes.

Military families often tell us how much they value the commissary benefit. However, they realize the value of the benefit is not the physical presence of a store on an installation, but rather in the savings the commissary provides. The commissary benefit is a vital element of military compensation. Any reduction in the savings military families receive through the commissary is effectively a cut to military pay. For this reason, we oppose the proposal in S. 1376 to privatize selected commissaries. We fear this plan would lead to higher prices for military families and potentially disrupt the complex military resale system. The commissary system works well and provides military families a substantial benefit at relatively low cost to the Department of Defense. Altering this benefit in any significant way must not be done without careful study and consideration.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation to protect the quality of life of military families. If we can be of assistance in your efforts to support military families or if you have any questions or need further information, please contact Eileen Huck in our Government Relations Department at (703) 931-6632 or EHuck@militaryfamily.org.

The National Military Family Association is the leading nonprofit dedicated to serving the families who stand behind the uniform. Since 1969, NMFA has worked to strengthen and protect millions of families through its advocacy and programs. They provide spouse scholarships, camps for military kids, and retreats for families reconnecting after deployment and for the families of the wounded, ill, or injured. NMFA serves the families of the currently serving, retired, wounded or fallen members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Commissioned Corps of the USPHS and NOAA.

Sincerely,

Joyce Wessel Raezer
Executive Director