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## **Army Warrant Officers Join Fight to Protect Troops and Family Benefits**

**Washington, D.C. (February 11, 2013)** – Army Warrant Officers from around the globe are stepping up to help protect commissary and exchange benefits for service members, veterans, and their families. *The Coalition to Save Our Military Shopping Benefits* announced today that the United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA) has joined the growing number of military and veterans service organizations who have recently become Valued Associate members of the Coalition.

USAWOA and fellow advocacy organizations have become increasingly concerned that budget cutters in and outside of Congress want to eliminate the taxpayer subsidy for commissaries, consolidate the commissary and exchange systems, raise prices, and close commissaries and exchanges stateside. Some members of Congress even propose giving active duty service members a \$400 cash allowance in lieu of the benefit – retirees, Medal of Honor recipients, and survivors would get nothing. USAWOA is urging Army Warrant Officers to respond to these attacks and to join the Coalition as individual members.

“It is morally wrong to deprive young troops and retirees, on meager fixed incomes, of the affordable groceries and products on which they have depended for a century or more,” said CW4 Jack Du Teil, USAWOA Executive Director. “We must all fight to protect these critical benefits for those who have given the most and asked the least in return.”

“USAWOA is a strong advocate for protecting these “quality of life” benefits for our service members and their families, and we welcome their valuable support,” said Patrick Nixon, President of *The Coalition to Save Our Military Shopping Benefits*. “USAWOA understands that the military resale system is too important of a benefit to lose. Not only does it save military patrons \$4.5 billion annually, it also contributes billions of dollars to military communities through vital MWR programs,” added Nixon.

Millions of service members, veterans, and their families rely on commissaries and exchanges to stretch their household budgets. An average military family of four can save \$7,000 a year. In remote and overseas locations, it is often the only affordable shopping opportunity available. In metropolitan areas, where prices are consistently higher, commissaries and exchanges help keep prices affordable. For some junior enlisted military families and fixed income retirees, savings are the difference between making ends meet and filing for public assistance. No wonder the military community consistently ranks commissaries and exchanges as one of their most important non-pay benefits.

USAWOA is the only military service organization thoroughly devoted to the welfare of Army Warrant Officers – serving, former and retired – and their families. In its brief forty year history, USAWOA has decisively impacted a remarkable evolution of Army Warrant Officers into the professional, technical, commissioned leaders that they are today. USAWOA provides social and professional opportunities for its members through its local chapters worldwide.

Organizations, service members and their families, veterans, and concerned citizens who wish to join *The Coalition to Save Our Military Shopping Benefits* or to learn more, please visit [www.SaveOurBenefit.org](http://www.SaveOurBenefit.org).