



Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service

February 8, 2017

KIA Motors America
111 Peters Canyon Rd
Irvine, CA 92606

Dear KIA:

I am writing to you as the representative of officers who serve in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) to request that you include them in your military/veterans discount program. If you are like most people you probably don't know anything about the USPHS. Let me start by saying that it is an all-officer corps of 6600 professionals that has existed since 1889. Its members comprise one of the seven federal uniformed services, along with the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, etc. Its members are given a commission by the President, just like officers in the armed forces. They wear Navy uniforms with PHS insignia, unless they serve the Coast Guard, in which case they wear Coast Guard uniforms.

They receive military pay and allowances, shop at exchanges and commissaries, and receive medical care for themselves and their families through either a military treatment facility or TRICARE—just like those serving in the armed forces. They deploy domestically and overseas just as do members of the armed forces, and almost 900 of them have deployed with the U.S. military to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Surgeon General of the Coast Guard is a USPHS admiral. They are veterans under federal law and are entitled to be buried in VA cemeteries. They were recognized in the ceremony program at Arlington National Cemetery this past November 11.

About the only thing that distinguishes them from the U.S. military is that they generally go unarmed, which is standard for medical personnel under the Geneva Convention. Doctors and nurses and other military medical personnel are also usually not under arms.

The USPHS is an all-officer cadre, so you would be attracting a group of men and women with high, steady incomes. Their demographic is one that any vehicle manufacturer would be pleased to reach, as these are folks who can afford to purchase top-of-the-line vehicles and who have absolutely the highest credit ratings.

KIA is not the first private sector corporation to whom we have reached out on behalf of these officers. We did the same with the Disney Corporation, which had long excluded USPHS officers from its "Military Salute" program. Disney has now embraced our contention that these officers deserve the same discounts as are given to members of the military.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions relating to this request.

Sincerely,

Col. James T. Currie, USA (ret.)
Executive Director