

May 22, 2017

The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hatch:

ROA supports your bill S. 1086, which removes the prohibition on eligibility for TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) of members of the reserve components who are eligible to enroll in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code.

Currently Guard and Reserve technicians go in and out of their civilian and military health plans when they go on active duty orders. This causes disruptions to medical care in the form of different treatment strategies and prescriptions. They also have difficulty maintaining continuity of care when they change doctors or health care plans. Your bill will allow technicians to participate in TRICARE Reserve Select and maintain the same provider by selecting a TRICARE-authorized provider.

A reserve commander recently said, *"I'm bleeding ARTS as are other units for varying reasons. One of them is the health care options. My airline pilots and professional civilian workers in every industry who make twice what the ARTS do have the ability to use TRICARE select option but my RESERVISTS that are also civilian employees on the part A side (ARTs) are not."* Once your bill is passed, commanders will be able to use TRS as a recruiting tool for technicians.

The shortages of ARTS impacts capability. Lieutenant General Miller explained at a Senate hearing, *"Our full-time maintenance manning is 80 percent, with a shortfall of 1,500 full-time maintainers. We have been successful in retaining our traditional reserve maintenance force and are manned at 100 percent but our shortfall in full time maintainers, coupled with the unrelenting demand for air power, are contributing to our decrease in aircraft availability rates and training and support to all flying operations."*

ROA has a membership of 50,000 and is the only national military association that exclusively supports all the uniformed reserve components of the United States. Thank you for your efforts on this issue, and your support of our veterans. Please have your staff call Susan Lukas, ROA's legislative director, at 202-646-7713 or e-mail at [slukas@roa.org](mailto:slukas@roa.org) with any question or issue you would like to discuss.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey E. Phillips  
Maj. Gen., USA (Ret.)  
Executive Director