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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 17, 2012

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FRA Urges Members to Oppose Healthcare Fee Hikes

In response to the Administration's recently announced proposal to significantly increase healthcare fees for military retirees in FY 2013 and beyond, the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) is urging its members to express opposition to lawmakers in Washington.

The Department of Defense budget plan includes substantial fee increases for younger retirees participating in the military's TRICARE Prime program, a new annual enrollment fee and increasing deductibles for TRICARE Standard and Extra beneficiaries, and establishes an enrollment fee for the first time for retirees and family members over age 65 who participate in the TRICARE-for-Life healthcare program. In addition to tiered enrollment fees that will nearly quadruple over the next five years for some beneficiaries, the plan calls for significant increases in pharmacy co-pays. These increases would be in addition to the 13-percent TRICARE Prime fee hike imposed for this year and future annual increases that will be indexed to medical inflation after FY 2016.

"Our members understand the need to reduce government spending, however FRA believes military retirees are being asked to shoulder an unfair portion of the pain associated with resolving the country's budget crisis," explains Joe Barnes, FRA's national executive director, who points out that there are some federal departments and agencies slated to receive increased funding in the coming fiscal year.

"Military service is unlike any other occupation or career field and many retirees – particularly older, career enlisted personnel – endured 20 or more years of arduous service at low pay based on assurances they would be provided certain benefits at retirement," continued Barnes. "More specifically, many were promised free healthcare for life in return for a career of service to our nation. Their healthcare coverage is an earned benefit and the Administration's budget certainly breaks faith with military retirees."

FRA is urging its members and others to use the Association's online Action Center to urge their elected officials to honor commitments made to those who served in the past and safeguard the interests of those serving today and in the future. To send a pre-written letter opposing significant increases in TRICARE fees, visit www.fra.org/tricarefee.

About FRA

FRA is a congressionally chartered, non-profit organization representing the interests of current and former enlisted members of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. In addition to its advocacy work on Capitol Hill, FRA also sponsors a national Americanism Essay Contest and assists its members with disaster relief grants. The Association also sponsors an Education Foundation that awards scholarships to deserving college students.

The Association recently celebrated its 87th anniversary and, as the collective voice for all Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard enlisted personnel, FRA speaks on behalf of its members on Capitol Hill. There is no law protecting military benefits, so FRA is here to stand guard.

To learn more about FRA, visit www.fra.org; follow us on Twitter at [@FRAHQ](https://twitter.com/FRAHQ); or Like us on Facebook at www.fra.org/fb.