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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 2, 2012

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## **FRA Presents 2012 Pinnacle Award**

The FRA (Fleet Reserve Association) recently presented its 2012 Pinnacle Award to California Congressman Bob Filner during a Capitol Hill reception in his honor. FRA National President Jeffrey Gilmartin and Auxiliary National President Gini Larson presented the award in recognition of the lawmaker's efforts to improve the quality of life for military personnel and veterans. FRA annually presents its Pinnacle Award to a member of Congress who has championed legislative initiatives that advance the Association's agenda of preserving and enhancing pay and benefits for current and former members of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

Kimberly Ross, Democratic staff director and counsel for the House Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, accepted the award on the congressman's behalf at the presentation ceremony that was held in conjunction with FRA's annual Storm-the-Hill event. Members of FRA's board of directors and other Association leaders visited their respective members of Congress to seek support for priority legislative issues, including exempting DoD from future sequestration budget cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act of 2011, opposition to drastic increases in healthcare fees for military retirees and proposals to reform/reduce military retirement benefits, as well advocacy for more timely determinations on claims for veterans' benefits and expanded presumptions for Agent Orange exposure.

Among other initiatives, Rep. Filner sponsored the Agent Orange Equity Act (H.R. 812), a bill that seeks to reverse the VA's policy that currently prevents many "Blue Water" veterans from receiving disability benefits related to illnesses related to exposure to Agent Orange. Current policy limits presumption for exposure to those who had "boots on the ground" or served on Vietnam's inland waterways. Those who served off the coast of Vietnam – many of whom are FRA shipmates who served in the Navy and Coast Guard – are not currently eligible for disability compensation for illnesses related to Agent Orange exposure.

### **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.

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