

“(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall carry out a joint family support assistance program for the purpose of providing to families of members of the Armed Forces the following types of assistance:

“(1) Financial and material assistance.

“(2) Mobile support services.

“(3) Sponsorship of volunteers and family support professionals for the delivery of support services.

“(4) Coordination of family assistance programs and activities provided by Military OneSource, Military Family Life Consultants, counselors, the Department of Defense, other Federal agencies, State and local agencies, and non-profit entities.

“(5) Facilitation of discussion on military family assistance programs, activities, and initiatives between and among the organizations, agencies, and entities referred to in paragraph (4).

“(6) Such other assistance that the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(b) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary of Defense shall carry out the program in not less than six areas of the United States selected by the Secretary. At least three of the areas selected for the program shall be areas that are geographically isolated from military installations.

“(c) RESOURCES AND VOLUNTEERS.—The Secretary of Defense shall provide personnel and other resources of the Department of Defense necessary for the implementation and operation of the program and may accept and utilize the services of non-Government volunteers and non-profit entities under the program.

“(d) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish procedures for the operation of the program and for the provision of assistance to families of members of the Armed Forces under the program.

“(e) RELATION TO FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS.—The program is not intended to operate in lieu of existing family support centers, but is instead intended to augment the activities of the family support centers.

“(f) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—

“(1) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which funds are first obligated for the program, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a report setting forth a plan for the implementation of the program.

“(2) ELEMENTS.—The plan required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) A description of the actions taken to select the areas in which the program will be conducted.

“(B) A description of the procedures established under subsection (d).

“(C) A review of proposed actions to be taken under the program to improve coordination of family assistance program and activities between and among the Department of Defense, other Federal agencies, State and local agencies, and non-profit entities.

“(g) REPORT.—

“(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which funds are first obligated for the program, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a report on the program.

“(2) ELEMENTS.—The report shall include the following:

“(A) A description of the program, including the areas in which the program is conducted, the procedures established under subsection (d) for operation of the program, and the assistance provided through the program for families of members of the Armed Forces.

“(B) An assessment of the effectiveness of the program in providing assistance to families of members of the Armed Forces.

“(C) An assessment of the advisability of extending the program or making it permanent.

“(h) DURATION.—The authority to carry out the program shall expire on December 31, 2012.”

#### RECOGNITION OF MILITARY FAMILIES

Pub. L. 108-136, div. A, title V, § 581, Nov. 24, 2003, 117 Stat. 1489, provided that:

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

“(1) The families of both active and reserve component members of the Armed Forces, through their sacrifices and their dedication to the Nation and its values, contribute immeasurably to the readiness of the Armed Forces.

“(2) Without the continued support of military families, the Nation’s ability to sustain a high quality all-volunteer military force would be undermined.

“(3) In the perilous and challenging times of the global war on terrorism, with hundreds of thousands of active and reserve component military personnel deployed overseas in places of combat and other imminent danger, military families are making extraordinary sacrifices and will be required to do so for the foreseeable future.

“(4) Beginning in 1997, military family service and support centers have responded to the encouragement and support of private, non-profit organizations to recognize and honor the American military family during the Thanksgiving period each November.

“(b) MILITARY FAMILY RECOGNITION.—In view of the findings in subsection (a), Congress determines that it is appropriate that special measures be taken annually to recognize and honor the American military family.

“(c) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of Defense shall—

“(1) implement and sustain programs, including appropriate ceremonies and activities, to recognize and honor the contributions and sacrifices of the American military family, including families of both active and reserve component military personnel;

“(2) focus the celebration of the American military family during a specific period of each year to give full and proper recognition to those families; and

“(3) seek the assistance and support of appropriate civilian organizations, associations, and other entities (A) in carrying out the annual celebration of the American military family, and (B) in sustaining other, longer-term efforts to support the American military family.”

#### § 1781a. Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is in the Department of Defense the Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council (in this section referred to as the “Council”).

(b) MEMBERS.—(1) The Council shall consist of the following members:

(A) The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, who shall serve as chair of the Council and who may designate a representative to chair the council in the Under Secretary’s absence.

(B) The following persons, who shall be appointed or designated by the Secretary of Defense:

(i) One representative of each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, each of whom shall be a member of the armed force to be represented.

(ii) One representative of the Army National Guard or the Air National Guard, who may be a member of the National Guard.

(iii) One spouse or parent of a member of each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, two of whom shall be the spouse or parent of an active component member

and two of whom shall be the spouse or parent of a reserve component member.

(C) Three individuals appointed by the Secretary of Defense from among representatives of military family organizations, including military family organizations of families of members of the regular components and of families of members of the reserve components.

(D) The senior enlisted advisor from each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, except that two of these members may instead be selected from among the spouses of the senior enlisted advisors.

(E) The Director of the Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs.

(2)(A) The term on the Council of the members appointed or designated under clauses (i) and (iii) of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) shall be two years and may be renewed by the Secretary of Defense. Representation on the Council under clause (ii) of that subparagraph shall rotate between the Army National Guard and Air National Guard every two years on a calendar year basis.

(B) The term on the Council of the members appointed under subparagraph (C) of paragraph (1) shall be three years.

(c) MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet not less often than twice each year.

(d) DUTIES.—The duties of the Council shall include the following:

(1) To review and make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding the policy and plans required under section 1781b of this title.

(2) To monitor requirements for the support of military family readiness by the Department of Defense.

(3) To evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the military family readiness programs and activities of the Department of Defense.

(e) ANNUAL REPORTS.—(1) Not later than February 1 each year, the Council shall submit to the Secretary of Defense and the congressional defense committees a report on military family readiness.

(2) Each report under this subsection shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of the military family readiness programs and activities of the Department of Defense during the preceding fiscal year in meeting the needs and requirements of military families.

(B) Recommendations on actions to be taken to improve the capability of the military family readiness programs and activities of the Department of Defense to meet the needs and requirements of military families, including actions relating to the allocation of funding and other resources to and among such programs and activities.

(Added Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title V, § 581(a), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 120; amended Pub. L. 111-84, div. A, title V, § 562, Oct. 28, 2009, 123 Stat. 2303; Pub. L. 111-383, div. A, title V, § 581, Jan. 7, 2011, 124 Stat. 4226; Pub. L. 112-81, div. A, title V, § 574, Dec. 31, 2011, 125 Stat. 1427.)

## AMENDMENTS

2011—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 112-81 amended subsec. (b) generally. Prior to amendment, subsec. (b) related to members.

Subsec. (b)(1)(B). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(d)(1)(A), struck out “, who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense” after “Air Force”.

Subsec. (b)(1)(C). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(d)(1)(B), struck out “, who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense” after “Air National Guard” in cl. (i) and after “Air Force Reserve” in cl. (ii).

Subsec. (b)(1)(D). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(d)(1)(C), struck out “by the Secretary of Defense” after “appointed”.

Subsec. (b)(1)(E). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(a)(1)(B), added subpar. (E). Former subpar. (E) redesignated (F).

Subsec. (b)(1)(F). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(c), amended subpar. (F) generally. Prior to amendment, subpar. (F) read as follows: “In addition to the representatives appointed under subparagraphs (B) and (C), the senior enlisted advisors of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, or the spouse of a senior enlisted member from each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force.”

Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(a)(1)(A), redesignated subpar. (E) as (F).

Subsec. (b)(1)(G). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(b), added subpar. (G).

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(a)(2), substituted “subparagraphs (C), (D), and (E)” for “subparagraphs (C) and (D)”.

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 111-383, § 581(d)(2), added par. (3).

2009—Subsec. (b)(1)(C) to (E). Pub. L. 111-84, § 562(a), added subpar. (C), redesignated former subpars. (C) and (D) as (D) and (E), respectively, and substituted “subparagraphs (B) and (C)” for “subparagraph (B)” in subpar. (E).

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 111-84, § 562(b), substituted “subparagraphs (C) and (D) of paragraph (1)” for “paragraph (1)(C)” and inserted at end “Representation on the Council required by clause (i) of paragraph (1)(C) shall rotate between the Army National Guard and Air National Guard. Representation required by clause (ii) of such paragraph shall rotate among the reserve components specified in such clause.”

### § 1781b. Department of Defense policy and plans for military family readiness

(a) POLICY AND PLANS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall develop a policy and plans for the Department of Defense for the support of military family readiness.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the policy and plans required under subsection (a) are as follows:

(1) To ensure that the military family readiness programs and activities of the Department of Defense are comprehensive, effective, and properly supported.

(2) To ensure that support is continuously available to military families in peacetime and in war, as well as during periods of force structure change and relocation of military units.

(3) To ensure that the military family readiness programs and activities of the Department of Defense are available to all military families, including military families of members of the regular components and military families of members of the reserve components.

(4) To make military family readiness an explicit element of applicable Department of Defense plans, programs, and budgeting activities, and that achievement of military family