

1           A JOINT RESOLUTION urging the United States Department of Defense and the  
2 federal government to protect the earned benefits of our veterans from retaliatory and  
3 punitive measures.

4           WHEREAS, the people of Kentucky recognize and celebrate the patriotic service  
5 and community contributions of the more than 370,000 Kentucky veterans and their  
6 families, totaling over one million residents, who call our great Commonwealth their  
7 home; and

8           WHEREAS, in recognition of their vital contribution to our state economy and  
9 local communities, we voice full support for the preservation and protection of their  
10 earned benefits from any punitive elimination or reduction of their retiree pay, veteran  
11 healthcare, or disability compensation for any exercise of their First Amendment right of  
12 free speech; and

13           WHEREAS, Kentucky veterans have faithfully served the nation and we steadfastly  
14 honor their service by protecting their honorably earned benefits; and

15           WHEREAS, any punitive risk that unjustly threatens Kentucky veterans' benefits  
16 would severely impact our 370,000 veterans and their families, who represent 25 percent  
17 of our population; and

18           WHEREAS, threats to recall any veteran into active duty for the purpose of  
19 conducting a court martial to downgrade or eliminate justly earned benefits sets a  
20 dangerous precedent for any and all veterans stating that their earned benefits could be  
21 subject to arbitrary and capricious administrative action by the United States Department  
22 of Defense or the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

23           WHEREAS, protected First Amendment speech doesn't require agreement to be  
24 protected, and its exercise should never be used against a person to threaten, intimidate,  
25 or provoke action. Retaliatory threats against protected speech are a valid concern that  
26 warrants action from the Commonwealth to protect its veterans; and

27           WHEREAS, to disenfranchise one veteran can disenfranchise all veterans;

1           NOW, THEREFORE,

2           *Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3           ➔Section 1. The General Assembly hereby urges the United States Department of  
4 Defense and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to protect the earned  
5 benefits of veterans now and into the future from retaliatory and punitive political action.

6           ➔Section 2. The General Assembly stands with our military veterans in  
7 advocating for their right to free speech and the protection of their earned retirement,  
8 healthcare, and disability benefits from specious claims.

9           ➔Section 3. The General Assembly condemns any course of action that would  
10 deny or revoke earned military benefits unjustly for political gain.

11           ➔Section 4. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit  
12 copies of this Resolution to Representative Pamela Stevenson and to the Kentucky  
13 congressional delegation.