Back in the air again

Oregon F-15s given green light following structural inspections

Story by Capt. Lucas Ritter, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. – After more than two months of being grounded, Klamath Falls' fighter jets once again took to the air Jan. 10. The 173rd Fighter Wing's F-15s have been grounded since Nov. 2 after an F-15 from the St Louis Air National Guard broke apart during flight and crashed. Since then all F-15 units around the country have been conducting a series of inspections to look for potential cracks that might have caused the St. Louis plane to come apart.

"It will be good to be back flying, getting the mission done," said Col. Tom Schiess, 173rd Fighter Wing commander. "We have been utilizing our simulators everyday to keep students and instructors up to speed. However, nothing replaces getting in the jet."

The decision to resume flying operations follows detailed information briefed on Jan. 4 to Air Combat Command from the Air Force's F-15 Systems Program Manager, senior engineers from Boeing and the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, as well as a briefing received on Jan. 10 from the Accident Investigation Board president.

See OREGON on PAGE 5

Oregon Guard takes top honors in national environmental security

Story by Mary Jane Jacobsen, Oregon Military Department Installations Division Environmental Branch

For the second year in a row, the Oregon Army National Guard has been selected as a first-place recipient in the National Environmental Security Awards competition.

Mr. Jim Arnold, Restoration Manager for the Installations Division Environmental Branch of the ORARNG, received a first-place award in the Oregon Military Department's Environmental Branch, in front of the Oregon Military Department's Environmental Branch Chief, retired, Sgt. Maj. Gerald E. Elliott, said Arnold's selection for the award highlights his skill and dedication to the Restoration Program, as well as the entire Oregon Army National Guard Environmental Program.

Arnold's restoration program is tailored to work with the ORARNG environmental management system (eMS), ensuring planning and reporting processes are compatible not only with the guards sustainability mission, but also with the Adjutant General's environmental policy statement. "I'm proud to have a role supporting our Soldier readiness and training missions through our Environmental Restoration Program," Mr. Arnold said.

"Our efforts focus on implementing timely and cost effective solutions that allow our training to continue uninterrupted while reinforcing Army sustainability initiatives, which is very rewarding—we've worked hard to make our program excel and it's quite satisfying for the Oregon National Guard to receive national recognition for these efforts," he added.

Submissions for the annual award are judged at the NGB level in August and September before moving on to the Department of the Army. If the program is selected by the D.A., it then goes on to the Department of Defense to compete against submissions from around the world.

The award will be presented to Arnold and his team at the National Environmental Workshop in Orlando, Fla., slated for April.

For more information about eMS, and environmental sustainability in the Oregon National Guard, please contact the environmental staff at 503-584-3914.

Also see “ORNG to receive TAG’s environmental policy” story on p. 8.
The Oregon Sentinel: New year, new look

By now you've taken note of the new look for the Oregon Sentinel. We made some subtle changes to the front page, headlines, text and graphics. However, in order to continue bringing you this award-winning and entertaining newspaper, we need your help. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact any of the Oregon Sentinel staff. Our online contact information can be located in the column on the left side of this page.

I look forward to reading your feedback and story ideas. We welcome your creative input, enjoyable and entertaining. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact any of the Oregon Sentinel staff. Our online contact information can be located in the column on the left side of this page.

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New year good time to plan for physical training

Information suggests we can simply “fix” slow Wheeler of the Center for Defense be an absolute to the policy makers. Win National Guard. However, the grounding us greatly here on the West Coast. in the Post on jets. The letter the Washington what we are tasked to provide.

The Dec. 22nd article detailing the

Dear Sir or Madam:

To date we have flown 1,230 flight hours and moved 2.8 packages of snacks and other

On behalf of the company, I sincerely wish you the best that this New Year has to bring.

Thank you for all your

We are experiencing a short increase in activities, which we invariably become involved in the Army behind the Army!!! We

The Oregon Army National Guard is of

If you have recently retired from the Oregon Army or Air National Guard, have moved or changed your marital status, and would like to continue receiving our award-winning The Oregon Sentinel, make sure you update your personnel information!

If you are interested in any of these positions, please work with your chain of command or E-

There is an MOS conversion bonus of $2,000 to eligible Soldiers that voluntarily or involun-

For us here, New Years Day falls back to our usual busy sched

We have been flooded with packages of snacks and other

For more information on the jobs listed below, or to see the complete list of require-

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

DON’T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE OF THE OREGON SENTINEL

If you have recently retired from the Oregon Army or Air National Guard, have moved or changed your marital status, and would like to continue receiving our award-winning Oregon Sentinel, make sure you update your personnel information!

Current Army National Guard members

Report to the Editor of the Washington Post about structural issues with Portland’s F-15 fighter jets. The letter was published in the Post on

A gap in our air defenses

Vacancy locations include Ashland, Bend, Clackamas, Cottage Grove, Dallas, Forest Grove, LaGrande, Portland, Prineville and Salem.

If you are interested in any of these positions, please work with your chain of command or E-

A gap in our air defenses

vacancy locations include Coos Bay, Corval-

The Oregon Army National Guard is of

In some cases, Soldiers may be eligible to receive $20,000 in education benefits. For more information on the jobs listed below, or to see the complete list of require-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

New year wishes from Oregon National Guard Aviation unit

New Year wishes from Oregon National Guard Aviation unit

121 Combat Engineers primarily supervise, serve or assist as a member of a team. They pro-

Waverly, Wash. Mayor Royce E. Pollard,

This winter, despite

Vacancy locations include Coos Bay, Cottage Grove, Falls, Lebanon, Medford, Pendleton, Roseburg and Woodburn.

For some information on the jobs listed below, or to see the complete list of require-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A gap in our air defenses

The Dec. 22nd article detailing the

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Rilea assists community during recent coastal storms

**Story by Maj. Alisha Hamel, ORNG Heritage Outreach Program**

Clatsop County has a name for the monster storm that hit Oregon on Dec. 2 – ‘Hurricane Winds 2007’.

The name may be appropriate, given recorded winds of up to 148 mph winds which completely isolated Clatsop County, home of Camp Rilea.

Camp Rilea was asked and expected to help the communities of Clatsop County during the crisis. They exceeded the already high expectations of Clatsop County, said Dean Perez, Human Resources Director and Planning Chief for the Clatsop County Emergency Operations Center.

Perez said during the panic and chaos in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the first 24 hours, officials from Rilea offered every resource they had to offer. “They let us know that Camp Rilea was up and running and how to get a hold of them,” he said. “We never heard the word ‘no’.

Because of the widespread power outages, ham radio operators were employed, and according to Perez, a drill-status guardsman stationed at Rilea, the post also provided fuel, generators, housing for displaced families and emergency power.

“About 10 traditional-status Soldiers had stayed on post after the drill weekend,” Beach continued. “The soldiers here did wonderfully. The people that work here at Camp are very customer service oriented, and it predisposes them in emergencies like this to help wherever possible.”

Perez added that Camp Rilea is viewed by the surrounding area as a community partner.

“Our lives would be very different right now if it wasn’t for Camp Rilea,” he said.

Col. Todd Plimpton, Camp Rilea Post Commander, lauded everyone at Camp Rilea for their efforts and assistance during the storms.

“Some counties are happy to have their constituents back, however, sometimes we have local officials that think we should be tortured or killed when they return there.”

“If we are knowing loosely a detainee if we have information that he will be tortured or killed,” Crawford said.

“That causes us to look to third party nations to attempt to take some detainees,” he added.

Since 2002, detainees have been released to other countries including Albania, Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, France, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Yemen.

There are approximately 275 detainees currently held at the Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

**Oregon Guardsmen help rebuild Iraq, one mission at a time**

Story by Lt. Steven Bomar, 115th Mobile

Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from the Oregon Army National Guard are assisting the 1st Armored Division with some of the most vital missions in northern Iraq: security and reconstruction.

“Of our many missions, one that is en-tails clearing the sides of the road in Iraq to prevent future improvised explosive devices,” said Army Staff Sgt. Edward Lewis, 2nd Platoon team leader, 224th Engineer Company, 1st Armored Division.

Culvert denial, route sanitation, and culvert repair are all a part of the many engineer missions 2nd Platoon, 224th Engineers, 115th Mobile, ORNG conducts in northern Iraq.

“Support back home makes a big difference. (The) family care has been great.”

Now, over half-way through their deployment, their unit’s Soldiers continue to enjoy the variety and change of both locations and missions, but are ready to head back home.

“Camaraderie, seeing the sites and knowing that we are helping the Iraqi kids is the best part of being over here, but Oregon is in sight now,” Lewis said.

The 224th Engineers currently have three platoons in Iraq, making up the 1281st Engineer Company, which is a reserve battalion based in Duluth, Ala. The unit is part of the 268th Engineer Brigade, at Fort Bragg, N.C., which is currently supporting the 1st Armored Division.
Aging F-15 fleet a ‘crisis’, says top Air Force General

WASHINGTON, D.C. — An Air Force F-15C Eagle fighter jet fell into the crash last fall of an F-15C Eagle fuel spill, leaving the aircraft burned, causing it to disintegrate during flight.

In a report released Thursday, Air Force investigators said they found the root cause for the accident was a failure of the upper right longeron, a critical support structure in the F-15C aircraft, the report says.

About 20 minutes after takeoff from Langley Air Force Base, Va., on Nov. 2, the forward fuselage of Maj. Stephen Stilwell’s $42 million F-15C Eagle shook violently and then broke apart 18,000 feet above the ground. Stilwell, his left arm shattered, barely had time to safely eject as pieces of his aircraft rained down over the Missouri countryside.

More troubling, however, are the results of a parallel examination finding as many as 163 of the workhorse aircraft also have flawed support beams, or longerons, that have been grounded as the Air Force continues to search for how serious the problem is and whether extensive, costly repairs are needed. Another 19 of the aircraft have been inspected and also remain grounded.

Nearly 260 of the Air Force’s F-15s, first fielded in the mid-1970s, were returned to flight status Tuesday following fleet-wide inspections.

The twin-engine aircraft are used primarily for homeland security and are a key link in the nation’s air defense network.


The Air Force’s Fleet of 224 newer F-15E Strike Eagles, which are used in Iraq and Afghanistan, do not have the structural problem. Those jets, whose role is more oriented toward ground attack missions, were temporarily grounded after Stilwell’s crash, but returned to service shortly thereafter.

The older F-15s are stationed at many so-called “alert” sites around the country, where planes and pilots stand ready to take off at a moment’s notice to intercept hijacked aircraft or guard protected airspace.

Among the Air Force’s other workhorse fighter jets in the F-16, which performs multiple roles including air-to-air combat and air-to-ground attack. It entered the operational fleet in 1979.

With the F-15s temporarily grounded, F-16s and other aircraft are pulled away from their regular duties to fill the gaps. That makes it difficult for the Air Force to accomplish its mission and leaves Air Force pilots untrained to perform.

“This is systemic,” Corley said.

The longeron helps support the cockpit and strengthens the jet as it moves through high-stress maneuvers while traveling hundreds of miles per hour.

Analysis of recovered parts from Stilwell’s jet identified a crack in the beam near the fuselage that investigators say grew over time and was not detected during regular maintenance of the aircraft.

In the report, Wignall said that prior to Stilwell’s flight, “no inspection requirements existed for detecting a crack in the longeron.”

The F-15A through D models were built by McDonnell Douglas. That company merged with defense manufacturer giant Boeing in August 1997.

Company spokesman Patrick Frost said Boeing representatives have not seen Wignall’s findings or comment on it.

“We are working with the U.S. Air Force to understand exactly how the mishap was gathered from fleet-wide inspections,” Frost said. “Once all of the data has been analyzed, a need for further inspection or repair can be determined.”

No decision has been reached as to whether Boeing might be liable for the repairs, which could cost as much as $500,000 per aircraft.

“This is the starting point for looking into that question,” said Lt. Gen. Donald Hoffman, a spokesman for Air Force Acquisition official. “We’re not going to speculate.”

The F-22 Raptor, a stealth aircraft intended to replace the F-15, is being fielded but in smaller numbers than initially planned. The Pentagon has said it will buy just 183 Raptors due to their high cost, but members of Congress are pressing Defense Secretary Robert Gates to buy more. A single Raptor costs about $160 million, according to the Air Force.

The Air Force has said it needs 381 of the F-22s.

Company spokesman Patrick Frost said Boeing representatives have not seen Wignall’s findings or comment on it.

“F-22 Raptor is not the solution to the F-15 problems. But he indicated becoming more F-15s would not be the Air Force’s preference.”

“It was the best of breed at its time,” said Corley, who was an F-15 instructor pilot in 1979. “It’s not anymore.”

Loren Thompson, a defense analyst with the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Va., said it may make more sense to retire the older F-15s rather than fix them. Due to their age, another part could fail even after the longerons are repaired.

“This is an aircraft that was designed during the Nixon administration,” Thompson said. “It doesn’t seem sensible to be making fixes so late in the game.”

Continued from FRONT PAGE

The information included an analysis of the health of the F-15 fleet from findings from the Nov. 2 mishap investigation, maintenance inspections and fleet-wide inspections taken to date as well as historical science and engineering trend data from F-15 fleet management.

Inspections are more than 90 percent complete for the entire F-15 fleet. Kingsley Field is 100 percent complete with all required inspections. Remaining inspections have primarily focused on the forward longerons. The longerons are a critical support structure.

The 173rd Fighter Wing has 25 jets in our inventory, but we currently have four F-15s that are released to fly on base tomorrow,” said Colonel Schies. “From here jets will be cleared to fly based on further engineering analysis.” Four of the 25 fighter jets have cracks in longerons that will require at least 6 months to repair.”

Additionally, approximately 40 percent of inspected aircraft in the entire F-15 inventory have at least one longeron that does not meet blueprint specifications.

Kingsley Field is the only Air Force base with air combat operations. The people at Kingsley Field have been working on the F-15 program for 25 years before the aircraft were built, but is just now being realized with this accident.

Defections in these longerons will be analyzed at the Warner Robbins Air Logistics Center. The analysis is expected to take approximately four weeks to complete. Once the analysis is complete, Air Combat Command will be able to determine which aircraft will need further inspection, or repair, before returning them to flight.
Orange County Choppers unveils first of three National Guard bikes

ARLINGTON, Va.-- Hundreds of Soldiers gathered in front of the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., in late September to witness the unveiling of the "Patriot Chopper," the first of three bikes to be built by Orange County Choppers (OCC) for the National Guard. The ceremony was highlighted by the Army National Guard's Feb. 17 victory in the Sweet Onion Film Festival in Walla Walla, Wash., where the film "This is War"-- about the experiences of Oregon National Guard Soldiers gone into combat-- took home awards for Best Documentary and Best Audience Reaction.

The "Patriot Chopper" is the result of a collaborative effort between the OCC and four National Guard Soldiers. In early 2007, the Army Guard invited Soldiers around the country to submit their ideas for the custom design of the Guard-sponsored bike. Four winners were chosen: Chief Warrant Officer David Vasquez of Colorado; Sgt. 1st Class Matthews Billiet of Georgia; Sgt. 1st Class Richard Crawford of Illinois and Pfc. Joseph Scheibe of Ohio.

Maj. Gen. James Nuttall, deputy director of the Army National Guard, presented certificates to the four winning Soldiers during the unveiling ceremony. He congratulated them on a job well done and a bike well-designed. The ceremony was highlighted when Paul Sr., made his grand entrance on the bike, coasting in coolly and revving the engine to the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd. The winning Soldiers were in awe. "To be a part of something like this is pretty cool stuff," said Scheibe. "We went to the OCC shop in New York last month, and we saw pieces and parts of the bike. But to see it finished was just really cool."

The finished bike is a minitower air cleaner. The blade spokes of the wheels feature 3-D inlaid spearheads, representing the seven Army values and an ammunition belt lines the handlebars. Chromed M-4 magazines serve as the struts, and an M-4 rifle is mounted on the side of the rear wheel. The color of the bike is red, white and blue with an Army Combat Uniform pattern throughout. A list on top of the bike includes every war and conflict the National Guard has been involved in since its founding in 1924.

"We took [the Soldiers'] ideas and put them to work," Paulie explained. "I told them, it really is their bike. It was a bike they designed and that we made. It's like they made it that much more special."

The "Patriot Chopper" is the first of three bikes commissioned by the Army National Guard. The purpose is twofold. First, the bikes are intended to be a recruiting tool. Army Guard recruiters will display them at rallies across the country to entice potential Soldiers to talk with them. Second, the bikes can also convey important messages about safety. Despite the television program's high-gloss image, the American Chopper stars remain extremely conscious about safety. Many guitars sport their own personal cameras and other protective gear religiously, a practice they hope to impress upon Soldiers.

"They're very willing to help us out in terms of safety awareness and wearing the proper gear for our Soldiers," said Nuttall. "The bike is one part of it—the build. But the safety is really what we're trying to get after." Before the ceremony in September, Paul Sr., invited Nuttall to talk about public service announcements about motorcycle safety aimed at National Guard members.

Story by Army Staff Sgt. Mary Flynn, National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. (November, 2007) -- Like many Soldiers deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, the Soldiers from the Oregon National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, brought their personal cameras along during their deployment to Iraq in 2004. They snapped photos of other first fire weapons, shot video of explosives they detonated and logged plenty of footage of their own comments intermixed with Soldier humor. Little did these Soldiers know that their day-to-day antics would one day represent deployed Guardmembers everywhere, preserved in a feature-length documentary film called, "This is War: Memories of Iraq."

The National Combat History Archive with Lucky Forward Films used the unscripted testimonies of nine Soldiers of varying ranks and experiences to narrate the events. Photos and video the Soldiers shot with their own personal cameras depict their experiences.

"We wanted to make a documentary non-political film that took someone who's never been to Iraq ... to show what it means to go into combat," said the film's director, Gary Mortensen.

"We told it in a non-specific way so that it could represent soldiers everywhere -- we wanted to tell a tale that anyone who has been over there can identify with," he added.

Mortensen said the unique thing about the film is that these Soldiers had their own personal recording devices with them every day, giving an intimate view of what they saw on a daily basis. The Soldiers had no idea of the film would be made so the result is a very honest and raw portrayal of their experiences.

"It's very powerful," said Sgt. 1st Class Phillip "Vince" Jacques, one of the Soldiers featured in the film. "It really represents the professionalism of these guys and shows exactly what troops are going through over there. They're the ones fighting the war. You might as well hear their story."

Having been present at various screenings of the film, Jacques noticed that the audience reaction was often one of awe. "Whether they support the war or not, they come away with a whole different view of what Soldiers are doing over there," Jacques said.

National audiences are also beginning to take notice.

Whether they support the war or not, they come away with a whole different view of what Soldiers are doing over there.

— Sgt. 1st Class Vincent Jacques

"This is War" won the Audience Choice Award and Best Documentary at the Idaho International Film Festival, and was later awarded the Jury Award: Best Documentary at the Florida International Movie Market. It also took home awards for best documentary and best director at the Sweet Onion Film Festival in Walla Walla, Wash.

Unfortunately, the film isn't available at your local video store just yet; Mortensen explained that they are working on the distribution and broadcast rights to the film. However, those interested in purchasing copies may call 503-597-7030, or visit the National Combat History Archive's website at www.luckyforwardfilms.com.

According to the site, all sales of the film help support the National Guard Foundation, the National Combat History Archive, the Iraq/Afghanistan Oregon Memorial Fund and the Wounded Warriors Project, a non-profit organization that helps injured service men and women by providing programs and services to meet their unique needs.

Photo by Sgt. Mary Flynn, National Guard Bureau

Paul Teutul Sr., of Orange County Choppers fame, rides the National Guard's "Patriot Chopper" in front of the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., during a Sept. 27 unveiling ceremony.

Story courtesy of National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Vasquez and Pfc. Joseph Scheibe admire the "Patriot Chopper" in Arlington, Va. The two were among four Army National Guard Soldiers whose ideas were incorporated into the design by Orange County Choppers (OCC) for the National Guard "Patriot Chopper," the first of three bikes to be built by Orange County Choppers (OCC) for the National Guard. The ceremony was filmed by the American Chopper production crew and two episodes airing Jan. 17 and 24 on The Learning Channel (TLC) will feature the construction of this bike.

Metalworker Paul Teutul Sr., and son Paul Teutul Jr., who is referred to as "Paulie" by his fans, founded OCC in New York founding Jan. 17 and 24 on The Learning Channel (TLC) will feature the construction of this bike.

Photo by Sgt. Mary Flynn, National Guard Bureau

Gary Mortensen, director of the Iraq War documentary, "This is War".
Army goes ‘green’ with new hybrid Howitzer

The Army’s new hybrid electric system, which is integral to the Family of Affordable Surface Environment (FASE) System lab, could debut next year in a howitzer.

There are lots of eco-friendly reasons to adopt a hybrid. And then there’s the Army, which has announced that its entire family of Manned Ground Vehicles (MGV) will use a hybrid system.

And while the Army is expected to start the howitzer, starting with the Non-Line-of-Sight, a 155 mm self-propelled howitzer. Of all the potential advantages for high-end vehicles, including better low-speed maneuverability than those with traditional drivetrains, none has to do with emitting emissions or reduc- ing carbon footprints.

Many like the diesel-electric off-road “Aggressor” prototype announced by the Army this past May, the new hybrid howitzer bears little resemblance to a Prius. The vehicle will generate more electrical output than a commercial hybrid to provide power for sensors, on-board computers and other integrated systems. All eight MGV variants, which range from artillery pieces to recon vehicles and more, will have a hybrid-electric system.

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The new propulsion system was tested last year and will have individual plaques mounted on a wall used to view their eligibility, benefits, claims and forms, and allow beneficiaries to sign up.

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There are lots of eco-friendly reasons to adopt a hybrid. And then there’s the Army, which has announced that its entire family of Manned Ground Vehicles (MGV) will use a hybrid system.

And while the Army is expected to start the howitzer, starting with the Non-Line-of-Sight, a 155 mm self-propelled howitzer. Of all the potential advantages for high-end vehicles, including better low-speed maneuverability than those with traditional drivetrains, none has to do with emitting emissions or reducing carbon footprints.

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Dean leaves Oregon for D.C. post


Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard said the new position will allow him to help the Oregon National Guard fulfill its mission in the active duty component. "I think it (also) informs others that we are a first-rate component," Blum said.

Story by Kimberly L. Lippet, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

One in three guardsmen take a pay cut to serve on the battlefield. While some employers voluntarily pay the difference in salary, many do not. The U.S. Senate recently signed some legislation that may help alleviate the burden. The Defenders of Freedom Tax Relief Act is aimed at helping military families keep more money in their pocket.

The legislation will offer guardsmen several tax breaks including a refundable federal income tax credit which allows soldiers to count their non-taxable combat pay towards the earned income tax credit. Guardians and reservists will also be able to take advantage of a tax credit for small businesses.

Survivors who lost their military spouse will be allowed to invest their $100,000 death gratuity payment in tax favored savings accounts, such as Roth IRAs or Coverdell Education Savings Accounts.

“'The holidays are a tough time to be separated from a loved one,'” U.S. Senator Gordon Smith said. “'Our troops lay their lives on the line to protect our freedoms. Their service should not bring financial hardship. These tax cuts will help ease their burdens and pay bills.'”

Some of the other benefits of the Defenders of Freedom Tax Relief Act include issuing qualified mortgage bonds to finance mortgages for veterans who served in active military without regard to the first-time homebuyer requirement. This exception expired on December 31, 2007. The proposal would make the provision permanent.

Another piece of the legislation benefits disabled military retirees, whose claims can be delayed for years. The VA disability award is retroactive to the date of the application and makes a portion of past military retired pay tax free.

But to claim a tax refund, the statute of limitations expires after three years and disabled veterans are barred from receiving tax refunds. The proposal extends the statute of limitations until the end of the one-year period beginning on the date of the VA disability determination.

Many employers voluntarily eliminate any pay gap between the Reservists’ civilian pay and military pay by paying the difference. The proposed legislation would treat the pay gap as wages requiring the information reporting and subject the differential pay amounts to withholding. The proposal would also make it easier for employers to contribute to their active employee’s retirement plans.

The Defenders of Freedom Tax Relief Act must be approved by the U.S. House before becoming law.

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