

Testimony

of

**John K. Lopez, SDV, Chairman
Association for Service Disabled Veterans**

to

**The Committee on Veterans' Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives**

**Thursday, 21 September 2006
334 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC**

Good morning Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member and Members of the Committee.

Thank you for your attention and without objection, I shall submit a written statement for the record and summarize my testimony for the Committee.

As you may know, the Association for Service Disabled Veterans (ASDV) is an organization of disabled in military service veterans (SDV) devoted to the rehabilitation of all disabled military veterans to the maximum state of self-dependency attainable within existing technological and human resources. Consequently, our focus is directed towards freeing the SDV from the dependency of tax supported assistance whenever possible.

To that end, SDV are extremely grateful to the accomplishments of the 106th, 107th, 108th and the 109th Congress, under the leadership of this Committee. Under the responsible and compassionate leadership of your Chairmen and Ranking Members, you have established **SELF-EMPLOYMENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP** as a viable opportunity for our nations SDV to live a life of individual dignity and significant contribution, to the economic prosperity of our nation. Public Law 106-50, Public Law 108 – 183 and the pending H.R. 3082 and “Reauthorizatiton of the Small Business Act of 2006” are continuing statements of the intent of the U.S. Congress to enable the rehabilitation of those who have sacrificed their well-being for the prosperity and security of the United States of America and the free world.

However, their remains the issue of effective implementation of the intent of Congress, due to the lack of compliance by the prime contractors that receive the vast majority of agency procurement dollars.

Although, required by legislation to subcontract opportunities to SDV owner businesses, and to assist in self-employment rehabilitation, major contractors continue to evade compliance thru various regulatory manipulations. This has the

dramatic effect of diminishing opportunities, since the majority of procurement dollars are awards to billion dollar prime contracts.

It is requested that the Committee request information regarding the subcontracting performance and practices of prime contractors of federal agencies, especially the lack of compliance by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Department of Defense billion dollar prime subcontractors.

Irrespective of the efforts of the Committee, a feeling persists among the SDVE population that the vested interests of the agency procurement bureaucracy (APB) and the influence of special interest groups (SIGs) is so pervasive, that it may require major oversight if we are to make significant and positive change.

Central to this quandary is the SDV perception that the SDV is a powerless stakeholder in the effort to establish and maintain an effective rehabilitation program for our nations service disabled heroes.

Attached to this Testimony is a discussion concept that considers the question of the establishment of a policy of “**countervailing**” power for the serving military person, titled “SELECTIVE SACRIFICE”. This concept would reinforce the perception of the serving military that their sacrifice be actively emphasized and subsequently acknowledged and honored.

This concept of **SELECTIVE SACRIFICE** is a reflection of the advice of the First President of the United States that; “The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, is directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated”.

Thank you for your attention!

I shall be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

SELECTIVE SACRIFICE ACT: AN AMENDMENT TO THE ARMED SERVICES ACT

Background:

Since the beginnings of our nation, the people of the United States of America have placed great confidence in that interpretation of the United States Constitution that permits our government to conscript or seduce our citizens to be killed, disabled and tortured in military service, for the security and prosperity of the total population.

Complicit in that application, has been the presumption that our nation, thru its government, would provide rehabilitation for the service disabled veteran (SDV) survivors of the resulting consequences.

However, actions of the U.S. government that reflect the mindset of the American populace, have indicated that there is no will to treat individuals service disabled and tortured for the security and prosperity of the United States of America, in a fair and equitable manner.

For over forty years, the U.S. government has spent billions of dollars on programs that have failed to alleviate the employment and training needs of veterans and now funds special interest groups (SIGs) and major corporations that subvert attempts by disabled veterans to develop self-employment entrepreneurial strategies and policies.

A review of the constant legislative conflict between representatives of the nations 26 million veterans and the U.S. Congress Committees charged with the support of the needs of these veterans, indicates a disinterest and disrespect for veteran needs.

Consequently, it is incumbent on those victims at risk that have demonstrated sacrifice for our nation's security and prosperity, to seek legislation

and policies that will prevent continued victimization of the veteran by a reluctant government.

Proposed:

It is requested that the U.S. Congress enact an amendment to the Armed Services Act which provides the following:

- (1) That an active duty serviceperson (ADS) be allowed to specify from one (1) to three (3) assignments wherein the ADS believes that the assignment will result in death, disablement or torture on direct behalf of individual(s) or organizations that adversely complicate or prevent the ability of the ADS to recover or be rehabilitated from a resulting disablement.
- (2) An ADS would be allowed to specify one (1) to three (3) of such assignments during active duty service in the military and be excused from such duty without prejudice or negative record. If in the opinion of the unit commanding officer there is no immediate danger to the status of the assignment and such an action can be implemented without clear and present danger to the mission.
- (3) The individual or organization specific assignment can be original to the ADS or recorded in electronic databases maintained by stakeholder civilian veteran organizations dedicated to protecting the futures of ADS disabled in service to the nation.

There is a persistent question asked by service disabled veterans nationwide: “Why should service persons risk death, disability and torture to insure the security and prosperity of individuals and organizations that are committed to the abuse of the at risk veteran?”

Our nation has developed a culture of entitlement that has presumed to include the expectation that military serviceperson(s) are to be readily killed and disabled for the security and prosperity of the interests, foreign and domestic, of any resident individual or organization.

Summary:

Human life and well-being are the most precious elements of any society.

The refusal of our nation to support the rehabilitation of those human lives that invested in our national security and prosperity is an outrage.

A legal, legislated policy to permit the ADS to express their specific dissatisfaction with the continued endangering of their life and well-being, is a token recognition of the hypocrisy that surrounds their sacrifice.