

# EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE STATEMENT OF SUPPORT PROGRAM



The Statement of Support Program is the cornerstone of ESGR's effort to gain and maintain employer support for the Guard and Reserve. The intent of the program is to increase employer support by encouraging employers to act as advocates for employee participation in the military. Employers signing a Statement of Support make the following commitments to their employees:

- We fully recognize, honor and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).
- Our managers and supervisors will have the tools they need to effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.
- We appreciate the values, leadership and unique skills service members bring to the workforce and will encourage opportunities to hire Guardsmen, Reservists and Veterans.
- We will continually recognize and support our country's service members and their families in peace, in crisis and in war.

The first Statement of Support was signed on December 13, 1972 in the Office of the Secretary of Defense by the Chairman of the Board of General Motors. President Nixon was the first President to sign a Statement of Support, and in 2005 every federal Cabinet Secretary and all federal agencies signed a Statement of Support to signify their continuing efforts to be model employers.

Since its inception, hundreds of thousands of employers have signed Statements of Support, pledging their support to Guard and Reserve employees.

To request your Statement of Support please visit [www.ESGR.mil/SoS](http://www.ESGR.mil/SoS).

  
**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT  
FOR THE GUARD AND RESERVE**  
  
**America, Inc.**  

We recognize the Guard and Reserve are essential to the strength of our nation and the well-being of our communities.

In the highest American tradition, the patriotic men and women of the Guard and Reserve serve voluntarily in an honorable and vital profession. They train to respond to their community and their country in time of need. They deserve the support of every segment of our society.


If these volunteer forces are to continue to serve our nation, increased public understanding is required of the essential role of the Guard and Reserve in preserving our national security.


Therefore, we join other employers in pledging that:


- We fully recognize, honor and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).
- Our managers and supervisors will have the tools they need to effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.
- We appreciate the values, leadership and unique skills service members bring to the workforce and will encourage opportunities to hire Guardsmen, Reservists, and Veterans.
- We will continually recognize and support our country's service members and their families in peace, in crisis, and in war.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
James G. Boholz  
National Chair, ESGR

  
Leon E. Panetta  
Secretary of Defense







# RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING SUPPORT

Employer support enhances retention rates in the Armed Forces and in the end, strengthens our national security. To recognize employers who support their Guard and Reserve employees, ESGR promotes several recognition programs including:

- Patriot Award
- Above and Beyond Award
- Pro Patria Award
- Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award

**Patriot Award:** The Patriot Award honors individual supervisors for their support of Guard and Reserve employees. Nominations must be made by Guard and Reserve service members or their spouses. Nominated employers will receive a Patriot Award certificate and accompanying lapel pin. Please visit the ESGR website at [www.ESGR.mil/PA](http://www.ESGR.mil/PA) to request a Patriot Award for your supervisor.

**Above and Beyond Award:** The Above and Beyond Award is the second in a series of ESGR employer recognition awards. The awards are presented by ESGR State Committees and recognize employers at the state level who have gone above and beyond the legal requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

**Pro Patria Award:** The Pro Patria Award is presented annually by each ESGR State Committee to one small, one large and one public sector employer in their state or territory who has provided the greatest support to Guard and Reserve employees through their leadership practices and personnel policies.

**Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award:** The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of employees serving in the Guard and Reserve. Each year, Guard and Reserve employees, or a family member acting on their behalf, have the opportunity to nominate their employer for the Freedom Award. The ESGR State Committees review nominations and submit recommendations to advance to the next round in each of the three categories: small, large (500+ employees) and public sector. A national selection board comprised of senior Department of Defense officials and business leaders selects 15 employers to receive the Secretary's prestigious award. More information on the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is available at [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil).

ESGR DEVELOPS AND PROMOTES A CULTURE IN  
WHICH ALL AMERICAN EMPLOYERS

**SUPPORT AND VALUE**

THE MILITARY SERVICE OF THEIR EMPLOYEES.

