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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-4602

August 8, 2012

The Honorable Joe Wilson
Chairman
Military Personnel Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
2229 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan A. Davis
Ranking Member
Military Personnel Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
1526 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Wilson and Ranking Member Davis,

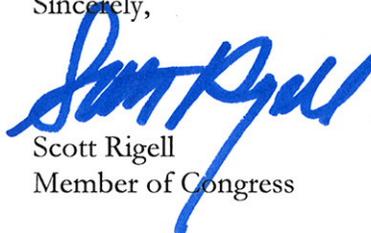
As you are aware, last year the Navy conducted Enlisted Retention Boards (ERB) to reduce overmanning in 31 ratings. The boards reviewed roughly 16,000 records and identified 3,000 Sailors to be involuntarily separated by September 1, 2012. These Sailors and their families endure unique and extraordinary demands and make significant sacrifices over the course of their careers. They are vital to our military readiness.

I am concerned about the way ERB was conducted. The Navy recently released guidance on the Voluntary Sea Duty Program and Sea Duty Incentive Pay offering eligible Sailors an additional \$500 to \$1,000 a month to return to sea duty early or extend on ships in order to support critical undermanned at sea requirements. Sailors who are separating due to ERB could potentially be in the rating and pay grade combinations that are now critical billets at sea. They should be given the opportunity to fill these positions and not involuntarily separated.

I respectfully request a hearing on ERB. As of August, the current force of the Navy is 321,053, well below the 325,700 that is mandated by law in the FY12 NDAA. The Navy should be able to allow these dedicated men and women to continue their service.

I appreciate your attention on this matter, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Scott Rigell
Member of Congress