



MISSION: READINESS

MILITARY LEADERS FOR KIDS

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Retired Military Brass Support USDA's Call For Improved Health and Nutrition Standards

Military brass support improved school nutrition to cut obesity, ensure qualified recruits

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 23, 2010) – Major General James A. Kelley, US Army (Ret.), joined USDA Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack today in calling on Congress to move quickly to pass new legislation that would reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act and help improve the health and nutrition of American's children.

Representing more than 100 retired admirals and generals who belong to the non-profit, bipartisan group, MISSION: READINESS, General Kelley said that improvements in school nutrition programs, which would be part of a new Child Nutrition Act, would help reduce child obesity, which the general said has become a national security concern.

“Being overweight or obese is a major disqualifying factor for young adults applying for military service,” said Major General Kelley. “An estimated one out of four of all young people ages 17 to 24 are too heavy to serve in the military. In the past 30 years, child obesity rates have more than tripled. Obesity has become more than a major health problem. If we don't address this problem now, we are putting our national security at risk.”

Kelley is a member of MISSION: READINESS, a group of retired admirals and generals who support research-based approaches to ensure that young people will have many career options as adults, including military service if they choose that path.

MISSION: READINESS is calling on Congress to support at least \$1 billion per year in additional funding to help improve nutrition standards for meals served in school, after school and in child care settings. The group is also seeking improved nutrition standards for all competitive foods and beverages sold on school grounds. The retired military leaders believe that improving nutrition in America's schools will help prevent and reduce obesity, thus ensuring that more young Americans will have the option of military service.

For a list of our members and more information, go to www.missionreadiness.org

MISSION: READINESS is the nonprofit, bi-partisan organization of senior retired military leaders ensuring continued American security and prosperity into the 21st century by calling for smart investments in the next generation of American children.

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