

VFW Against Privatizing Commissaries

May 15, 2015

WASHINGTON — The Senate Armed Services Committee yesterday inserted language into its version of the fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act that could lead to the privatization of military commissaries. The provision would also establish a pilot program to test it on not fewer than five installations.

In a statement, John W. Stroud, the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, said his organization is against any plan to privatize commissaries.

"Military commissaries are a key quality of life benefit to military service members, their families and to retirees," said Stroud, a retired Air Force first sergeant. "You can sometimes find better deals off base, but nowhere near the overall 30 percent savings that commissaries provide, plus any reduction in customer traffic at the commissary will have a corresponding reduction in customer traffic at the base exchange, which will directly impact morale, welfare and recreation contributions.

"The VFW is against privatizing military commissaries and we are against the pilot program to test it," he said. "We want this language stripped from the Senate's version of the defense bill."

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