

From: CSM Julio Rodriguez US Army Reserve Ret  
Subject: Testimony on the SB501/Maryland National Guard to Senate Education,  
Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
Date: March 4, 2009

Mr. Chairman, Hon Senators, ladies and gentlemen My name is Julio Rodriguez I am a retired command sergeant major US Army Reserve.

I served 27 years and in that time I was activated one time for desert storm in 1990. I also served with the New York State National guard in 1981.

When young men and women join the National Guard the enlistment contract they sign is for 1 weekend a month and 2 weeks annual training each year.

They also understand that in case of national emergency they may be called to augment the regular army.

This is not what has happened to the National Guard in Iraq.

In the last eight years the guard has been used as the regular army and in some cases members have been called to active duty to serve for as long as 12 to 15 months and as many as 3-5 deployments.

This has had a devastating effect on the families of the guardsmen creating bankruptcy, divorce and mental health problems.

If at the end of a member enlistment a member tried to leave the service, with an honorable discharge, he or she would run into a new policy called STOP LOSS, used to keep service members on active duty, after their enlistment was up. Your Maryland National Guard needs your protection. They should not be used as a back door draft for the country.

Remember in case of a state emergency we need a strong Maryland Guard to protect us, here at home. Thank you