

May 10, 2010

Let's Make History by Supporting Our Nation's Marines As They Support Us;
Redesignate the Department of the Navy as
the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps

Dear Colleague:

Today there are more than 200,000 men and women serving in the United States Marine Corps. During our fight against terrorism, 1,200 Marines have lost their lives in service to our country and in Iraq and Afghanistan alone, more than 10,000 have suffered injuries. Right now, Marines are playing a central role in the surge in places like Marja and Kandahar.

It is not possible to overstate the service and sacrifice of any man or woman who wears or has worn the Marine Corps uniform, whether in Iwo Jima 65 years ago or today. The Corps has been "first to fight for right and freedom" for 234 years.

That is why I am writing to urge you to co-sponsor S.504, *A bill to redesignate the Department of the Navy as the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps*.

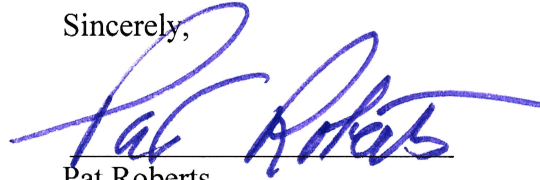
This legislation does not detract from the tremendous commitment and dedication of our U.S. Navy personnel or any other service. It does not move funds, change promotions or take away mission or jurisdiction. Rather, it corrects a long standing disparity by which the Marine Corps falls *under* the Department of the Navy by simply adding "and Marine Corps" to the title of the service. The Department of the Navy would become the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps and the Secretary would become the Secretary of the Navy and Marine Corps.

By adding three words, we can credit the Marine Corps as a full service. We can publicly acknowledge that the Secretary of the Navy is also the head of the Marine Corps. We can acknowledge the Corps is on an equal footing with other services. And we can do this at a time when we are asking all of our servicemen and women to make great sacrifices for our country.

Recently, the companion bill to S. 504 passed the House of Representatives as a stand alone measure. On May 4th the House made history when it unanimously passed H.R. 24 with a new record of 426 co-sponsors. The many supporters of this legislation include former Director of Central Intelligence Admiral Stansfield Turner, former Secretary of the Navy Lawrence Garrett, The Marine Corps League, MarineParents.com, former Marine Corps Commandants Alfred M. Gray, Carl Mundy, and Charles Krulak, General Anthony Zinni, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and The Fleet Reserve Association.

I hope you will join me in recognizing our nation's force in readiness, our Marine Corps, and those who serve in it as equal to our other Armed Forces. To co-sponsor S. 504, please contact Libby Quint in my office at 202-224-4774 or Libby_Quint@roberts.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pat Roberts", is written over a horizontal line.

Pat Roberts
United States Senator

P.S. One only has to watch the current acclaimed special television production, "Pacific," to understand why Marines everywhere are expressing their heartfelt support for what they believe is a long overdue oversight. The Marines and Marine veterans in your state simply ask you join them with your support.

Thanks – and Semper Fi!