

ROBERT C. BEACH
SPRINGFIELD, OH

Regarding: SCR 7 and the Federal REAL ID ACT of February 2023

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My sincere appreciation for your invitation to speak to you regarding the Federal Real ID Act. It is my heartfelt hope that this most unfortunate dis-service to tens of thousands of retired DOD civilian employees can and immediately be resolved. The reality is that we have been ‘dumped’ from the ‘DOD family’ after having served our country with dedication and pride.

I would like to share a summary of my dedicated career in service to Our Country.

When I graduated from high school, I joined the US Navy. I was immediately required to take an ‘oath of service’ – which opens with the following: “I, Robert C. Beach, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic....” I found that I loved electronics and enjoyed one fantastic enlistment in the Navy.

Following my Navy enlistment, I worked in the US Navy Yard, Philadelphia, PA while attending evening college to earn a degree Electrical Engineering. Thru an amazing turn of events, I was then promotion transferred to become a “Flight Test Engineer” at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. Upon my arrival at Wright Patterson, I was again required to take an ‘oath of service’ –which opened with very similar sounding wording: “I, Robert C. Beach, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic....”

As my DOD, Civil Service career soared, I was immediately trained and certified into ‘full flight status’ with the 4950th Test Wing. As the years passed, I progressed to become a ‘four letter chief’, a staff level position in the Test Wing where flight records indicate that I was ‘airborne’ for something over 3, 800 flight hours. [An interesting related fact is that one man year is computed at 2080 man hours. This means that I ‘enjoyed’ almost two man years, wings-up, in US Air Force aircraft, on world-wide DOD missions.] I was certified as a Fight Instructor and Chief Flight Examiner as we trained and certified young officers to full flight status as engineers with the deployment title of ‘Mission Commander’.

I happily hold in my hands, five expired, “Official Passports”, which might be referred to as a ‘Diplomatic Passport’. There is a statement inside, “Department of State, Passport Office Washington. The bearer is on official assignment to Japan and other countries for the Department of Defense of the United States of America.” I note the statement does not certify military or civilian. My point is that my heart considered myself to be “dedicate member of the ‘DOD Family’! I was serving our country.

At my over 29 year career retirement as a GM-13, [General Manager, Grade-13], the assembled members of the 4950th Test Wing, absolutely honored me with the presentation of this fantastic, leather flight jacket, that I am wearing before you today. We were a Team. There was no mention of military or civilian!

Since my retirement and in recent years, I have been totally honored with invites to attend full retirement ceremonies for US Air Force Colonels for whom I was their first ‘mentor’, and helped launch their careers to complete success and service to our Country.

B-U-T!! As I approach the Pentagon, Joint Base Andrews, and other DOD facilities, to attend these retirements, I AM A NO-BODY! I am no longer a member of the 'DOD Family'. I must divert to the base Pass and ID Office, wander in and 'take a number', and request permission of that DOD Facility Commander to enter....

I sincerely hope and pray that you never have to feel the hurt that is in my heart!

I am only one 'voice', among tens of thousands of retired, but dedicated DOD civilians who have served Our Country over decades. Mine is only one humble example.

I would urge that Senator Koehler's use of the word 'onerous' is absolutely appropriate, and only touches on the absolute loss and confusion that we retired DOD Civilians have incurred by the Real ID Act.

My sincere appreciation for your SCR-7, and with high hopes that it will be genesis of our return to 'The DOD Family'.

Oh and my smiles and complements that Ohio could receive full credit for being the originator of this Resolution which would return honor to DOD retired civilians in all 50 states.

My heart-felt thanks for your time and interest.

Sincerely;

Robert C. (Bob) Beach