

**SEC. ____ . FOREIGN LANGUAGE INCENTIVE PAY FOR MEMBERS OF
PRECOMMISSIONING PROGRAMS.**

1 (a) AUTHORITY.—Chapter 5 of title 37, United States Code, is amended by inserting after
2 section 316 the following new section:

3 **"§ 316a. Foreign language incentive pay for members of precommissioning programs**

4 "(a) INCENTIVE PAY.—Regarding foreign languages identified as critical for purposes of
5 national defense, the Secretary of Defense may pay incentive pay to a Senior Reserve Officers'
6 Training Corps member determined eligible under subsection (b).

7 "(b) ELIGIBILITY.—(1) Incentive pay authorized under subsection (a) may be paid to a
8 member enrolled in a Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program or the Marine Corps
9 Platoon Leaders Class who—

10 "(A) is a citizen of the United States;

11 "(B) is entitled to subsistence allowance or pay under section 209 of this title;

12 "(C) enlists in an armed force under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the
13 military department concerned, as prescribed by the Secretary;

14 "(D) contracts with the Secretary of the military department concerned, or
15 designated representative, to serve for the period required by the program;

16 "(E) enters into a written agreement to accept an appointment, if offered, as a
17 commissioned officer in the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps, as the case may
18 be, and to serve in the armed forces for the period prescribed by the Secretary; and

19 "(F) is participating in a SROTC-approved language immersion program, study
20 abroad, or enrolled in an academic course that involves instruction in a foreign language
21 of strategic interest to the Department of Defense.

1 "(2) Notwithstanding the limitation under section 2103a (a) of title 10, regarding a first
2 year member of a four-year Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program, such member may
3 be considered eligible under subsection (b) and entitled to subsistence allowance or pay under
4 section 209(c) of this title.

5 "(c) INCENTIVE PAY AMOUNT.—The Secretary of Defense may authorize incentive pay
6 paid under subsection (a) in an amount that may not exceed \$3,000 per year.

7 "(d) REPAYMENT.—A member who receives incentive pay under this section, but who
8 does not satisfactorily complete the foreign language academic course, shall be subject to the
9 repayment provisions of section 303a(e) of this title.

10 "(e) REGULATION.—This section shall be administered under regulations prescribed by
11 the Secretary of Defense for the armed forces under the jurisdiction of the Secretary, by the
12 Secretary of Homeland Security for the Coast Guard when the Coast Guard is not operating as a
13 service in the Navy, by the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the Commissioned
14 Corps of the Public Health Service, and by the Secretary of Commerce for the National Oceanic
15 and Atmospheric Administration."

16 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is
17 amended by inserting after the item relating to section 316 the following new item:

18 "316a. Foreign language incentive pay for members of precommissioning programs."

Section-by-Section Analysis

This section would allow the Secretary of Defense to provide an incentive pay to Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC) and Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class (PLC) members (freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) entitled to subsistence allowance or pay under section 209 of title 37, United States Code. Specifically this section would allow the Secretary of Defense to offer a monetary incentive to SROTC and Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class (PLC) to take foreign language courses of strategic importance to the Department, such as Arabic, Chinese, Dari, and Farsi, identified on the Department's Strategic Language List (SLL).

The Department of Defense (DoD) requires this authority to meet future needs related to officer foreign language proficiency. Providing a restricted monetary incentive to SROTC and PLC members who are enrolled in or achieve proficiency in a strategic language, such as those identified above, would enhance the Department's foreign language capability. The goal of this proposed broad authority is to provide the Department with the necessary flexibility to meet their specific language needs.

The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) emphasized the need for greater language capability and included the following wording in their report: "Developing broader linguistic capability and cultural understanding is also critical to prevail in the long war and to meet 21st century challenges.... The Department must dramatically increase the number of personnel proficient in key languages such as Arabic, Farsi, and Chinese and make these languages available at all levels of action and decision – from strategic to the tactical."

Academy Language Training and ROTC Language Training grants are a first step by the Department to gain greater foreign language proficiency. Another example is the privately-funded Olmstead Scholarship program, which presently funds 35 officers a year. The program also supports cadets and midshipmen for summer travel and education at the Service academies and for Title 10 schools. However, the numbers of officers gained through this program are insufficient to meet the needs of today's environment, which consists of increased global presence, missions, and strategic partnerships and coalition alliances. To increase our foreign language capability, the Department needs a more aggressive approach to incentivize officers to gain language skills prior to commissioning. Providing the authority to offer a significant monetary incentive to SROTC students would send a clear, urgent, and immediate signal to SROTC students and the colleges and universities that host ROTC programs that studying such strategic languages as Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, and the Central Asian languages is valued.

The Department would not have the authority to pay SROTC students without this legislative change.

Cost Implications: The DoD estimates that this new incentive pay would cost \$33 million each year from fiscal year (FY) 2009 through FY 2013, for a total of \$212.6 million. This estimate assumes that 50 percent of SROTC and PLC members would participate. The estimate does not include staff and administrative costs.

Language Incentive Pay (\$ in thousands)							
	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Air Force	\$19,539	\$19,988	\$20,448	\$20,918	\$21,400	\$21,892	\$124,185
Navy	\$4,835	\$4,946	\$5,060	\$5,176	\$5,295	\$5,417	\$30,730
Marine Corps	\$1,954	\$1,999	\$2,045	\$2,092	\$2,140	\$2,189	\$12,419
Army	\$7,124	\$7,288	\$7,455	\$7,627	\$7,802	\$7,982	\$45,278
Total	\$33,452	\$34,221	\$35,008	\$35,814	\$36,637	\$37,480	\$212,613

Note: 2.3% annual increases are based on USD(Comptroller)'s Inflation Guidance - FY 2008/2009 Presidential Budget memo dated January 18, 2007 for pay raise assumption.

NUMBER OF PERSONNEL AFFECTED

The DoD estimates that the number of SROTC and PLC members enrolled in foreign language study and eligible for Foreign Language Incentive Pay will be 50 percent of the total SROTC and PLC population of 29,751:

	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Air Force	8,850	8,850	8,850	8,850	8,850	8,850
Navy	2,153	2,153	2,153	2,153	2,153	2,153
Marine Corps	752	752	752	752	752	752
Army	3,121	3,121	3,121	3,121	3,121	3,121
Total	14,876	14,876	14,876	14,876	14,876	14,876

The DoD calculated these enrollment figures at a 3 percent growth rate through the out years. The estimated cost for the out years will be further refined through DoD and Service policies. However, the \$3,000 annual cap, as well as the flexibility contained in the legislative proposal, would provide DoD flexibility, policy oversight and establish, restrict, and constrain costs.

Cost Methodology: The Department estimated the cost of this section based on a projected SROTC and PLC population of 29,751 as outlined in the Department's FY 2009 Program Budget Review Submission. An example of the monetary incentive would be pay of \$100 per month, for initial enrollment, in a foreign language course. The SROTC and PLC member could receive \$150 per month for a second year of language study, \$200 per month for the third year of language study, and \$250 per month for the fourth year of continuous language study. Incentive pay also would include funding for attaining DoD-specified proficiency in a language, as well as incentive pay for courses abroad.