

## And I should trust YOU with my pension WHY?

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There's sooooo much commotion going on in Congress right now regarding the handling/restructure of the Military Retirement funds - I just was unable to contain my comments any further.

Let's look at some basics:

An E5 - Over 4 years - \$2448.30/mo or approx. \$29,379.60/yr

Based on the fact that this enlisted person is Active Duty - that rate should be divided by 624 - number of hours in a 26 day month (used for the sake of argument - to factor leave time/sick time/ and other unforeseen circumstances. This is also based on a 24 hour day - as an Active Duty service person is "on duty" 24 hours a day - as they are subject to "call to action" at any time - day or night - weekend/holiday/what have you.

This equates to: \$3.92/hr (isn't Federal Minimum Wage \$7.25 /hr - Just asking...)

Average US Congressman - \$13,508.33/mo or approx. \$162,100.00/yr

Starting to see the problem? Congress is in session an average of 145 days per year. That's close to 12 days a month or 288 hours per month (assuming they actually worked a 24 hour day - which as we all know is FAR from the truth) . So - with that, albeit generous, figure in mind - let's see how this compares to our Enlisted person. Drum roll please?

This equates to: \$46.90/hr

Now - we all know that no Congressman works 24 hours a day - nor do they HAVE to do so even if Congress is in emergency session - unlike our servicemen and women - who may be called up to work 24 or more hours in a row. So let's try and make it more realistic as to ACTUAL hours worked... Again, we'll be generous and say that they work 16 hours a day. 16 hours times 12 days is 192 hours per month. So, with THAT figure in mind - the numbers crunch out to:

\$70.36/hr

Now let's go even further - If you serve Active Duty for 20 years (in the Air Force or the Army - the Navy and Marines have a different Guideline) - you can "retire" with 50% of your base pay. An E-5 with 20 yrs in - has a top-end, base pay of \$2,965.50/mo or approx. \$35,586 per year. So let's take 50% of that. The result is an annual "retirement income" of \$17,793/yr or \$1,482.75/mo...

So... our enlisted person may now rest comfortably - knowing they have just retired at \$3,117 more per year than the current federal weighted poverty threshold - or \$259.75/mo more than the same standard.

So let's not be unreasonable - however - let's say that our E-5 made it to E-7 before 20 years hit. That would mean his monthly base pay would be \$4,143/mo or approx. \$49,716/yr. So 50% of that would be \$24,858.00/yr or \$2,071.50/mo. - that would be a whopping \$10,182/yr or \$848.50 per month over the same poverty level guidelines.

And for all this ABUNDANCE of pension - our service person needed only to dedicate their lives in service to this country - for 20 years - every hour of their day - every day of their lives.

Not 8 hours a day, 5 days a week - but ready, available, dedicated to the point of giving their own lives if need be - for 20 years.

And now Congressional bureaucrats have determined that this is "too much" - and that we should just dock their base pay and have them "contribute", mandatorily, to a 401(k) plan -which, based on our current economic situation, would be a controversial investment at best - with no guarantee of dividend or return on investment?

Why is it that I think that it just NOT be ROCKET SCIENCE to determine this is a BAD IDEA?