

Senator Tom Coburn Amendment # 567 - Amends the deficit-reduction reserve fund for government reform to require the reduction of the number of generals and flag officers in the Armed Forces.

Significant savings in Pentagon expenditures can be made by reducing the number of general and flag officers in the military to ratios at the successful end of the Cold War.

Just for historical comparison, at the end of World War II there were more than 2,000 general and flag officers for a 12 million person military force. **Ulysses S Grant was actually only a three-star general when he won the Civil War for the Union. Lieutenant General Grant commanded over 2 million troops.**

There are over 35 four-star generals today among the four military branches of service for 1.2 million active duty troops and around 2.5 million total troops including reserves.

Today, with around one-sixth of the military personnel, fewer Army brigades and divisions, and with fewer ships and planes, the military still has around 50 percent of the general and flag officers (just under 1,000). **Each of these general and flag officers comes with a robust staff of military aides both officer and enlisted as well as civilian administrative support.** Part of this includes a staff of enlisted personnel to assist with cooking for the general and his family and invited guests.

The Department of Defense could realize budgetary savings by reducing general and flag officers from around 1,000 today to a Cold War ratio of five general officers per 10,000 troops (as opposed to the seven the Pentagon has today).

This would be a reduction of around 200 general and flag officers, some of which could be placed in the reserves. A conservative estimate could mean a reduction in 1,000 support personnel costing \$100,000 each per year in pay and benefits allowing the Department of Defense to save \$1 billion over ten years. A further reduction in “stars” – turning some of the 4-stars into 3-stars, some of the 3-stars into 2-stars, could save even more money.

Perhaps more valuable than the financial savings would be the increase in morale by **showing the troops that the senior leaders of the military are willing to sacrifice to forestall cuts elsewhere in the Pentagon budget.**