

Defense include guidelines to be furnished to officer selection boards, would elaborate the requirement in more detail, and would add appropriate instructions for selection boards to section 615 of title 10, United States Code. This amendment is considered in the discussion of section 402 below.

Sec. 662. Promotion policy objectives for joint officers

The House amendment contained a provision (section 302) that would require the Secretary of Defense to establish policies to ensure that Joint Staff officers, as a group, are promoted at a rate not less than the rate of officers assigned to Service headquarters staffs. The provision contained the same promotion rate requirement for joint specialty officers. A third requirement would specify promotion rate policies for officers serving in other joint duty assignments.

The Senate amendment contained a provision (section 115) that would require the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the promotion, retention, and assignment policies of the Services provide sufficient incentives for officers to seek joint duty assignments.

The Senate recedes with two amendments. The first Senate amendment would eliminate the mandatory promotion rates and, instead, require the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the qualifications of officers assigned to joint duty assignments are such that the promotion rates specified in the House amendment will be achieved. The conferees agreed that the underlying objective of the provision concerning promotion rates is to ensure that highly capable officers are selected for joint duty assignments—in the case of the Joint Staff or joint specialty, outstanding officers who are, or will be, qualified as a group to be promoted at the same high rates as officers assigned to Service headquarters staffs. The Senate amendment, in focusing on the qualifications of officers selected for joint duty assignments, more accurately expresses congressional intent with respect to this provision.

The second Senate amendment would require the Secretary of Defense to report to the Congress no less often than every 6 months on the promotion rates of joint duty officers. In addition, if the promotion rates should fail to meet the established objectives, the Secretary of Defense would be required to notify the Congress immediately and explain what actions are being taken to prevent further failures. The conferees discourage any interpretation that the first Senate amendment suggests that the Congress is less committed to the objective of manning joint duty assignments with outstanding officers than the House amendment indicates. The second Senate amendment is intended to require notice whenever the Department of Defense fails to achieve the objectives originally established by the House amendment.

Sec. 663. Education

Capstone Course for New General and Flag Officers

The House amendment contained a provision (section 301) that would require, subject to a case-by-case waiver, that officers selected for promotion to brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half)