

Military Recruits Can Select Sneakers if Approved by Army Podiatrist

The Defense Department (DoD) has issued a formal notice asking American manufacturers who want to make an athletic shoe for service members to come forward and be counted. Under a 2002 exemption from the Berry Amendment, which mandates clothes for troops must be U.S.-made, the Army, Navy, and Air Force issue a cash allowance that allows recruits to select sneakers based their own comfort and injury-prevention needs. Despite pressure from Congress and American shoe makers, DoD has for several years resisted ending the exemption, framing it as an issue of choice and safety for troops.

At present, recruits in the Army, Navy, and Air Force can take the allowance, or a voucher, to a reception center or military clothing store where they can be fitted and select from footwear approved by the Army podiatrist, according to a defense official. The assortment primarily includes Asics, Brooks, and New Balance brand sneakers.

Source: PM News via *Army Times* [2/16/14]