

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 11, 2013

Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel,

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, signed into law on January 2, 2013, provided specific religious freedom protections for servicemembers generally and chaplains specifically. The provisions require the Armed Forces to accommodate servicemembers' moral and religious convictions, as long as they do not "threaten good order and discipline." The language also prohibits the military from using an individual's beliefs as the basis for adverse personnel action and ensures that chaplains will not be forced "to perform any rite, ritual, or ceremony that is contrary to [their] conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs."

When President Obama signed the NDAA into law he contemporaneously issued a statement criticizing several provisions of the bill, including the religious freedom protections. The President called the protections "unnecessary and ill-advised" and said "The Secretary of Defense will ensure that the implementing regulations do not permit or condone discriminatory actions that compromise good order and discipline or otherwise violate military codes of conduct. My Administration remains fully committed to continuing the successful implementation of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and to protecting the rights of gay and lesbian service members; Section 533 will not alter that."

It is offensive for the President to suggest that protecting the free exercise of religion safeguarded by the Constitution will result in discriminatory actions that compromise good order and discipline. Labeling servicemembers of faith as discriminatory does a disservice to the countless individuals who bravely serve alongside people of diverse political, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Despite the President's insinuation to the contrary, we are confident that the implementation of the religious freedom protections will not hamper the respect and professionalism displayed by men and women in uniform.

Our primary concern lies with the regulations the Department of Defense (DoD) will issue to implement the NDAA religious freedom protections. The constitutional separation of powers requires that DoD issue implementing regulations that exemplify congressional intent, not the President's personal opinion on the merit of the measure. DoD is responsible for executing the law as written.

Congress included religious freedom protections in the NDAA to ensure that servicemembers of faith are not singled out for intimidation and adverse personnel action because of their religious beliefs; and that chaplains are not forced to participate in actions that violate their consciences. Our request is simply that DoD employ safeguards to ensure that it does not trample these



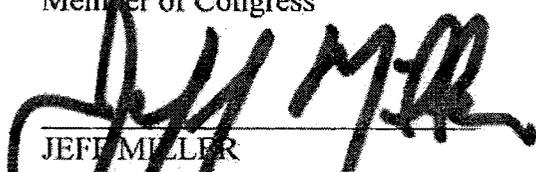
constitutionally protected religious freedoms in its pursuit of other objectives. We call on DoD to enthusiastically accommodate servicemembers' moral and religious convictions and refrain from using servicemembers' beliefs as the basis for adverse personnel action.

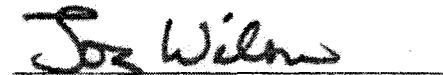
Amidst the aggressive changes made by the Administration, servicemembers of faith must not be demeaned or overlooked. These individuals do not leave their faith at home when they volunteer to serve. We remain committed to ensuring that they are never forced to do so.

Sincerely,

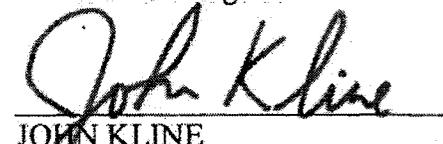
  
J. RANDY FORBES  
Member of Congress

  
MIKE MCINTYRE  
Member of Congress

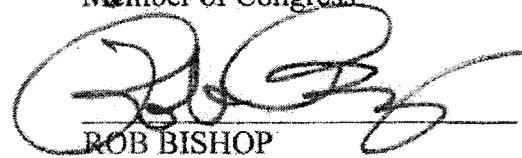
  
JEFF MILLER  
Member of Congress

  
JOE WILSON  
Member of Congress

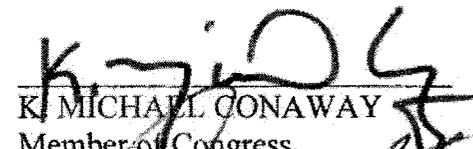
  
ROB WITTMAN  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN KLINE  
Member of Congress

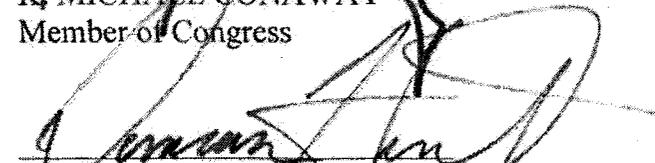
  
WALTER JONES  
Member of Congress

  
ROB BISHOP  
Member of Congress

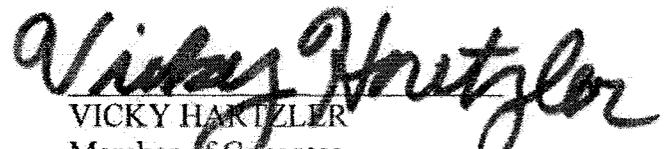
  
TRENT FRANKS  
Member of Congress

  
K. MICHAEL CONAWAY  
Member of Congress

  
DOUG LAMBORN  
Member of Congress

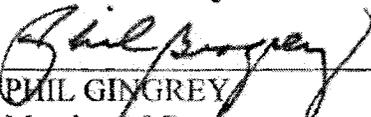
  
DUNCAN HUNTER  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN FLEMING  
Member of Congress

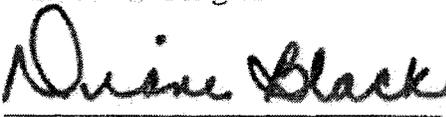
  
VICKY HARTZLER  
Member of Congress

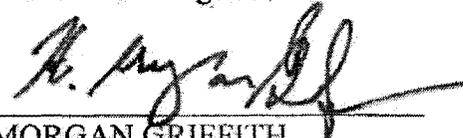
  
SCOTT GARRETT  
Member of Congress

  
STEVE SOUTHERLAND  
Member of Congress

  
PHIL GINGREY  
Member of Congress

  
RENEE ELLMERS  
Member of Congress

  
DIANE BLACK  
Member of Congress

  
MORGAN GRIFFITH  
Member of Congress

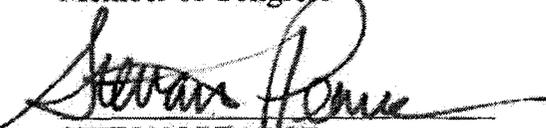
  
TIM WALBERG  
Member of Congress

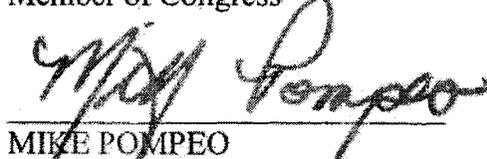
  
MARSHA BLACKBURN  
Member of Congress

  
RANDY NEUGEBAUER  
Member of Congress

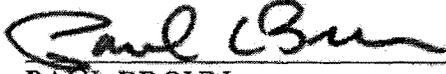
  
ROBERT LATTA  
Member of Congress

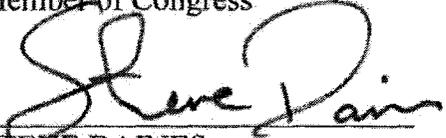
  
ALAN NUNNELEE  
Member of Congress

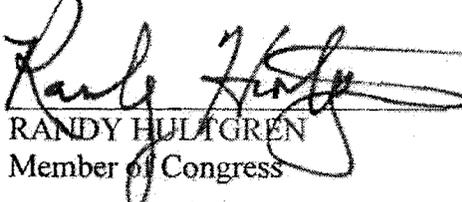
  
STEVAN PEARCE  
Member of Congress

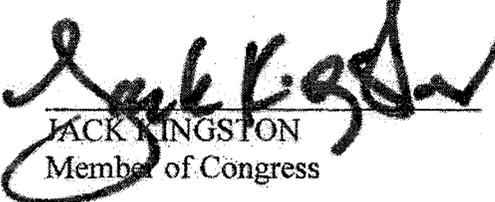
  
MIKE POMPEO  
Member of Congress

  
MICHELE BACHMANN  
Member of Congress

  
PAUL BROUN  
Member of Congress

  
STEVE DAINES  
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RANDY HULTGREN  
Member of Congress

  
JACK KINGSTON  
Member of Congress

*Austin Scott*

AUSTIN SCOTT  
Member of Congress

*Steve Palazzo*

STEVE PALAZZO  
Member of Congress

*Kristi Noem*

KRISTI NOEM  
Member of Congress

*Jim Bridenstine*

JIM BRIDENSTINE  
Member of Congress

*Jim Jordan*

JIM JORDAN  
Member of Congress

*Jeb Hensarling*

JEB HENSARLING  
Member of Congress

*Bob Goodlatte*

BOB GOODLATTE  
Member of Congress

*Jason Chaffetz*

JASON CHAFFETZ  
Member of Congress

*Joe Pitts*

JOE PITTS  
Member of Congress

*James Lankford*

JAMES LANKFORD  
Member of Congress

*Gus Bilirakis*

GUS BILIRAKIS  
Member of Congress

*Chris Smith*

CHRIS SMITH  
Member of Congress

*Bill Flores*

BILL FLORES  
Member of Congress

*Robert B. Aderholt*

ROBERT ADERHOLT  
Member of Congress

*Tim Huelskamp*

TIM HUELSKAMP  
Member of Congress

*Gregg Harper*

GREGG HARPER  
Member of Congress

*Sam Johnson*

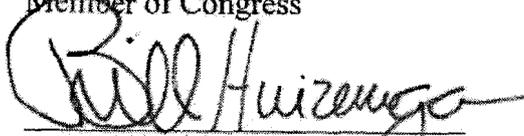
SAM JOHNSON  
Member of Congress

*Frank Wolf*

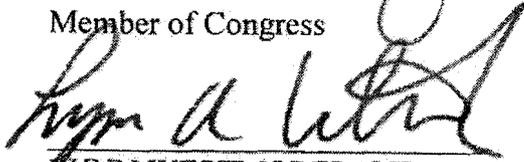
FRANK WOLF  
Member of Congress



RANDY WEBER  
Member of Congress



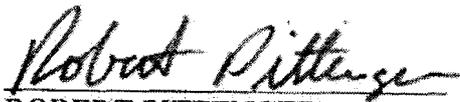
BILL HUIZENGA  
Member of Congress



LYNN WESTMORELAND  
Member of Congress



STEVE STIVERS  
Member of Congress



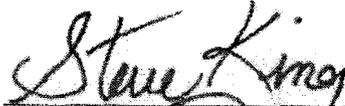
ROBERT PITTENGER  
Member of Congress



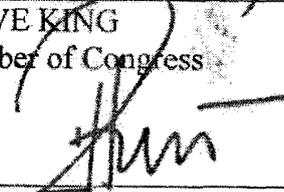
DOUG LAMALFA  
Member of Congress



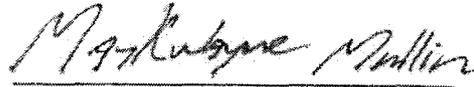
LOUIE GOHMERT  
Member of Congress



STEVE KING  
Member of Congress



ROBERT HURT  
Member of Congress



MARKWAYNE MULLIN  
Member of Congress

MAC THORNBERRY, TEXAS  
WALTER B. JONES, NORTH CAROLINA  
J. RANDY FORBES, VIRGINIA  
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JOE WILSON, SOUTH CAROLINA  
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MIKE ROGERS, ALABAMA  
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BILL SHUSTER, PENNSYLVANIA  
K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, TEXAS  
DOUG LAMBOURN, COLORADO  
ROBERT J. WITTMAN, VIRGINIA  
DUNCAN HUNTER, CALIFORNIA  
JOHN C. FLEMING, M.D., LOUISIANA  
MIKE COFFMAN, COLORADO  
E. SCOTT RIGELL, VIRGINIA  
CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON, NEW YORK  
VICKY HARTZLER, MISSOURI  
JOSEPH J. HECK, NEVADA  
JON RUNYAN, NEW JERSEY  
AUSTIN SCOTT, GEORGIA  
STEVEN M. PALAZZO, MISSISSIPPI  
MARTHA ROBY, ALABAMA  
MD BRDDKS, ALABAMA  
RICHARD B. NUGENT, FLORIDA  
KRISTI L. NOEM, SOUTH DAKOTA  
PAUL COOK, CALIFORNIA  
JIM BRIDENSTINE, OKLAHOMA  
BRAD R. WENSTRUP, OHIO  
JACKIE WALORSKI, INDIANA

LORETTA SANCHEZ, CALIFORNIA  
MIKE MCINTYRE, NORTH CAROLINA  
ROBERT A. BRADY, PENNSYLVANIA  
ROBERT E. ANDREWS, NEW JERSEY  
SUSAN A. DAVIS, CALIFORNIA  
JAMES R. LANGEVIN, RHODE ISLAND  
RICK LARSEN, WASHINGTON  
JIM COOPER, TENNESSEE  
MADELINE Z. BDRGALLO, GUAM  
JOE COURTNEY, CONNECTICUT  
DAVE LOEBACK, IOWA  
NIKI TSONGAS, MASSACHUSETTS  
JOHN R. GARAMENDI, CALIFORNIA  
HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON JR., GEORGIA  
COLLEEN HANABUSA, HAWAII  
JACKIE SPEIER, CALIFORNIA  
RON BARBER, ARIZONA  
ANDRÉ CARSON, INDIANA  
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JOAQUIN CASTRO, TEXAS  
TAMMY DUCKWORTH, ILLINOIS  
SCOTT H. PETERS, CALIFORNIA  
WILLIAM L. ENYART, ILLINOIS  
PETE P. GALLEGO, TEXAS  
MARC A. VEASEY, TEXAS

# COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

March 12, 2013

ROBERT L. SIMMONS, II, STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

Recently, a convening authority overturned the guilty verdict in an Air Force court-martial involving sexual assault charges. That decision has raised significant concerns among Members of Congress regarding not only the appropriateness of the decision, but also the rationale for the underlying statutory authority upon which the decision was based. We share those concerns.

Given the intense Member interest in this issue, we expect that it will be a matter addressed in the Committee's deliberations on the national defense authorization bill for fiscal year 2014. In order to assist our deliberations, we ask your expeditious responses to the following questions:

- How is a convening authority's ability to overturn the adjudged sexual assault conviction and sentence of a General Court-Martial, as in the case of Lieutenant Colonel James Wilkerson, USAF, appropriate and consistent with justice, good order and discipline, and the Department's policy of zero tolerance for sexual assault?
- What changes, if any, should be made to Article 60 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice?

To further assist our deliberations in this matter, we request that you provide the Committee with the following, as soon as possible:



OSD002977-13

The Honorable Chuck Hagel

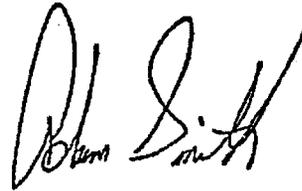
March 12, 2013

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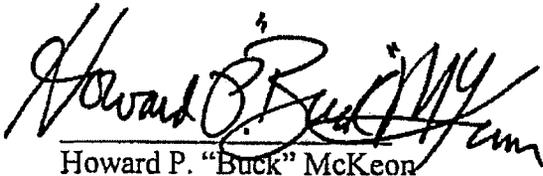
- An analysis of the underlying rationale for the convening authority's role and responsibilities in the UCMJ? How has it developed over time?
- A summary, by service, going back to 2008, of the cases and times when a convening authority in a general or special court-martial, exercised the authority under Article 60, UCMJ, to dismiss or disapprove either in full or in part the findings or sentence adjudged by the court-martial, or to change a finding of guilty in one charge to a finding of guilty to a lesser included offense, or ordered a proceeding in revision or a rehearing on either the adjudged findings or sentence.
- An analysis of how other military justice systems address the role of the convening authority in courts-martial.

We look forward to your response and with working with you as the Committee deliberates this issue as part of the national defense authorization bill for fiscal year 2014.

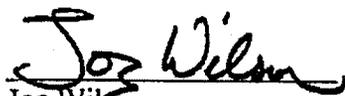
Sincerely,



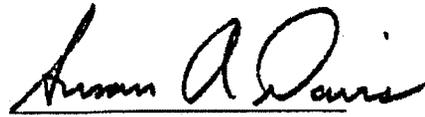
Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Armed Services



Howard P. "Buck" McKeon  
Chairman  
House Committee on Armed Services



Joe Wilson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee Military Personnel



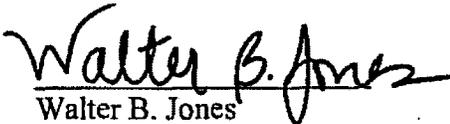
Susan A. Davis  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee Military Personnel

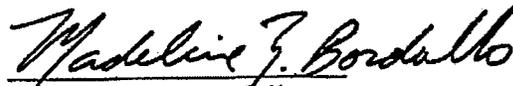


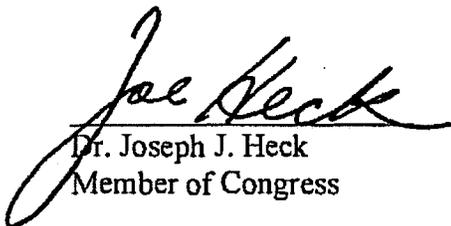
Michael R. Turner  
Member of Congress



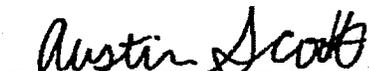
Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress

  
Walter B. Jones  
Member of Congress

  
Madeleine Z. Bordallo  
Member of Congress

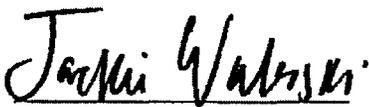
  
Dr. Joseph J. Heck  
Member of Congress

  
David Loeb sack  
Member of Congress

  
Austin Scott  
Member of Congress

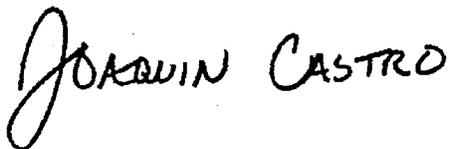


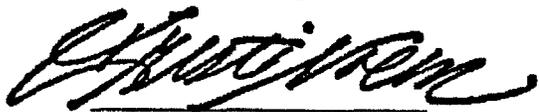
  
Brad R. Wenstrup  
Member of Congress

  
Jackie Walorski  
Member of Congress



  
Christopher P. Gibson  
Member of Congress



  
Kristi L. Noem  
Member of Congress

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JERRY MORAN, KANSAS  
JOHN BOOZMAN, ARKANSAS  
DEAN HELLER, NEVADA

LUPE WIESEL, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 25, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We are writing to highlight an issue of vital importance to our nation's veterans. As a veteran yourself, a former Deputy Administrator of the Veterans Administration, and an advocate for veterans during your tenure as a Senator, we are confident that you thoroughly understand and appreciate the challenges facing the veteran population today.

One of the largest challenges confronting the Department of Veterans Affairs is its continuing struggle to provide timely and accurate claims decisions. The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs recently held a hearing to examine VA's efforts to transform the compensation claims system. The relationship between VA and DoD was discussed numerous times during the hearing. These discussions emphasized the absolute need for continued collaboration, cooperation, and commitment between these two agencies. As VA continues to move forward with implementation of its plan to transform the compensation claims system, DoD's role becomes increasingly vital.

We appreciated hearing that DoD and VA have recently reached an agreement to speed the delivery of evidence necessary for the adjudication of compensation claims. Under this agreement, DoD will be responsible for gathering service treatment records, validating the completeness of the records, and providing the complete package of records to VA. Our understanding is that such packages are still transferred to VA in paper format, but that DoD has accelerated the development of its Healthcare Artifact and Image Management Solution to facilitate the electronic transfer of service treatment records by December 2013.

We request that you ensure DoD makes smart investments in the resources and manpower necessary to expedite the transition from paper to electronic records transfer. Ultimately, a common overarching information technology solution must be created to provide seamless electronic transmission of the information necessary to speed the processing of benefit decisions. We would also request that DoD work closely with VA to ensure that Guard and Reserve records are included in this process. It is imperative that DoD and VA work collaboratively to ensure a seamless transition process.

Moving forward, we ask that you work to strengthen DoD's existing partnership with VA as it continues to transform its compensation claims system into one fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We look



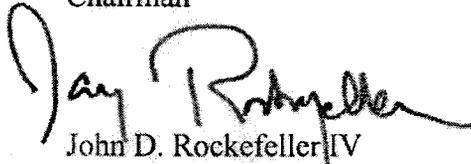
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forward to working together to ensure that the brave men and women who have put their lives on the line to defend our country receive the benefits that they undoubtedly earned and deserve.

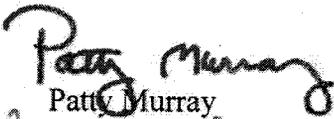
Sincerely,



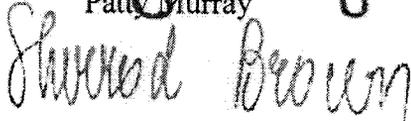
Bernard Sanders  
Chairman



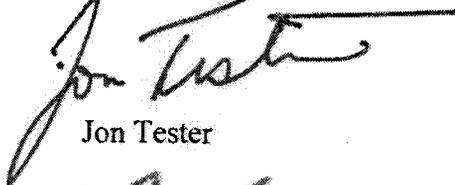
John D. Rockefeller IV



Patty Murray



Sherrod Brown



Jon Tester



Mark Begich



Richard Blumenthal



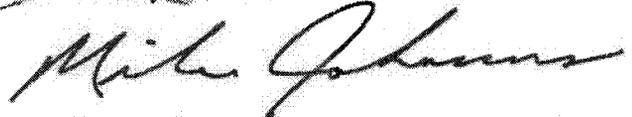
Mazie Hirono



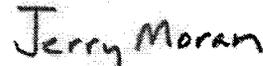
Richard Durbin  
Ranking Member



Johnny Isakson



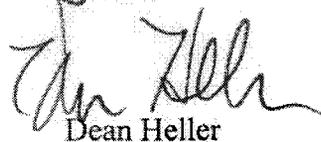
Mike Johanns



Jerry Moran



John Boozman



Dean Heller

cc: The Honorable Eric Shinseki

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you proceed with your strategic review of the Department's priorities, we would request that you also turn your attention to one of the Department's most strategic assets: its civilian personnel. Specifically, we ask that you review sequestration-related actions with respect to civilian personnel, particularly the widespread use of furloughs, the firing of temporary and term employees, and the freeze on new hires.

These actions currently being implemented were announced in the January 10 guidance issued by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, long before the Department knew the specific funding levels that would be available to it for the entirety of fiscal year 2013. H.R. 933, the Consolidated and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2013, increases funding to the Department's Operation and Maintenance accounts from FY12 to FY13 by an amount that exceeds the anticipated savings from the actions imposed in the January 10 guidance.

It is increasingly clear that these actions are threatening to undermine mission performance and, as a result, mission readiness. We understand that your office is currently reviewing installations' and components' petitions for relief, either because implementation will increase costs — e.g., the workforce will have to work overtime to complete work by contractual deadlines — or is not necessary, e.g., because an installation has workload already funded through a Working Capital Fund. However, to date we have been told only that all civilian furloughs are being applied in the same manner across the Department, regardless of whether a service component or defense agency has the resources to buy back the furlough days.

Additionally, the manner in which the Department is imposing furloughs exacts punishing reductions on components and agencies that downsized their civilian staffs in fiscal years 2009 and 2010 in compliance with prior Defense guidance, while appearing to reward departments and agencies that did not shed workforce. In essence, under the current furlough guidance, the more streamlined, efficient organizations are footing the bill for those that are still over strength.

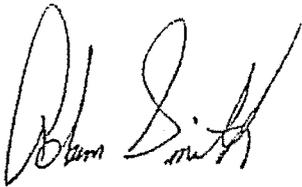


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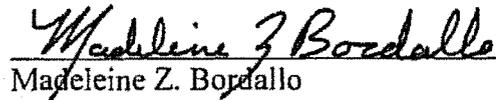
As sequestration continues, the Department inevitably will also have to reduce spending on service contracts. However, even though new civilian hiring is all but stopped, the same constraint might not be imposed on new contracts. Even though temporary and term employees are being systematically fired, not all service contracts will be terminated. Even though the vast majority of civilian employees are being subjected to furloughs which could result in a 20% reduction in income, not all service contracts will be reduced in scope by one-fifth.

We are not taking the position that civilian personnel should not bear sacrifices because of sequestration. Rather, we strongly urge the Department to make merit-based versus indiscriminate decisions on furloughs and firing temporary and term employees and that managers be allowed the discretion to make offsetting cuts to comply with sequestration.

Sincerely,



Adam Smith



Madeleine Z. Bordallo



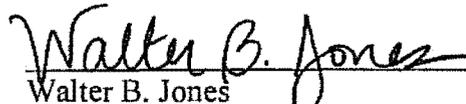
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Michael R. Turner



Robert E. Andrews



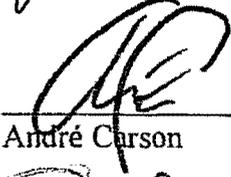
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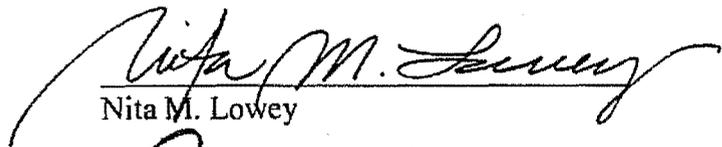
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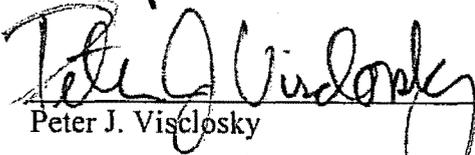
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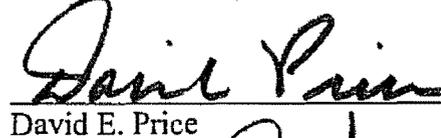
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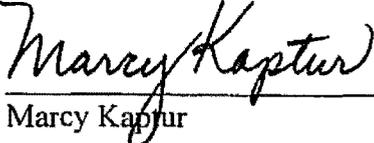
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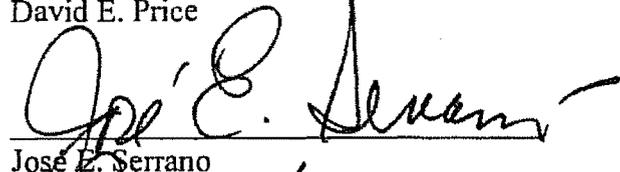
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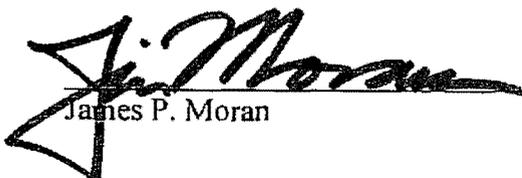
David E. Price



Marcy Kaptur



José E. Serrano



James P. Moran



Chaka Fattah

Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Lucille Roybal-Allard

Sanford D. Bishop  
Sanford D. Bishop

Tom Cole  
Tom Cole

Ed Pastor  
Ed Pastor

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Eleanor Holmes Norton

Danny K. Davis  
Danny K. Davis

Al Green  
Al Green

George Miller  
George Miller

John F. Tierney  
John F. Tierney

Rubén Hinojosa  
Rubén Hinojosa

Bruce L. Braley  
Bruce L. Braley

Bobby L. Rush  
Bobby L. Rush

Peter Welch  
Peter Welch

Nick J. Rahall II  
Nick J. Rahall II

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Carolyn B. Maloney

Frank D. Lucas  
Frank D. Lucas

Albo Sires  
Albo Sires

Stephen F. Lynch  
Stephen F. Lynch

Alcee L. Hastings  
Alcee L. Hastings

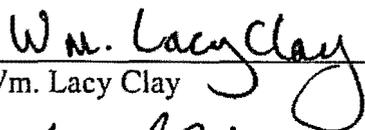
Janice D. Schakowsky  
Janice D. Schakowsky

Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Christopher H. Smith  
Christopher H. Smith

Steve Cohen  
Steve Cohen

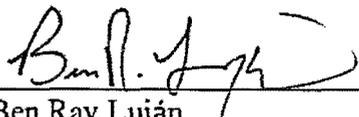
C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger



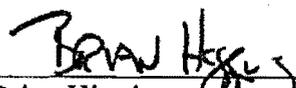
Wm. Lacy Clay



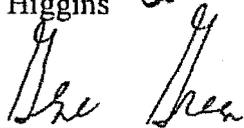
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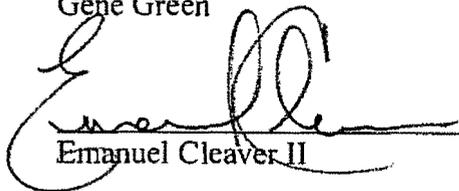
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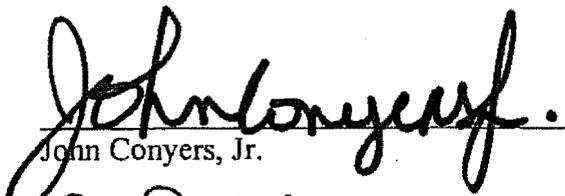
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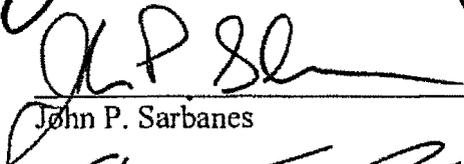
Gene Green



Emanuel Cleaver II



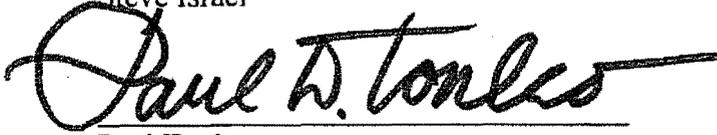
John Conyers, Jr.



John P. Sarbanes



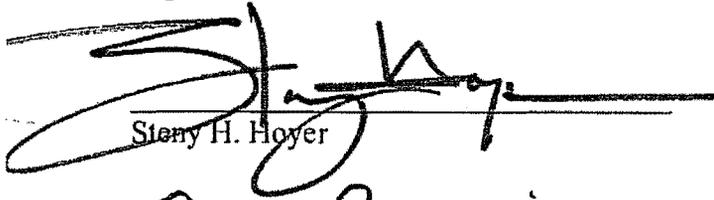
Steve Israel



Paul Tonko



Elijah E. Cummings



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Steny H. Hoyer



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James R. Langevin



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Robert A. Brady



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Rick Larsen



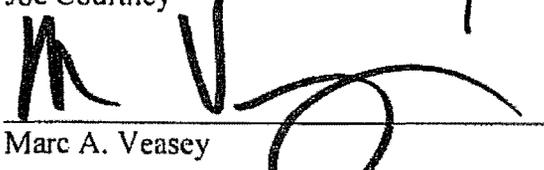
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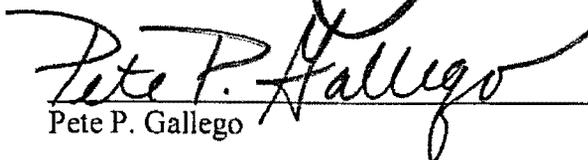
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Joe Courtney



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Marc A. Veasey



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Pete P. Gallego



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William L. Owens



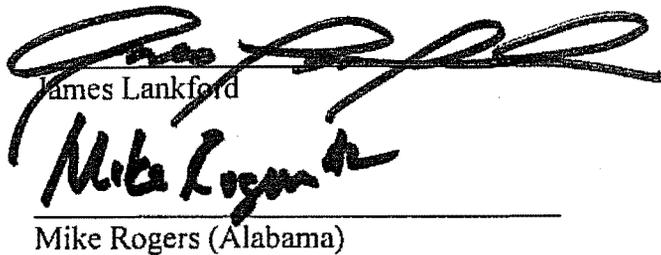
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Lou Barletta



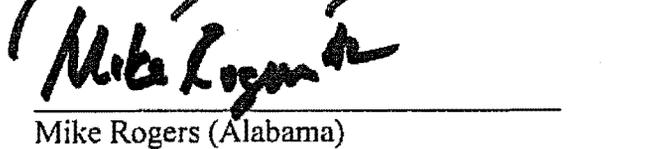
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Ann M. Kuster



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James Lankford



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Mike Rogers (Alabama)



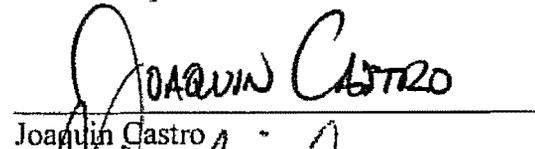
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Tammy Duckworth



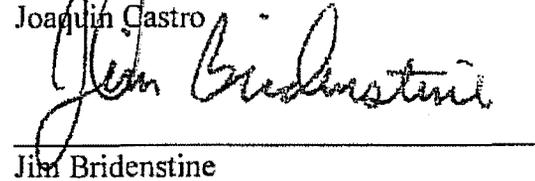
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Rob Bishop



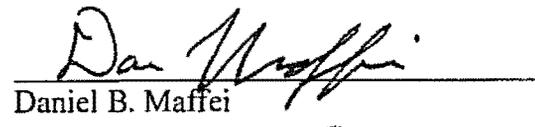
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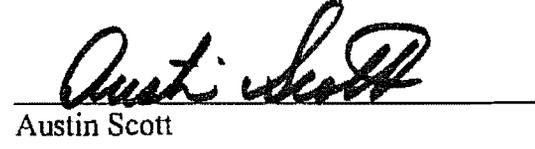
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Daniel B. Maffei



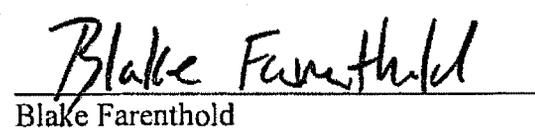
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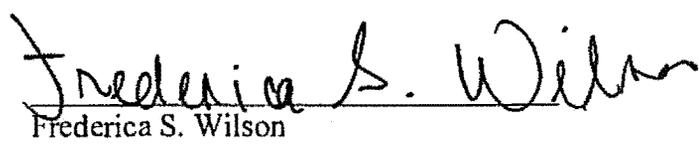
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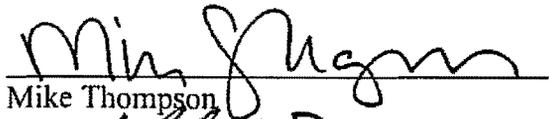
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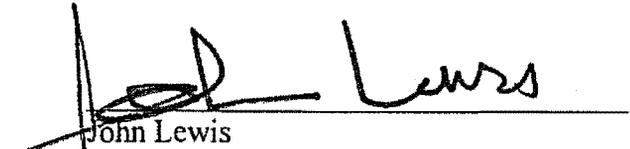
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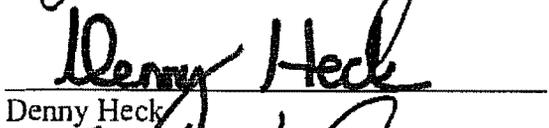
  
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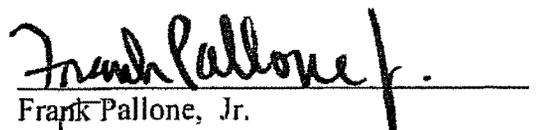
  
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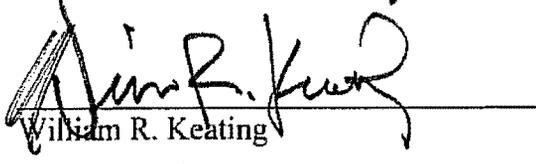
  
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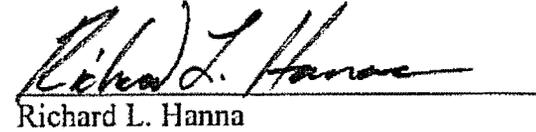
  
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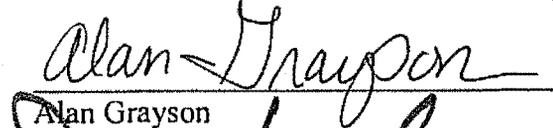
  
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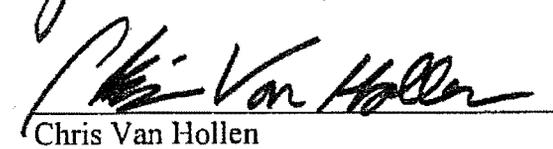
  
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Tom Marino

  
Gerald E. Connolly

  
Alan Grayson

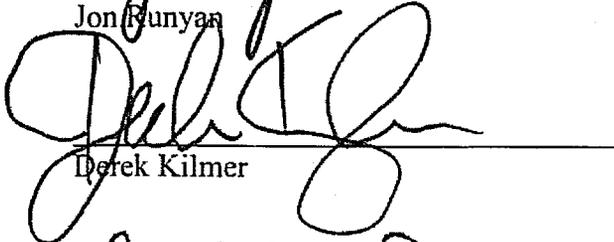
  
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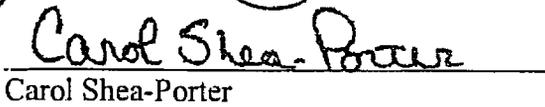
  
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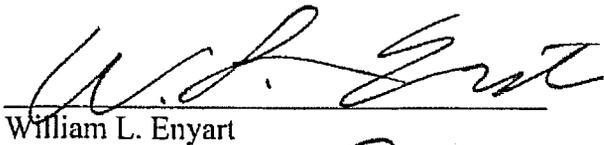
  
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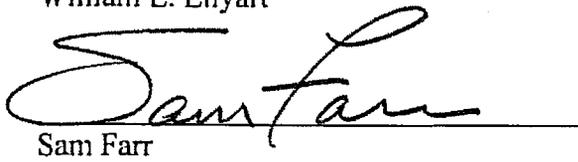
  
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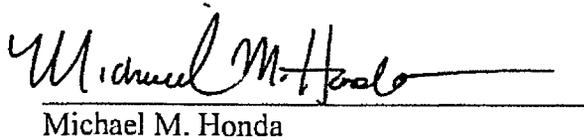
  
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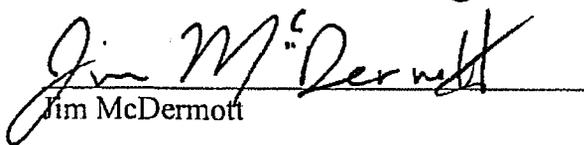
  
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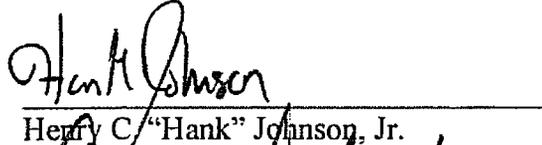
  
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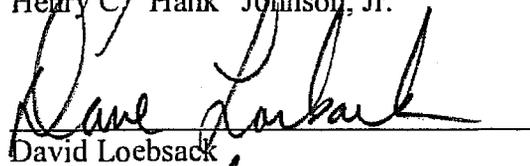
  
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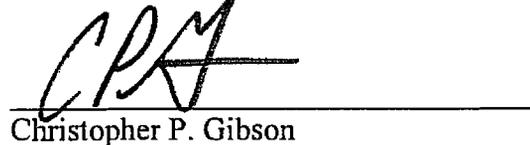
  
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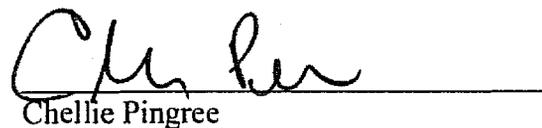
  
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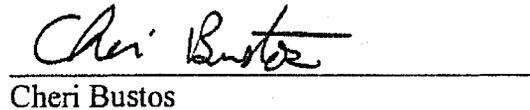
  
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David Loebsack

  
Christopher P. Gibson

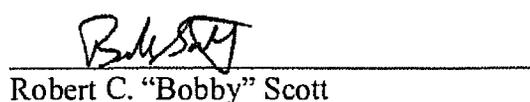
  
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Chellie Pingree

  
Cheri Bustos

  
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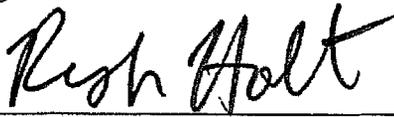
  
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

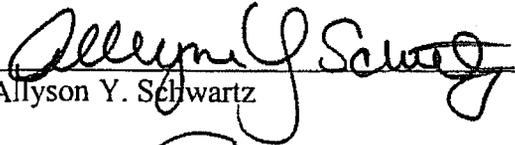
The Honorable Chuck Hagel

April 23, 2013

Page 8



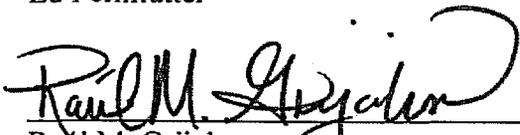
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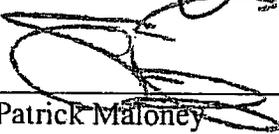
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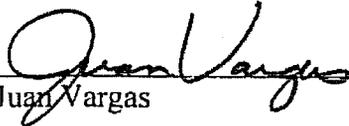
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Raúl M. Grijalva



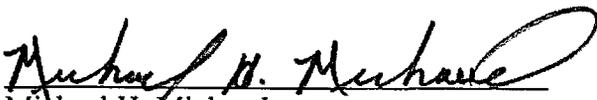
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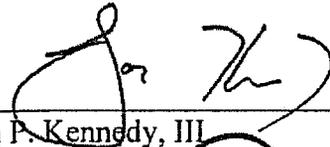
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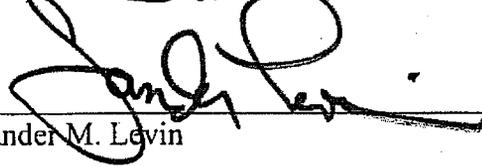
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Michael H. Michaud



Joseph P. Kennedy, III



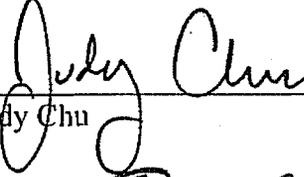
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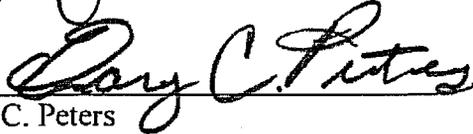
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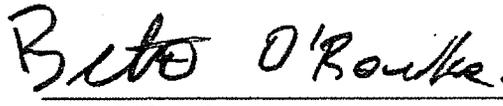
Matthew A. Cartwright



Judy Chu



Gary C. Peters



Beto O'Rourke

Cc: The Honorable Robert Hale, Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 13, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel,

It has come to our attention that as recently as April 23, 2013, Pentagon officials met with Mr. Michael "Mikey" Weinstein, Founder and President of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF), to discuss religious freedom in the military. As we have great concern regarding numerous inflammatory statements from Mr. Weinstein in recent weeks, we are seeking further clarification on the meeting that took place late last month.

In a recent posting in his own words, Mr. Weinstein characterized men and women of the Christian faith as, "monsters who terrorize their fellow Americans" and offered consent to labeling individual faith based family groups as "hate groups." Mr. Weinstein also urged exposure of these "pathologically anti-gay, Islamophobic, and rabidly intolerant agitators," equating them as "die-hard enemies of the United States Constitution." There are additional previous examples where Mr. Weinstein compares men and women of faith serving in the Pentagon to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, and followers of the Christian faith to that of Hitler and Stalin. Also of concern are statements equating spiritual expression to "spiritual rape" and sedition and treason within the military. Such sentiments are consistent throughout Mr. Weinstein's printed and other media materials.

We question the Pentagon's judgment and reasoning in accepting a meeting from someone with a history of such statements and sentiments like Mr. Weinstein. We would respectfully request clarification on the nature of the meeting and detailed information regarding the following items:

1. Confirmation of a meeting between Pentagon officials and representatives from MRFF, as well as a list of meeting attendees, both military and civilian;
2. The purpose of the meeting, specifically whether the meeting was organized to inform deliberative policy for the Armed Forces, as well as a summary of the meeting's discussion;
3. Prior to arranging this meeting, were Pentagon officials aware of Mr. Weinstein's previous statements, including those referenced above?
4. In addition to any meetings already held, are there additional meetings scheduled?



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Noting that this is a particularly critical time for the Department of Defense as they finalize regulations protecting the moral and religious convictions of service members and military chaplains, we would appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

Thank you and we look forward to the favor of a reply.

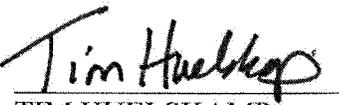
Sincerely,

  
JOHN FLEMING, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
STEVE SCALISE  
Member of Congress

  
JOSEPH R. PITTS  
Member of Congress

  
MICHELE BACHMANN  
Member of Congress

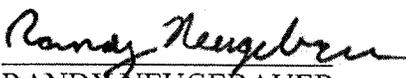
  
TIM HUELSKAMP  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN R. CARTER  
Member of Congress

  
LYNN WESTMORLAND  
Member of Congress

  
LYNN JENKINS  
Member of Congress

  
LOUIE GOHMERT  
Member of Congress

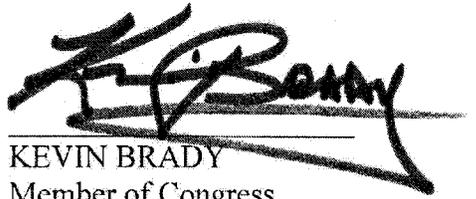
  
RANDY NEUGEBAUER  
Member of Congress

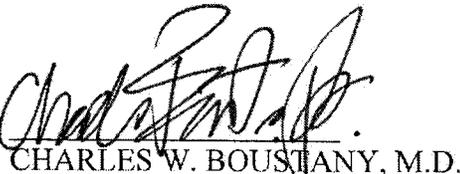
  
MIKE POMPEO  
Member of Congress

  
FRANK R. WOLF  
Member of Congress

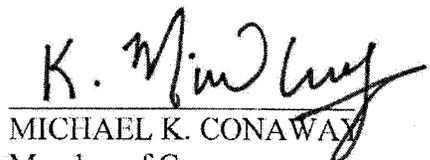
  
TOM COTTON  
Member of Congress

  
KENNY MARCHANT  
Member of Congress

  
KEVIN BRADY  
Member of Congress

  
CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
ALAN NUNNELEE  
Member of Congress

  
MICHAEL K. CONAWAY  
Member of Congress

STEVAN PEARCE  
Member of Congress

PETE OLSON  
Member of Congress

JIM BRIDENSTINE  
Member of Congress

TIM WALBERG  
Member of Congress

JOHN A. CULBERSON  
Member of Congress

VICKY HARTZLER  
Member of Congress

JOHN SHIMKUS  
Member of Congress

STEVE DAINES  
Member of Congress

TRENT FRANKS  
Member of Congress

JEFF DUNCAN  
Member of Congress

BILL JOHNSON  
Member of Congress

STEVE CHABOT  
Member of Congress

ROBERT B. ADERHOLT  
Member of Congress

DOUG LAMBORN  
Member of Congress

JIM JORDAN  
Member of Congress

MIKE KELLY  
Member of Congress

STEVEN M. PALAZZO  
Member of Congress

ANDY HARRIS, M.D.  
Member of Congress

MARKWAYNE MULLIN  
Member of Congress

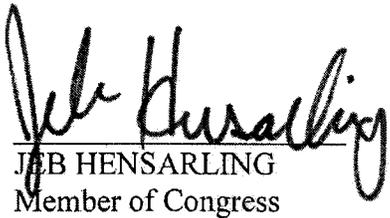
AUSTIN SCOTT  
Member of Congress

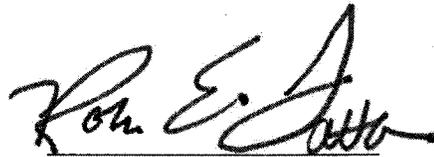
MO BROOKS  
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ROB BISHOP  
Member of Congress

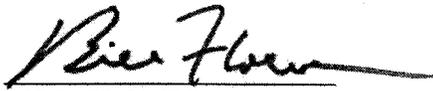
WALTER B. JONES  
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KEITH J. ROTHFUS  
Member of Congress

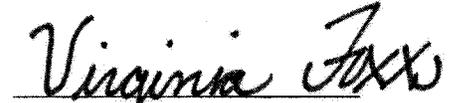
  
JEB HENSARLING  
Member of Congress

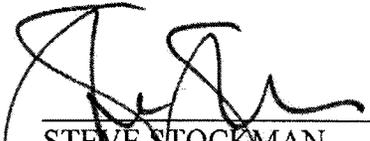
  
ROBERT E. LATTA  
Member of Congress

  
RON DESANTIS  
Member of Congress

  
BILL FLORES  
Member of Congress

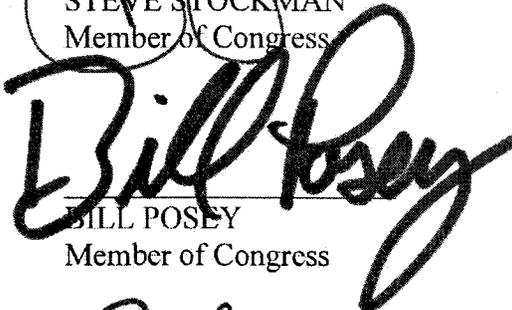
  
KERRY BENTIVOLIO  
Member of Congress

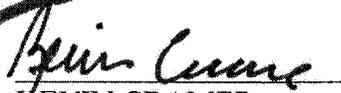
  
VIRGINIA FOXX  
Member of Congress

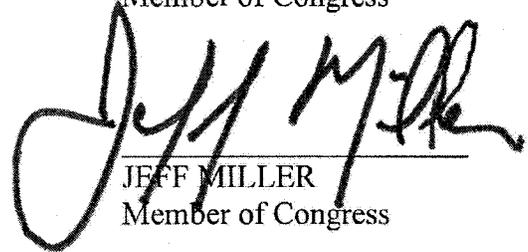
  
STEVE STOCKMAN  
Member of Congress

  
LAMAR SMITH  
Member of Congress

  
PAUL C. BROUN, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
BILL POSEY  
Member of Congress

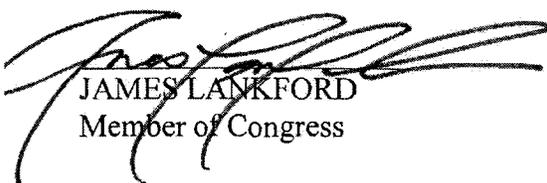
  
KEVIN CRAMER  
Member of Congress

  
JEFF MILLER  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN KLINE  
Member of Congress

  
RICHARD B. NUGENT  
Member of Congress

  
JACK KINGSTON  
Member of Congress

  
JAMES LANKFORD  
Member of Congress

  
TODD ROKITA  
Member of Congress

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 13, 2013

The Honorable Charles Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
Office of the Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel,

Religious freedom is an integral component of America's greatness and has been a vital pillar of our nation from the very beginning. As you noted during the House Armed Services Committee Hearing on April 11, 2013, the protection of religious freedom is fundamental to our country. Congress recognized this fact when it included religious conscience protections for our servicemembers in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The conscience protections which Congress included in section 533 of the National Defense Authorization Act provided specific religious freedom protections for servicemembers generally and chaplains specifically. The provisions require the Armed Forces to accommodate servicemembers' moral and religious convictions, as long as they do not "threaten good order and discipline." The language also prohibits the military from using an individual's beliefs as the basis for adverse personnel action and ensures that chaplains will not be forced "to perform any rite, ritual, or ceremony that is contrary to [their] conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs."

Upon signing the NDAA into law, President Obama said the conscience protections were "unnecessary and ill-advised." This statement, coupled with recent events, raises concerns that the military is developing a culture that is hostile to religion. A recently revealed power point presentation used in equal opportunity training to an Army reserve unit in Pennsylvania included evangelical Christians, Catholics, Mormons, Sunni Muslims, and some Jews on a list of religious extremist groups alongside groups like Al Qaeda and Hamas. A memo regarding visitation policies at Walter Reed issued in December 2011 prohibited visitors from bringing Bibles and other religious materials on the premises. A particularly concerning memorandum issued on September 1, 2011, General Norton A. Schwartz prohibited commanders from notifying Airmen about Chaplain Corps programs, stating that only Air Force chaplains are trained to provide leadership on religious matters.

As you acknowledged, these assaults should not be happening. Congress deliberately included religious freedom protections in the NDAA to address this growing pattern of hostility and to protect the constitutionally guaranteed right of religious freedom for our servicemembers and chaplains.

Under section 533, you have been tasked with implementing regulations that carry out the conscience protections passed by Congress. In your testimony you indicated that, you "will comply with all the NDAA directives." As Members of Congress who voted for the inclusion of these protections in the defense policy bill, we are deeply concerned that the Department of

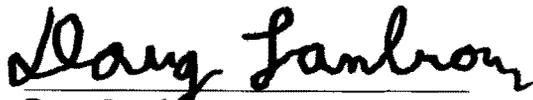


Defense may have consulted with the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, an organization that is focused on silencing religious freedom in the military, regarding policies affecting these religious freedom rights of our nation's servicemembers.

We request the names of all organizations you are consulting in drafting regulations to comply with the NDAA and the date by which you expect to have the regulations protecting conscience protections, as called for under the law, finalized and implemented.

We appreciate your expressed commitment to addressing this matter. Your leadership as Secretary of Defense is vital to protecting religious liberty in our military. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

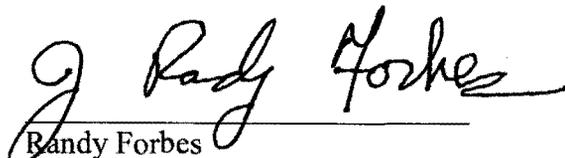
Sincerely,



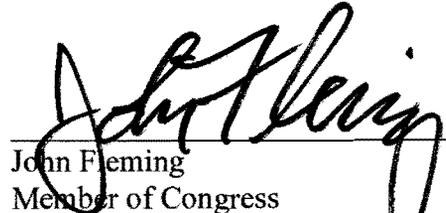
Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress



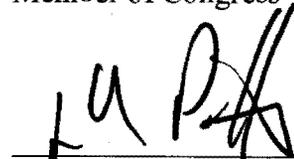
Steve Scalise  
Member of Congress



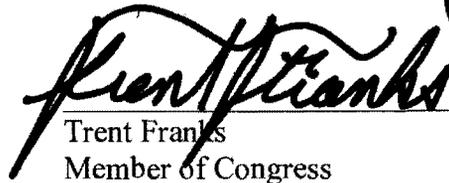
Randy Forbes  
Member of Congress



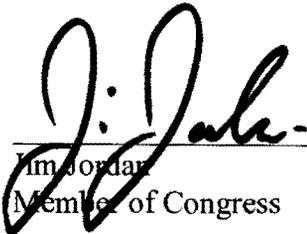
John Fleming  
Member of Congress



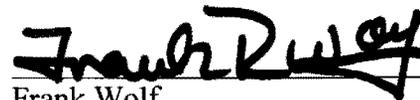
Joe Pitts  
Member of Congress



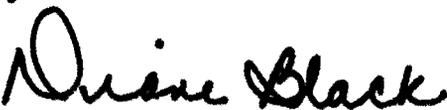
Trent Franks  
Member of Congress



Jim Jordan  
Member of Congress



Frank Wolf  
Member of Congress

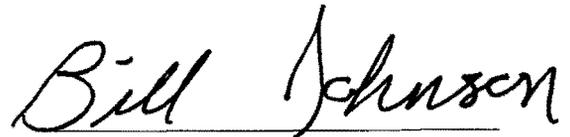


Diane Black  
Member of Congress

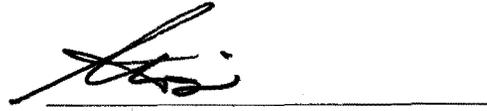


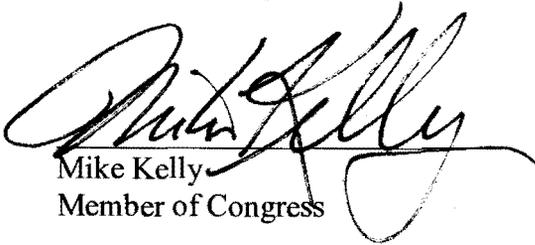
Jack Kingston  
Member of Congress

  
Alan Nunnelee  
Member of Congress

  
Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress

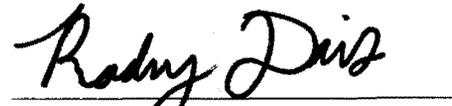
  
Mo Brooks  
Member of Congress

  
Andy Harris  
Member of Congress

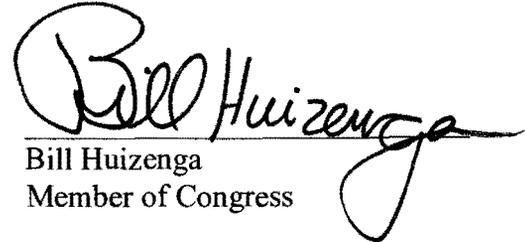
  
Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress

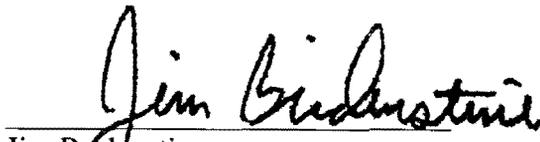
  
Mark Meadows  
Member of Congress

  
Markwayne Mullin  
Member of Congress

  
Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress

  
Marlin Stutzman  
Member of Congress

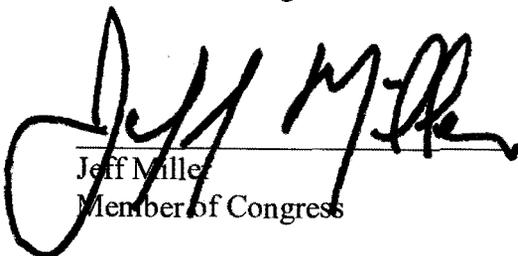
  
Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress

  
Jim Bridenstine  
Member of Congress

  
Tim Huelskamp  
Member of Congress

  
Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

  
Robert Pittenger  
Member of Congress

  
Jeff Miller  
Member of Congress

  
Tom Cotton  
Member of Congress

Walter B. Jones

Walter Jones  
Member of Congress

Lynn Westmoreland

Lynn Westmoreland  
Member of Congress

Michelle Bachmann

Michelle Bachman  
Member of Congress

Paul Broun

Paul Broun  
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert

Louie Gohmert  
Member of Congress

John Shimkus

John Shimkus  
Member of Congress

Robert Latta

Robert Latta  
Member of Congress

Tim Walberg

Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress

Rep Hensarling

Rep Hensarling  
Member of Congress

Stevan Pearce

Stevan Pearce  
Member of Congress

Ralph M. Hall

Ralph Hall  
Member of Congress

John Culberson

John Culberson  
Member of Congress

Gus Bilirakis

Gus Bilirakis  
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson

Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress

Joe Barton

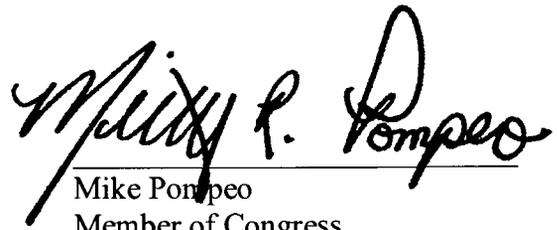
Joe Barton  
Member of Congress

Mike McIntyre

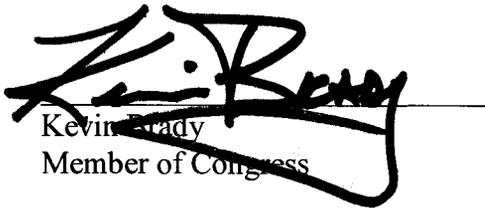
Mike McIntyre  
Member of Congress



Steven Palazzo  
Member of Congress



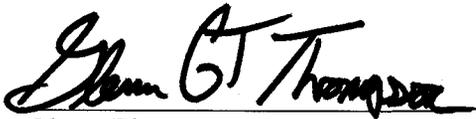
Mike Pompeo  
Member of Congress



Kevin Brady  
Member of Congress



Steve Daines  
Member of Congress



Glenn Thompson  
Member of Congress



Austin Scott  
Member of Congress



Luke Messer  
Member of Congress



Charles Fleischmann  
Member of Congress



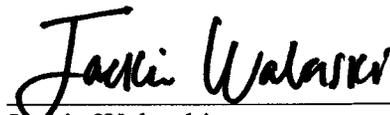
Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress



James Lankford  
Member of Congress



Pete Olson  
Member of Congress



Jackie Walorski  
Member of Congress



Todd Rokita  
Member of Congress



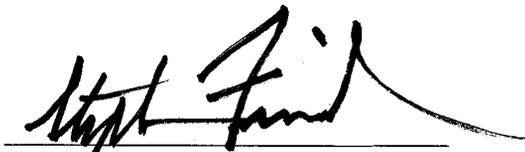
Chris Stewart  
Member of Congress



Scott Garret  
Member of Congress



Dan Lipinski  
Member of Congress



Stephen Fincher  
Member of Congress



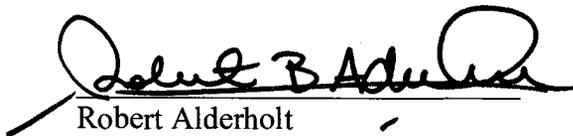
Randy Neugebauer  
Member of Congress



Susan Brooks  
Member of Congress



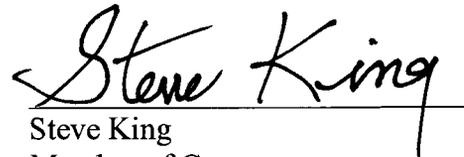
Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress



Robert Alderholt  
Member of Congress



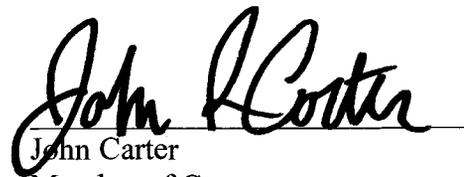
Kevin Kramer  
Member of Congress



Steve King  
Member of Congress



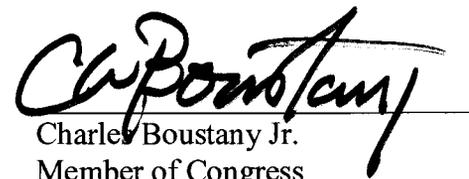
Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress



John Carter  
Member of Congress



Tim Griffin  
Member of Congress



Charles Boustany Jr.  
Member of Congress



Robert Wittman  
Member of Congress



Matt Salmon  
Member of Congress

ROGER F. WICKER

MISSISSIPPI

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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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May 20, 2013

The Honorable Charles Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
Office of the Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We appreciate that your leadership as Secretary of Defense is vital to protecting the constitutionally guaranteed right of religious freedom for our service members and military chaplains. As Members of Congress with an interest in this issue, we write to request an update on your efforts to implement Section 533 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013.

As you noted during your testimony last month before the U.S. House Armed Services Committee, the "protection of religious freedom is pretty fundamental to this country." Our Founding Fathers, who discussed at length the significance of "freedom of conscience" and its underpinning of all other freedoms, embraced a similar view. In passing religious conscience protections for service members in Section 533 of the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Congress confirmed the importance of guaranteeing that service members are afforded the same constitutional rights they fight to protect.

Under Section 533, the Department of Defense is charged with issuing regulations that would implement the conscience protections recently passed by Congress. We would be gravely concerned if third parties who are focused on obstructing religious freedom in the military were afforded the opportunity to influence the Department's efforts to carry out this statutory language, which was enacted for the express purpose of protecting the conscience rights of all service members.

We also would be concerned if Pentagon leaders permitted other activities, such as efforts to encourage service members to retire or resign due to their beliefs, or the adoption of policies that could impinge on the religious freedom of our nation's servicemen and servicewomen. Our armed services were created with an apolitical framework, and this unique platform has helped maintain Americans' trust and respect for the military.

Our service members already have to cope with various challenges as a result of recent defense budget cuts. We hope you would agree that the Department's focus should be on advancing the best interests and preserving the morale of our brave service members and military

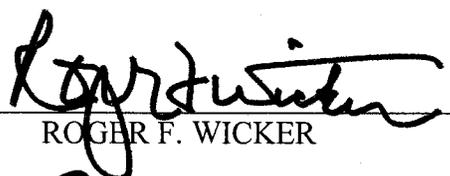


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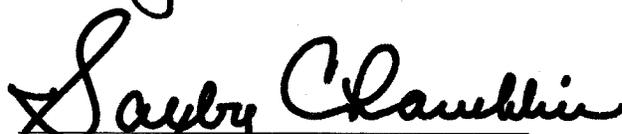
chaplains, and that such efforts must include protecting service members' constitutionally guaranteed right of religious expression.

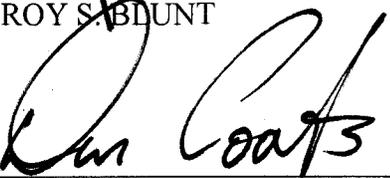
We look forward to hearing more from you concerning your recent efforts to implement Section 533 of the NDAA. We request that you provide us with a plan and timetable for steps that the Department intends to take, including a list of organizations with whom the Department has consulted, or intends to consult in the future, in developing regulations to implement this section of the law. Thank you.

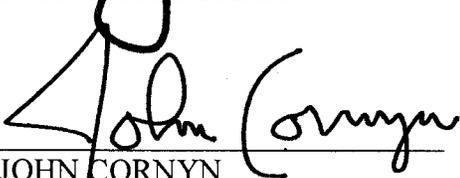
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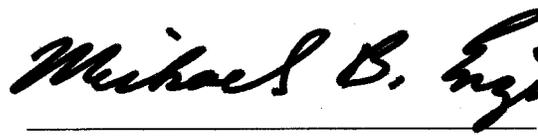
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ROGER F. WICKER

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ROY BLUNT

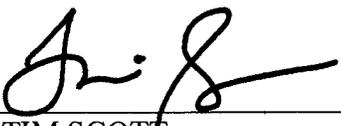
  
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SAXBY CHAMBLISS

  
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DAN COATS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN CORNYN

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MICHAEL ENZI

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MIKE JOHANNS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
TIM SCOTT

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JEFF SESSIONS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID B. VITTER

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 21, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
The Department of Defense  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We are writing to express our concern about the determination that civilian workers at entities funded through Defense Working Capital funds are subject to furloughs. It appears that there are substantial legal and economic questions surrounding the decision to impose furloughs on these employees.

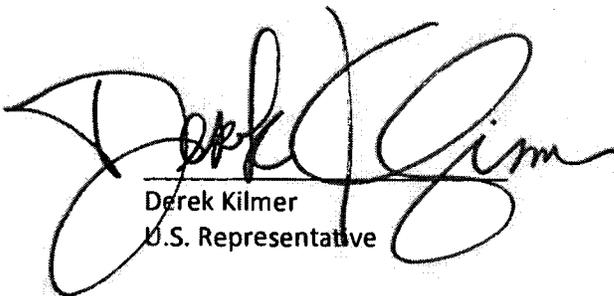
We request an explanation as to whether the Department considers civilian employees at Working Capital fund entities to be "indirectly funded Government employees of the Department of Defense," as defined in 10 USC 129. If so, we further request an explanation of the legal justification the Department is using to impose furloughs on these civilian workers, despite the explicit protections afforded them under this statute.

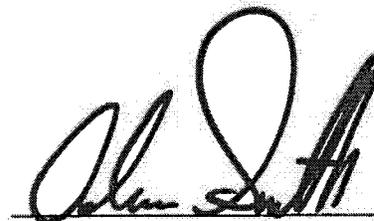
Furthermore, while the Department sought to alleviate a shortfall in its operating funds for fiscal year 2013, we request the Department clarify its rationale in determining that furloughing these workers would reduce its operating expenses. Specifically, please provide the Department's estimate of the reduction in FY 2013 spending as a result of furloughing civilian workers at entities funded through Working Capital funds.

We are concerned that, in addition to the loss of pay these civilian employees now face and the subsequent impact this will have on our local communities, moving forward with these furloughs will reduce the ability of our civilian workforce to complete workload which is already funded. Further restricting available workforce resources will result in mission delays, eventual overtime, and greater cost to the Department and taxpayers.

We respectfully request your prompt attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

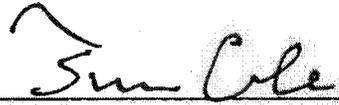
  
Derek Kilmer  
U.S. Representative

  
Adam Smith  
U.S. Representative





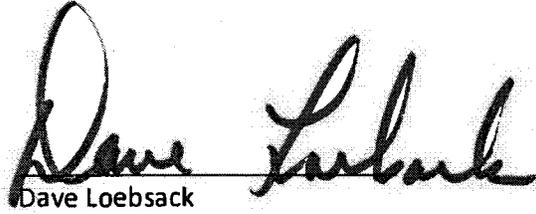
Scott Rigell  
U.S. Representative



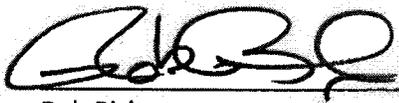
Tom Cole  
U.S. Representative



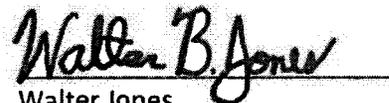
Betty McCollum  
U.S. Representative



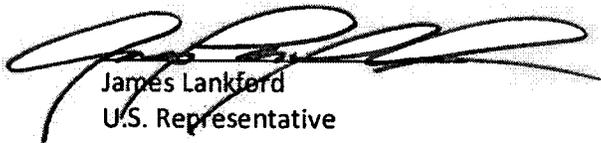
Dave Loebsack  
U.S. Representative



Rob Bishop  
U.S. Representative



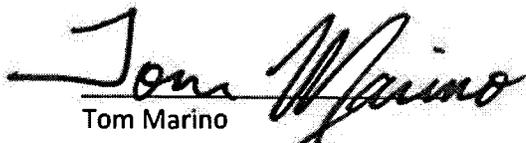
Walter Jones  
U.S. Representative



James Lankford  
U.S. Representative



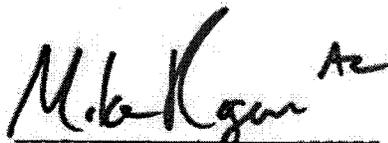
Austin Scott  
U.S. Representative



Tom Marino  
U.S. Representative



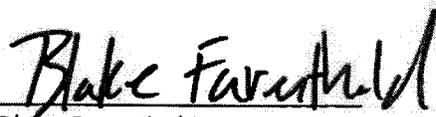
Mo Brooks  
U.S. Representative



Mike Rogers  
U.S. Representative



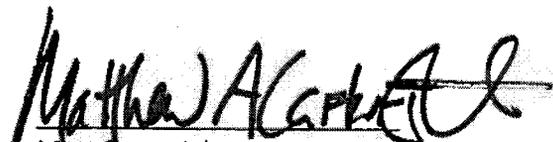
Cheri Bustos  
U.S. Representative



Blake Farenthold  
U.S. Representative

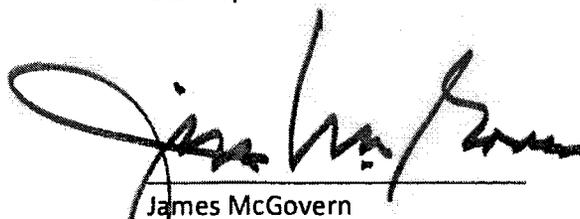


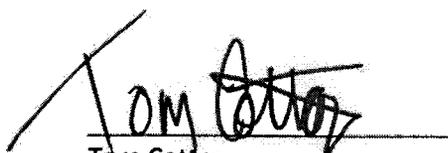
Bill Shuster  
U.S. Representative

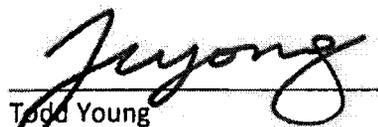
  
Matt Cartwright  
U.S. Representative

  
Lou Barletta  
U.S. Representative

  
Tim Griffin  
U.S. Representative

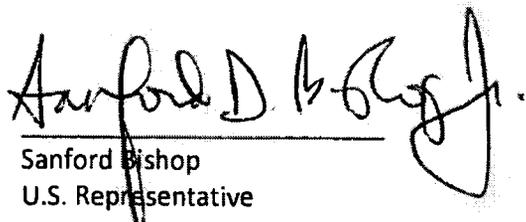
  
James McGovern  
U.S. Representative

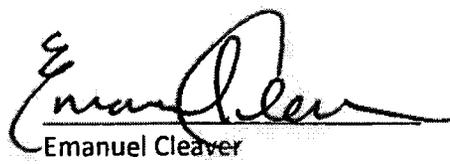
  
Tom Cotton  
U.S. Representative

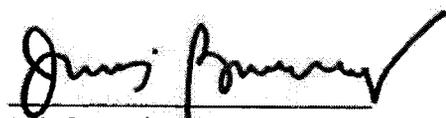
  
Todd Young  
U.S. Representative

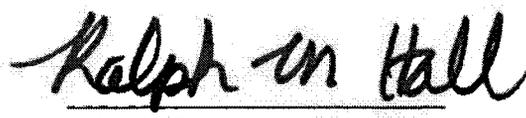
  
Mike Turner  
U.S. Representative

  
Filemon Vela  
U.S. Representative

  
Sanford Bishop  
U.S. Representative

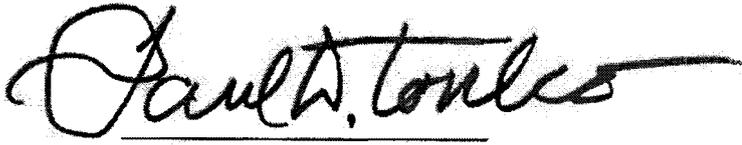
  
Emanuel Cleaver  
U.S. Representative

  
Julia Brownley  
U.S. Representative

  
Ralph Hall  
U.S. Representative

  
Paul Cook  
U.S. Representative

  
Markwayne Mullin  
U.S. Representative

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul W. Tonko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Tonko  
U.S. Representative

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 10, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel,

We are writing to express our continued opposition, especially in light of a recent letter from the Department of Defense (DoD), to the DoD's continued insistence regarding mandatory furloughs of approximately 177,000 DoD employees funded through Defense Working Capital Funds (DWCF), and request that you brief us on this important issue facing our national security.

On July 5, 2013, Undersecretary of Defense Robert Hale informed Congress, on your behalf, that DoD has interpreted current law to allow the Department to furlough civilians who serve at DWCF installations. As you know, Defense Working Capital Fund employees are paid through reimbursements for the services they provide, so there are no direct savings in appropriated dollars to be rendered from furloughing these individuals. Accordingly, we disagree with the Undersecretary's rationale and maintain that continuing with these furloughs is a bad policy that will cost taxpayers' money and damage our nation's civilian defense workforce over the long term. Therefore, we would like to further discuss with you the associated economic impacts and our legal concerns, including the Department's narrow interpretation of Section 129 of Title 10 of the United States Code, regarding your decision to furlough DWCF employees.

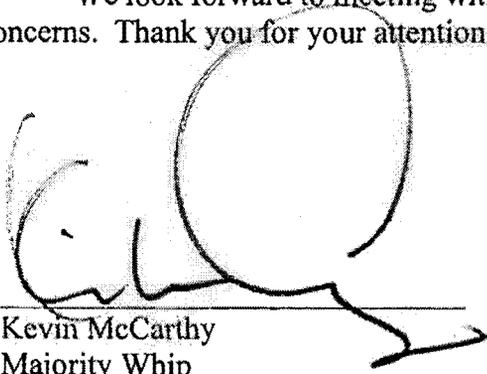
Furthermore, we agree that it is regrettable you have made the determination to furlough DoD civilian employees, which is why the U.S. House of Representatives acted three times last Congress by passing legislation to replace across-the-board sequestration cuts with targeted spending reductions or to repeal the discretionary defense spending sequestration cuts to reduce or eliminate the need for DoD furloughs. Unfortunately, the Senate did not act on these bills, and the Administration threatened to veto each of these bills if passed by Congress. However, given our concern about the impact sequestration continues to have on DoD civilian employees and military readiness, the House acted again this year and passed H.R. 933, which was enacted into law and provides DoD with the flexibility to minimize the need for furloughs.

That said, as Members with military installations in our districts that are directly affected by DoD's decision which is currently being implemented, we would like to convey the damage this decision to furlough DWCF employees is already having on morale and the associated financial hardships it is creating for many of the employees and their families. We view this scenario as legally dubious and unnecessary, especially when the work performed by our civilian defense employees ensures our warfighters, who are currently in harm's way in Afghanistan and other operational areas around the globe, are equipped with the tools they need to accomplish their mission.

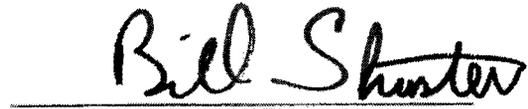


We look forward to meeting with you this month to further discuss this policy and our concerns. Thank you for your attention on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Kevin McCarthy  
Majority Whip



Bill Shuster



Walter B. Jones



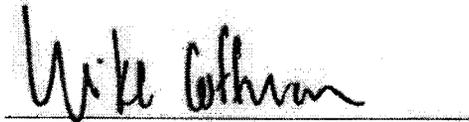
Michael R. Turner



Robert G. Wittman



Tim Cole



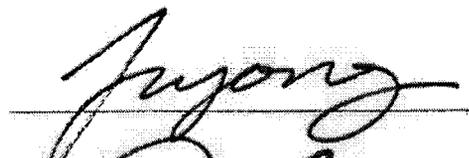
Mike Coffman



Steve Chabot



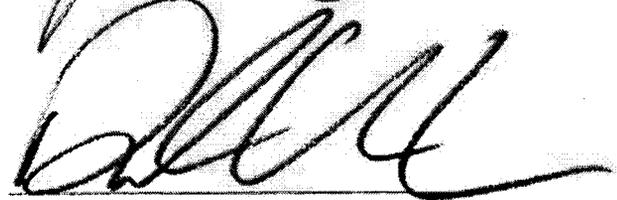
Fred Lusk



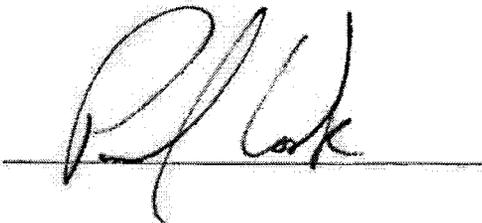
Jinyong



Markwayne Mullin



Bill Huelskamp



R. L. Cook



M. Brooks

Lon Barletta

Blake Faratheld

Ed BQ

[Signature]

Jim Bidmetine

Ch Stewart

Paul Cusack

Paul Scott

Boef

Paul Zell

Tam Cotts

1. Kevin McCarthy
2. Bill Shuster
3. Walter Jones
4. Michael Turner
5. Rob Wittman
6. Tom Cole
7. Mike Coffman
8. Jason Chaffetz
9. Frank Lucas
10. Todd Young
11. Markwayne Mullin
12. David Valadao
13. Paul Cook
14. Mo Brooks
15. Lou Barletta
16. Blake Farenthold
17. Rob Bishop
18. James Lankford
19. Jim Bridenstine
20. Chris Stewart
21. Ander Crenshaw
22. Austin Scott
23. Bill Young
24. Scott Rigell
25. Tom Cotton

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

July 11, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel,

We strongly oppose the Department of Defense's (DoD) recently signed contract with the Russian state arms dealer Rosoboronexport to supply 30 additional Mi-17 helicopters for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The signing of the contract blatantly ignores the intent of Congress which was reaffirmed with the bipartisan vote by the House of Representatives, 423-0, seeking to end DoD's business relationship with Rosoboronexport. It also appears ill advised in light of a recent Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) report critical of the purchase.

As you know, Russia serves as the main arms supplier to Syria providing weapons the regime is using to fuel a tragic war in that country that has thus far claimed at least 93,000 lives. Even as Rosoboronexport was providing weapons to the Syrian regime last year, DoD entered into no-bid contracts to purchase Mi-17 helicopters for the ANSF from the firm.

In response, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (P.L. 112-239) and the 2013 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act (P.L. 113-6) prohibiting 2013 funds from being used to enter into contracts with Rosoboronexport. The Department of Defense is maneuvering around the law and using Fiscal Year 2012 Afghanistan Security Forces Funds to enter into this new contract.

That is why the House of Representatives passed an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act of 2014 to strengthen the prohibition on DoD contracts with Rosoboronexport. The amendment granted you a national security waiver allowing you to purchase equipment from the Russian arms dealer so long as you submit a report to Congress 30 days prior to any such purchase.

That report requires you to provide Congress with information that we now respectfully request you provide by responding with the following:

1. An explanation of why it is in the national security interest of the United States to purchase equipment from Rosoboronexport;



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2. An explanation why comparable equipment cannot be purchased from another corporation;
3. An assessment of the cooperation of Rosoboronexport with the Defense Contract Audit Agency;
4. An assessment of whether and how many S-300 advanced anti-aircraft missiles have been delivered to the Assad regime by Rosoboronexport; and
5. A list of the contracts that Rosoboronexport has signed with the Assad regime since January 1, 2013.

In addition, the SIGAR report, *Afghan Special Mission Wing: DOD Plans to Spend \$908 Million to Build Air Wing that the Afghans Cannot Operate and Maintain*, questions "the wisdom of moving ahead with the provision of 30 new Mi-17s." The report notes that DoD's massive \$908 million financial investment, including the Mi-17 purchases, in the Afghan Specialty Mission Wing (SMW) is moving forward even though the Afghans have not yet agreed to NATO's concept for reorganization within the Afghan government to support the SMW and even with a lack of planning to transfer critical maintenance and logistics functions to the Afghans. Accordingly, we also respectfully request that you provide justification for procuring 30 additional Mi-17 helicopters despite the inability of the SMW to use them.

We firmly believe that DoD should not purchase helicopters or any other equipment from Russia as it continues to arm Assad's regime. Moreover, it is unconscionable that American taxpayers are subsidizing a company that is complicit in atrocities occurring in Syria.

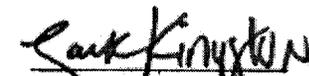
We look forward to your prompt response.

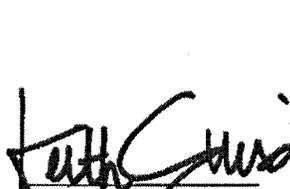
Sincerely,

  
ROSA L. DeLAURO  
Member of Congress

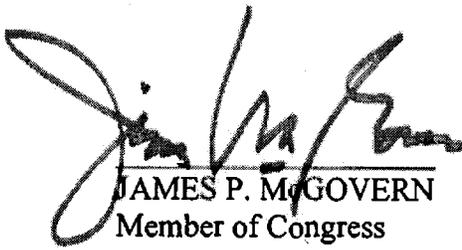
  
KAY GRANGER  
Member of Congress

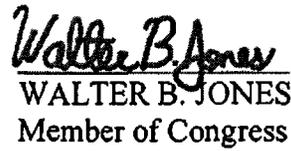
  
JAMES P. MORAN  
Member of Congress

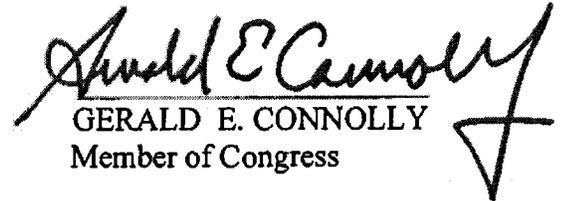
  
JACK KINGSTON  
Member of Congress

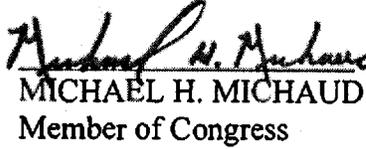
  
KEITH ELLISON  
Member of Congress

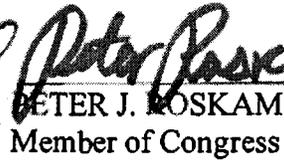
  
FRANK R. WOLF  
Member of Congress

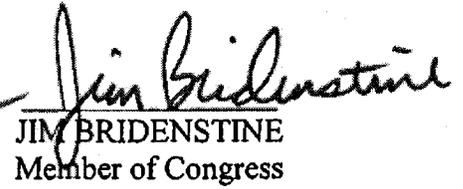
  
JAMES P. McGOVERN  
Member of Congress

  
WALTER B. JONES  
Member of Congress

  
GERALD E. CONNOLLY  
Member of Congress

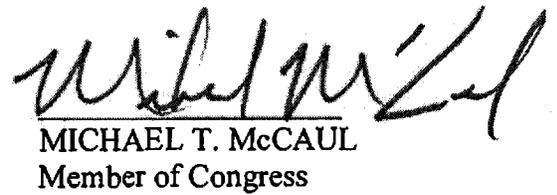
  
MICHAEL H. MICHAUD  
Member of Congress

  
PETER J. ROSKAM  
Member of Congress

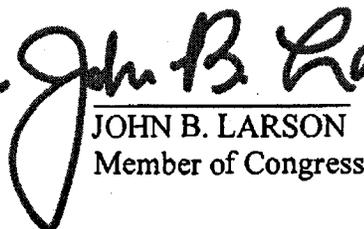
  
JIM BRIDENSTINE  
Member of Congress

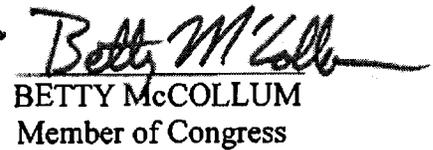
  
JON RUYAN  
Member of Congress

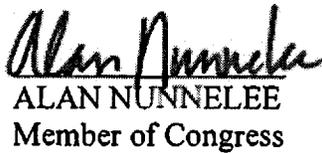
  
TIM RYAN  
Member of Congress

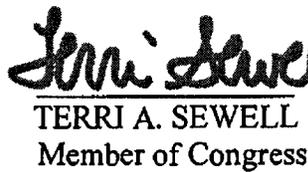
  
MICHAEL T. McCAUL  
Member of Congress

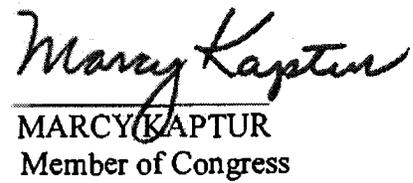
  
BARBARA LEE  
Member of Congress

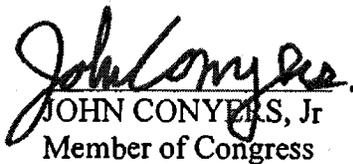
  
JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress

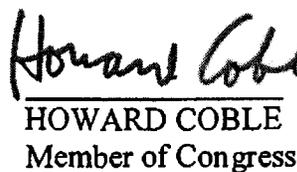
  
BETTY McCOLLUM  
Member of Congress

  
ALAN NUNNELEE  
Member of Congress

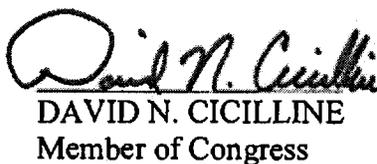
  
TERRI A. SEWELL  
Member of Congress

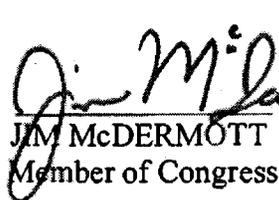
  
MARCY KAPTUR  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN CONYERS, Jr  
Member of Congress

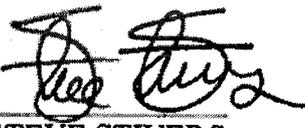
  
HOWARD COBLE  
Member of Congress

  
KENNY MARCHANT  
Member of Congress

  
DAVID N. CICILLINE  
Member of Congress

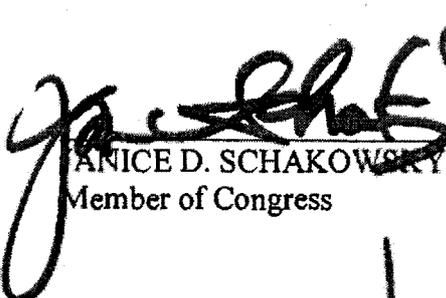
  
JIM McDERMOTT  
Member of Congress

  
MARIO DIAZ-BALART  
Member of Congress

  
STEVE STIVERS  
Member of Congress

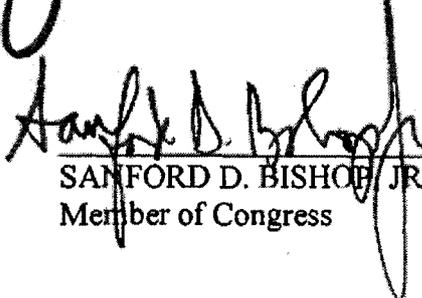
  
RAUL GRIJALVA  
Member of Congress

  
SAM FARR  
Member of Congress

  
JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY  
Member of Congress

  
PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress

  
TONY CARDENAS  
Member of Congress

  
SANFORD D. BISHOP JR.  
Member of Congress

  
TIM GRIFFIN  
Member of Congress

  
TOM COLE  
Member of Congress

  
WILLIAM L. OWENS  
Member of Congress

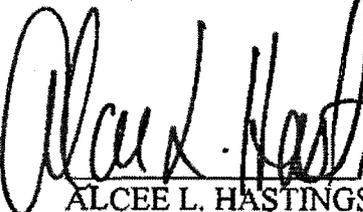
  
TED POE  
Member of Congress

  
BOBBY L. RUSH  
Member of Congress

  
GARY C. PETERS  
Member of Congress

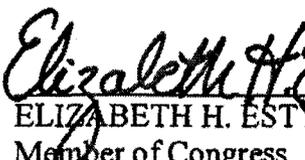
  
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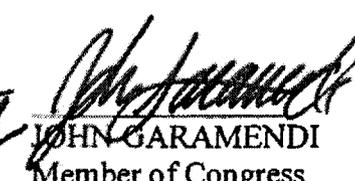
  
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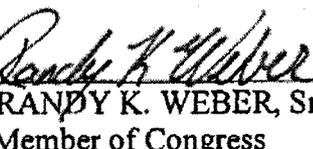
  
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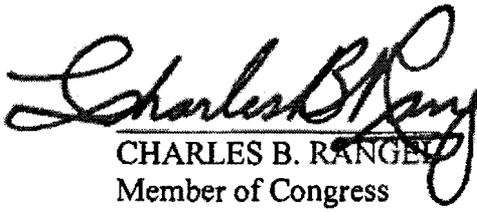
  
NIKI TSONGAS  
Member of Congress

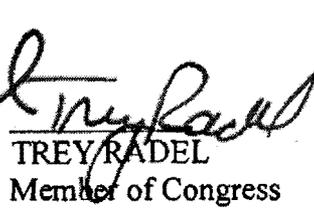
  
LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER  
Member of Congress

  
ELIZABETH H. ESTY  
Member of Congress

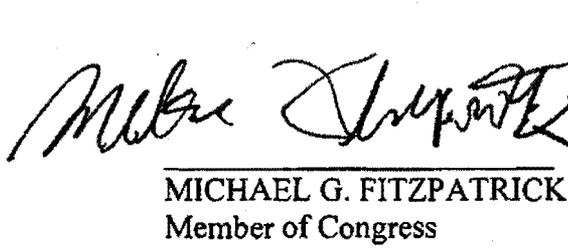
  
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Member of Congress

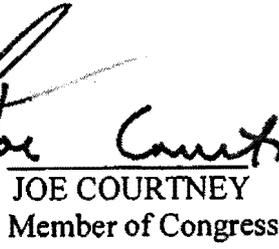
  
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Member of Congress

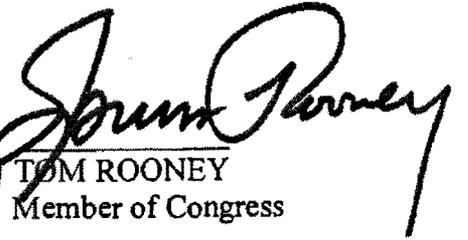
  
CHARLES B. RANGEL  
Member of Congress

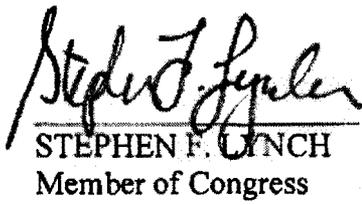
  
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Member of Congress

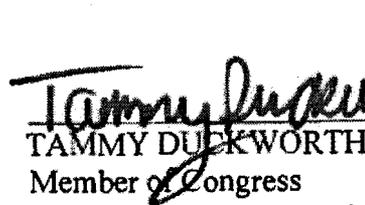
  
STEVE COHEN  
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MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK  
Member of Congress

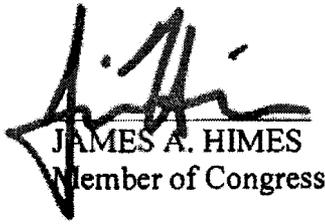
  
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Member of Congress

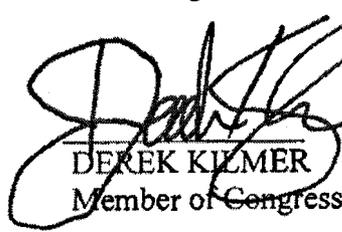
  
TOM ROONEY  
Member of Congress

  
STEPHEN F. LYNCH  
Member of Congress

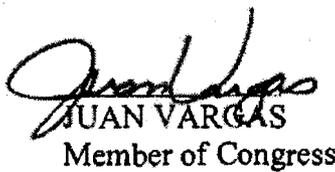
  
TAMMY DUCKWORTH  
Member of Congress

  
ADAM B. SCHIFF  
Member of Congress

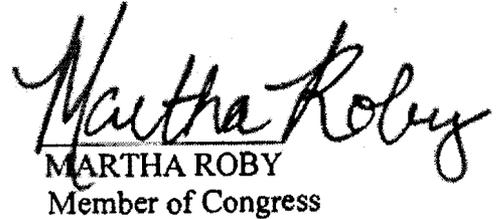
  
JAMES A. HIMES  
Member of Congress

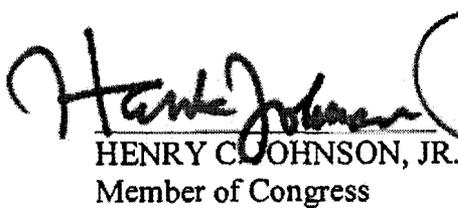
  
DEREK KILMER  
Member of Congress

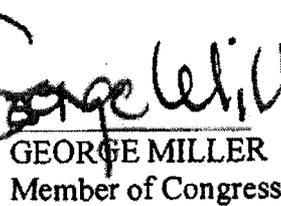
  
ANN McLANE KUSTER  
Member of Congress

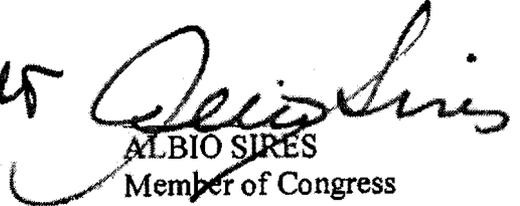
  
JUAN VARGAS  
Member of Congress

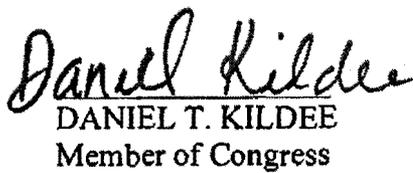
  
MIKE QUIGLEY  
Member of Congress

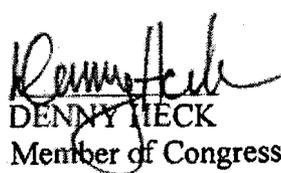
  
MARTHA ROBY  
Member of Congress

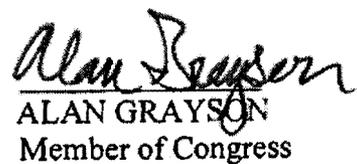
  
HENRY C. JOHNSON, JR.  
Member of Congress

  
GEORGE MILLER  
Member of Congress

  
ALBIO SIRES  
Member of Congress

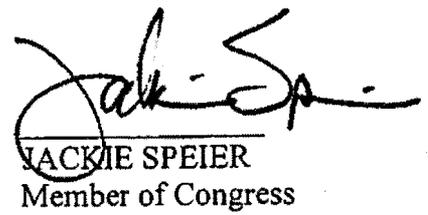
  
DANIEL T. KILDEE  
Member of Congress

  
DENNY HECK  
Member of Congress

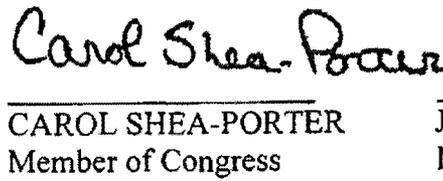
  
ALAN GRAYSON  
Member of Congress

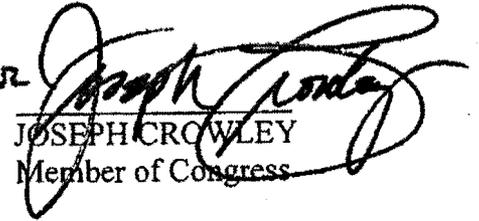
  
JOE GARCIA  
Member of Congress

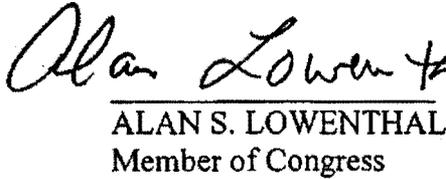
  
COLLEEN W. HANABUSA  
Member of Congress

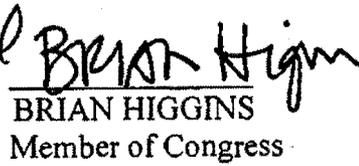
  
JACKIE SPEIER  
Member of Congress

  
BILL JOHNSON  
Member of Congress

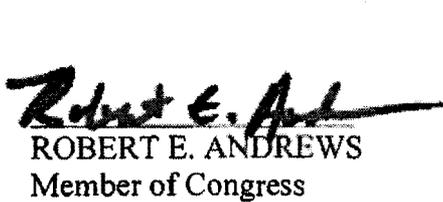
  
CAROL SHEA-PORTER  
Member of Congress

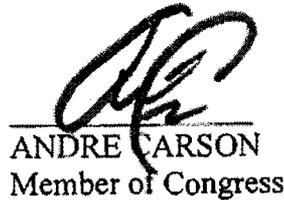
  
JOSEPH CROWLEY  
Member of Congress

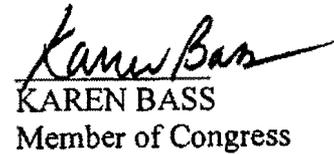
  
ALAN S. LOWENTHAL  
Member of Congress

  
BRIAN HIGGINS  
Member of Congress

  
DANIEL B. MAFFEI  
Member of Congress

  
ROBERT E. ANDREWS  
Member of Congress

  
ANDRE CARSON  
Member of Congress

  
KAREN BASS  
Member of Congress

  
KEN CALVERT  
Member of Congress

  
RON BARBER  
Member of Congress

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 11, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the decision not to open the commissary at Dobbins Air Reserve Base (ARB) and to jointly proceed with the closure of the commissary at Fort McPherson. This decision leaves these heroes without access to this important benefit. We urge the Department to keep its promise to open the commissary at Dobbins ARB and to maintain the commissary at Fort McPherson until the commissary at Dobbins ARB is open.

The commissary at Fort McPherson serves thousands of veterans and service members across north east Georgia, including the Atlanta region. These heroes have earned this benefit through service to their nation. In these difficult economic times, with veterans and service members facing the impact of sequestration, reduced benefits, and the effects of two recent wars, it is deeply disappointing that the Department would make the decision to deprive Atlanta-area veterans of a commissary.

If the Department plan is implemented, veterans and service members in the Atlanta area will have to travel up to two hours one way, to Fort Benning, to visit the nearest commissary. Veterans and service members who are older, ill, or working will find it difficult to make the four hour round trip to access their commissary benefit.

Service members and veterans in the Atlanta area deserve access to the commissary they were promised by their government. We urge the Department to keep its promise to open the commissary at Dobbins ARB and to maintain the commissary at Fort McPherson until the commissary at Dobbins ARB is open and we look forward to your timely response.

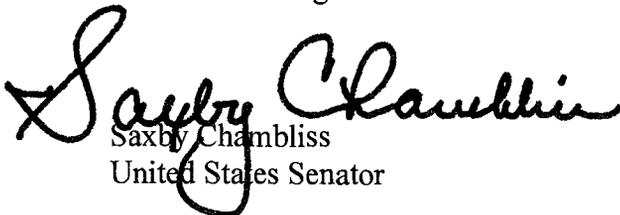
Sincerely,



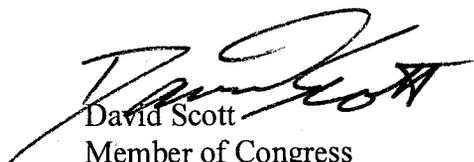
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson  
Member of Congress



Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator

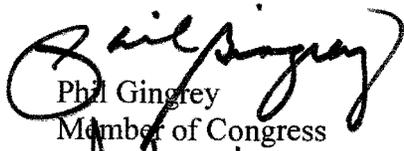


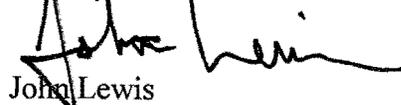
Saxby Chambliss  
United States Senator

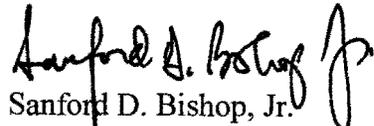


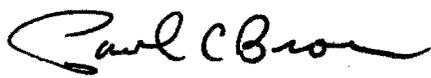
David Scott  
Member of Congress

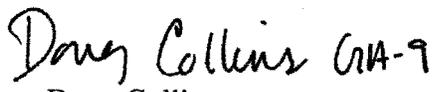


  
Phil Gingrey  
Member of Congress

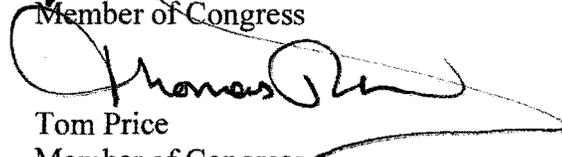
  
John Lewis  
Member of Congress

  
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress

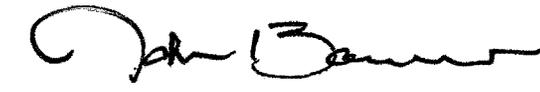
  
Paul C. Broun, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
Doug Collins  
Member of Congress

  
Lynn Westmoreland  
Member of Congress

  
Tom Price  
Member of Congress

  
Austin Scott  
Member of Congress

  
John Barrow  
Member of Congress

  
Tom Graves  
Member of Congress

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 1, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Mr. Rand Beers  
Secretary (Acting)  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Sylvia Mathews Burwell  
Director  
The Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Secretary Hagel, Mr. Beers, Director Burwell,

Thank you for your service to our great Nation and your commitment to those who defend the United States, their families, Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard civilians, and our veterans. I am writing today to draw your attention to an issue that negatively impacts the families of hundreds of thousands of Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard civilians around the world and has the potential to needlessly hurt our national security if not rectified immediately.

On September 30, 2013, the Congress passed and President Obama subsequently signed into law H.R. 3210, which ensures that members of our Armed Forces (including reserve components), civilian personnel of the Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard, and contractors of the Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard will continue to be paid in the event of a lapse in appropriations during fiscal year 2014.

While the President has ensured military members will continue to be paid during this government shutdown, we are disheartened that the Administration chose to needlessly furlough workers against the intent of Congress. The language outlined in H.R. 3210 purposefully exempts Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard employees supporting the Armed Forces. Since all DoD and U.S. Coast Guard civilian employees serve to support the uniformed services, all of these civilian employees should be returned to work without further delay.

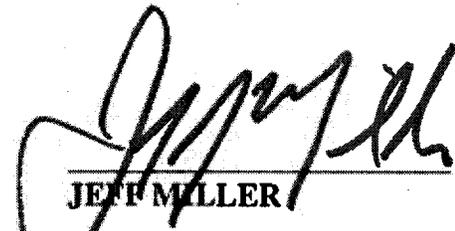
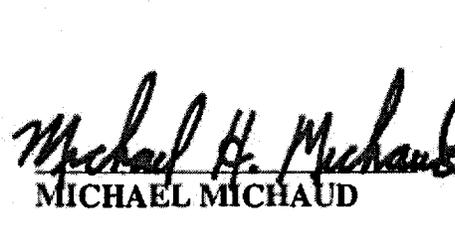
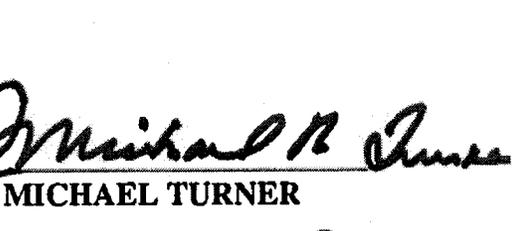
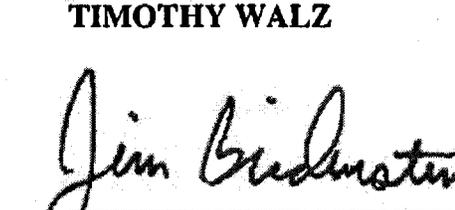
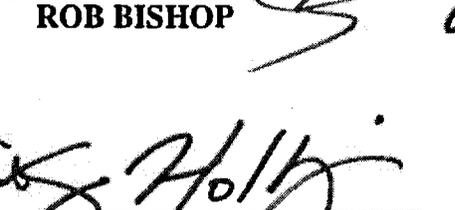
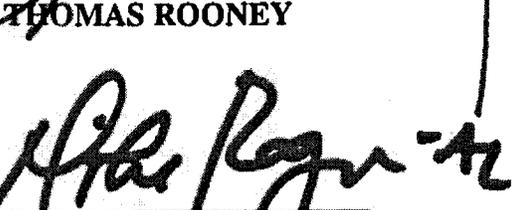
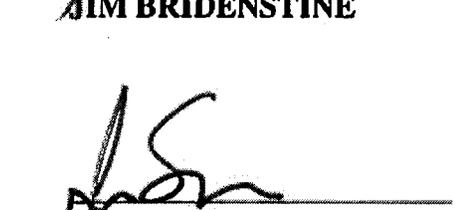
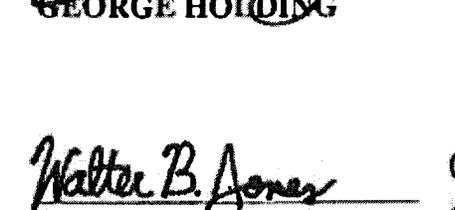
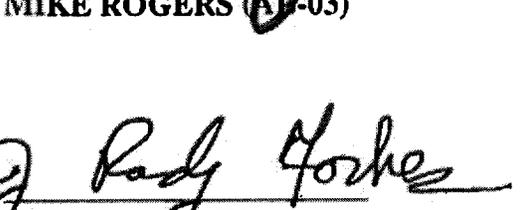
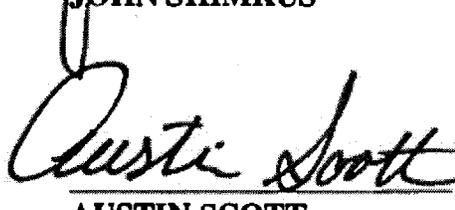
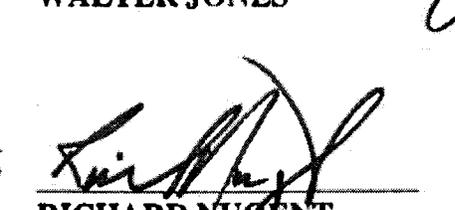
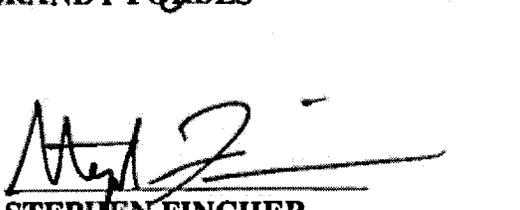
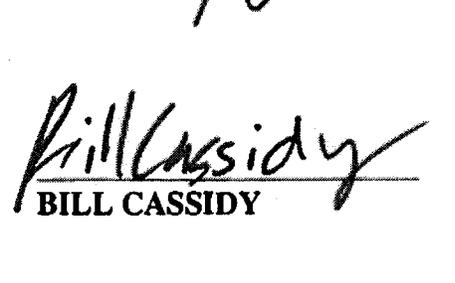
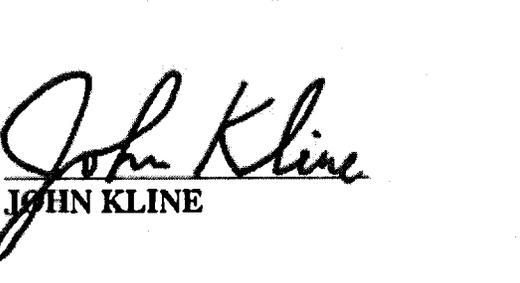
Additionally, the text of H.R. 3210 specifically includes all those "who perform active service." The term "active service" is defined in current law as active-duty or full-time National Guard duty. This implies that, under H.R. 3210, all National Guard AGR, dual-status technicians, and active Reserve members would continue to be paid. Unfortunately, our



understanding is the Department of Defense is interpreting "active service" as only those reservists who have been federalized, which would not be compatible with current law and breaks with the intent of H.R. 3210.

Thank you for your attention on this matter and we look forward to the favor of your reply.

Sincerely,

 JEFF MILLER	 MICHAEL MICHAUD	 MICHAEL TURNER
 TIMOTHY WALZ	 ROB BISHOP	 THOMAS ROONEY
 JIM BRIDENSTINE	 GEORGE HOLDING	 MIKE ROGERS (AI-03)
 JOHN SHIMKUS	 WALTER JONES	 RANDY FORBES
 AUSTIN SCOTT	 RICHARD NUGENT	 STEPHEN FINCHER
 MICHAEL CONAWAY	 BILL CASSIDY	 JOHN KLINE

*Doug Lamborn*  
DOUG LAMBORN

*John Mica*  
JOHN MICA

*Pat Tiberi*  
PATRICK TIBERI

*Louie Gohmert*  
LOUIE GOHMERT

*Lee Terry*  
LEE TERRY

*Kevin Cramer*  
KEVIN CRAMER

*Joe Wilson*  
JOE WILSON

*Randy Neugebauer*  
RANDY NEUGEBAUER

*Robert Latta*  
ROBERT LATTA

*Steven Palazzo*  
STEVEN PALAZZO

*Kristi Noem*  
KRISTI NOEM

*Peter King*  
PETER KING

*Mo Brooks*  
MO BROOKS

*Rodney Davis*  
RODNEY DAVIS

*Duncan Hunter*  
DUNCAN HUNTER

*Christopher Smith*  
CHRISTOPHER SMITH

*Bill Flores*  
BILL FLORES

*Andy Barr*  
ANDY BARR

*Sam Graves*  
SAM GRAVES

*Tom Cole*  
TOM COLE

*Steve Stivers*  
STEVE STIVERS

*David Joyce*  
DAVID JOYCE

*Pete Sessions*  
PETE SESSIONS

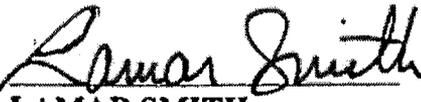
*Vicky Hartzler*  
VICKY HARTZLER

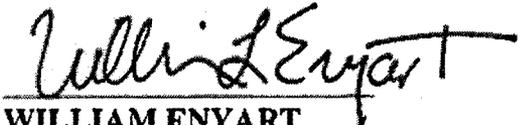
  
PAUL COOK

  
E. SCOTT RIGEL

  
ANDER CRENSHAW

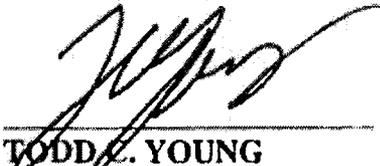
  
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LAMAR SMITH

  
WILLIAM ENYART

  
TIM RYAN

  
MARTHA ROBY

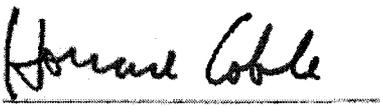
  
TODD C. YOUNG

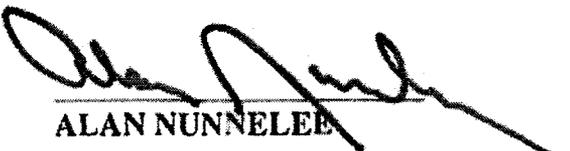
  
CHRIS STEWART

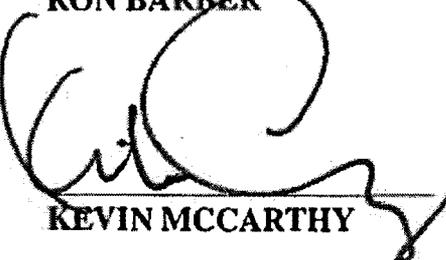
  
STEVE KING

  
DAVID VALADAO

  
RON BARBER

  
HOWARD COBLE

  
ALAN NUNNELEE

  
KEVIN MCCARTHY

  
RICHARD HANNA

  
BLAKE FARENTHOLD

  
TIM GRIFFIN

  
JAMES LANKFORD

  
JON RUNYAN

*Ted S. Yoho*  
TED S. YOHO

*David B. McKinley*  
DAVID B. MCKINLEY

*Markwayne Mullin*  
MARKWAYNE MULLIN

*Jackie Walorski*  
JACKIE WALORSKI

*Lynn A. Westmoreland*

**LYNN A. WESTMORELAND**

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 3, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel,

One of the issues that this divided Congress can agree on is ensuring that our troops who serve in harm's way, and those that support them, receive the pay and benefits that they have earned. That is why Congress unanimously passed the "Pay Our Military Act" and the President quickly signed the bill into law.

The "Pay Our Military Act" gives the Department of Defense broad latitude to pay service members and civilians. The bill does not limit the provision of pay to civilians or certain service members who were previously categorized by the Administration as 'excepted' or 'essential' during sequestration furloughs. The law that we recently passed is explicitly clear: all members of the Armed Forces, including Reserve component personnel who perform active service, will be paid in the event of a government shutdown. Further, the bill requires that civilian Department of Defense personnel "providing support to members of the Armed Forces" continue to receive their pay and allowances.

Unfortunately, we are receiving disturbing and conflicting reports from constituents and military personnel that uniformed service members and civilians who are directly supporting troops, including those in combat, are being furloughed. It is our understanding that under the current Department of Defense guidance, our National Guard and Reserves are seeing disruptions for personnel, to include:

- Traditional members of the Guard or Reserve who attend drill and annual training, including those who are performing domestic disaster relief and recovery operations; and
- Dual-status technicians, who are uniformed service members, and also non-dual status technicians; and
- Active Guard Reserve (AGR) personnel; and
- Personnel on short-term, mission-essential, active duty tours (commonly known as ADOS); and
- Federally reimbursed state civilians, such as firefighters, air traffic controllers and other civilians in direct support of military operations



Beyond the impact on the National Guard and Reserves, we have also received reports of civilians who have been furloughed, even though they directly support deployed troops and their family members.

Therefore, we urge you to review the policies that the services are disseminating to their commands to ensure that the spirit of the "Pay Our Military Act" is upheld and that guidance is standard across the services. Congress has given you the authority to maintain our national security without interruption. We strongly believe that all service members, and the civilians that support them, should receive equitable and fair treatment under this law.

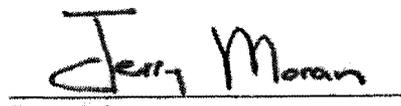
Thank you for reviewing this matter.

Sincerely,



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Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator



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Jerry Moran  
United States Senator



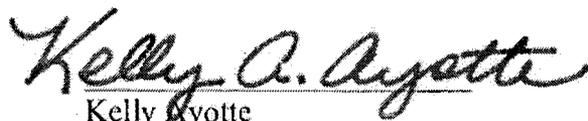
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Mark Udall  
United States Senator



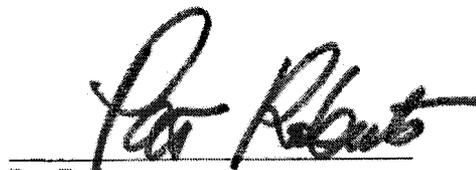
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Mark Pryor  
United States Senator



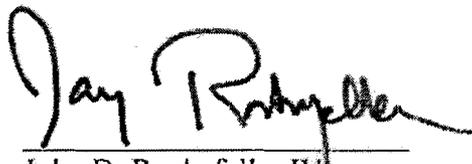
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Kelly Ayotte  
United States Senator



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Pat Roberts  
United States Senator



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John D. Rockefeller IV  
United States Senator



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Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



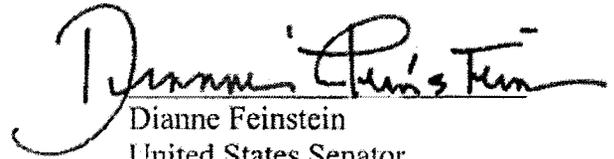
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



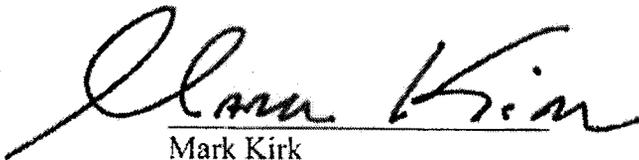
Michael Bennet  
United States Senator



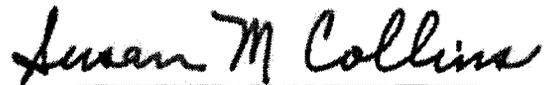
Patrick Leahy  
United States Senator



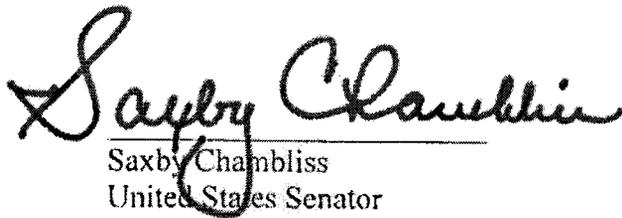
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Mark Kirk  
United States Senator



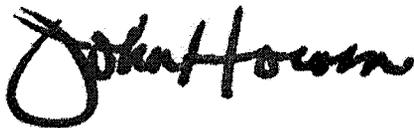
Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator



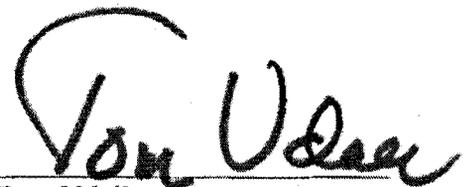
Saxby Chambliss  
United States Senator



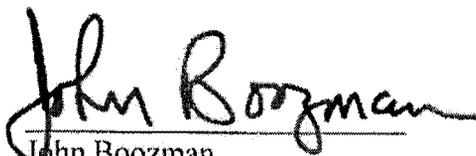
Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator



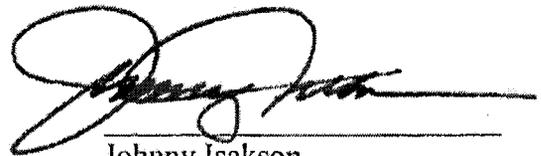
John Hoeven  
United States Senator



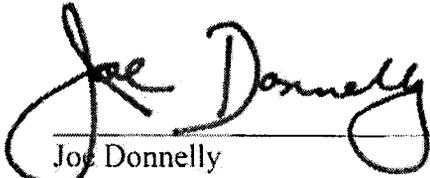
Tom Udall  
United States Senator



John Boozman  
United States Senator



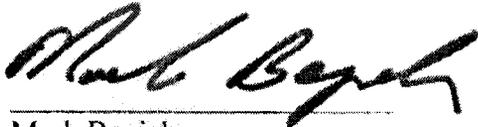
Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator



Joe Donnelly  
United States Senator



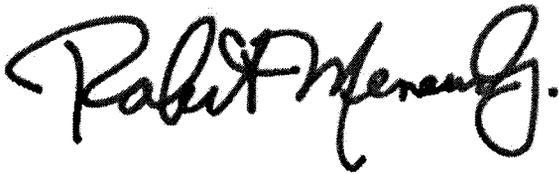
Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



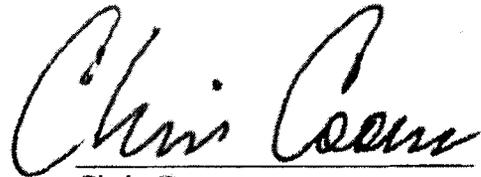
Mark Begich  
United States Senator



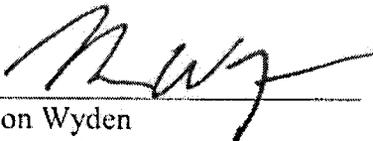
Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator



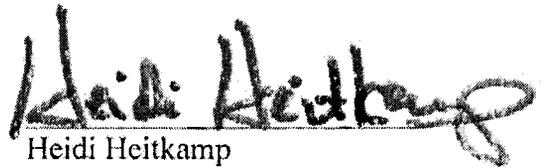
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator



Chris Coons  
United States Senator



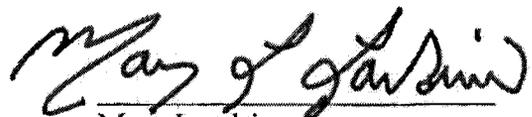
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Heidi Heitkamp  
United States Senator



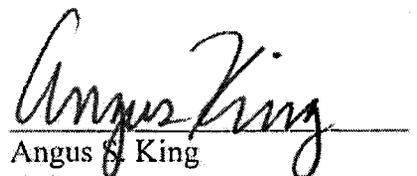
Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



Mary Landrieu  
United States Senator



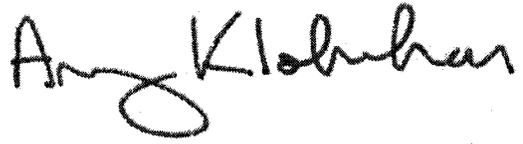
Bill Nelson  
United States Senator



Angus S. King  
United States Senator



Tim Johnson  
United States Senator



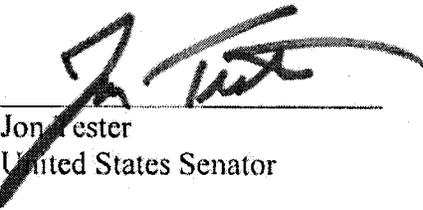
Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



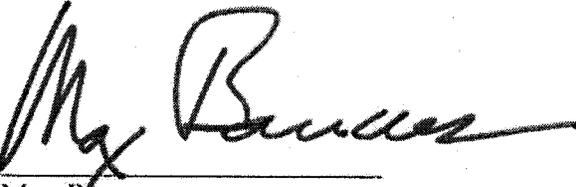
Roy Blunt  
United States Senator



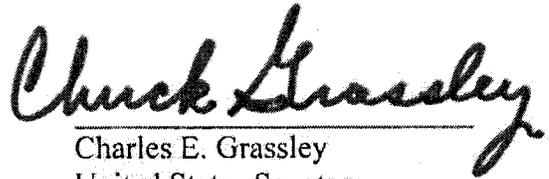
Jon Tester  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



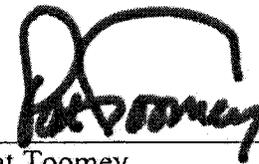
Max Baucus  
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley  
United States Senator



Al Franken  
United States Senator



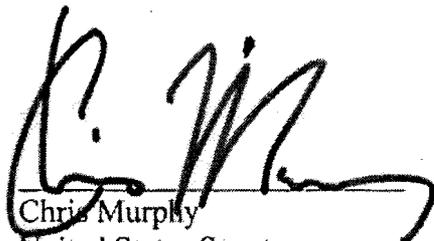
Pat Toomey  
United States Senator



Richard Burr  
United States Senator



Dan Coats  
United States Senator



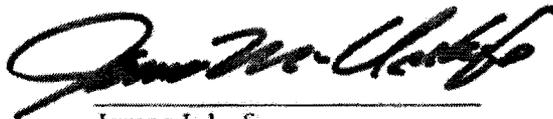
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Chris Murphy  
United States Senator



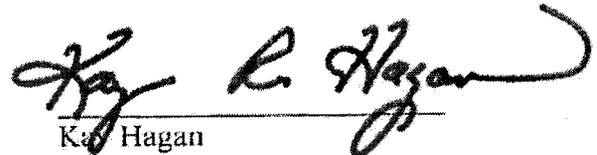
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Jeff Sessions  
United States Senator



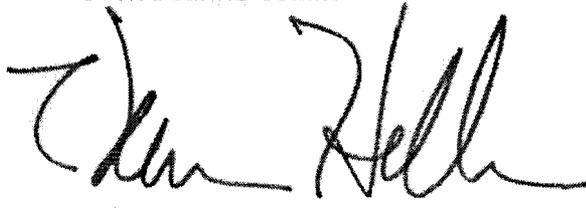
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James Inhofe  
United States Senator



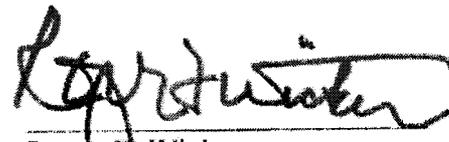
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Kay Hagan  
United States Senator



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Dean Heller  
United States Senator



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Roger F. Wicker  
United States Senator

NICK J. RAHALL, II  
3RD DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
RANKING MEMBER

www.rahall.house.gov

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4803

2307 RAYBURN BUILDING, WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4803  
(202) 225-3452

109 MAIN STREET, BECKLEY, WV 25801-4610  
(304) 252-5000

845 FIFTH AVENUE, ROOM 152  
HUNTINGTON, WV 25701-2086  
(304) 522-NICK

601 FEDERAL STREET, ROOM 1005  
BLUEFIELD, WV 24701-3033  
(304) 325-6222

220 DINGESS STREET  
LOGAN, WV 25601  
(304) 752-4934

October 3, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

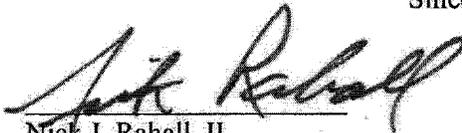
We respectfully request that you use your broad discretion afforded with the passage of H.R. 3210 to ensure that full-time National Guard employees receive excepted status during the government shutdown.

Congress' intent in passing H.R. 3210 was two-fold. First, Congress desired to mitigate the harm to the men and women who have already sacrificed so much for our country caused by the present budget impasse. Second, Congress intended to maintain a level of military readiness.

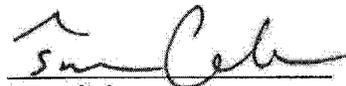
Our National Guard is a critical component of ensuring that our Nation stands prepared to rapidly confront disaster at home and abroad. That is why we ask that you deem those activated under Title 32 – Active Guard & Reserve, dual status military technicians, and Active Duty Operational Support – as excepted employees. Further, we request that those civilian workers who support Title 32 employees in their mission – non-dual status military technicians and federally reimbursed State civilian employees – receive this same designation.

We feel that the dual mission of National Guard personnel necessitates that they receive the same consideration as servicemembers and support staff working under Title 10. We thank you in advance for your efforts in ensuring that our National Guard personnel receive the compensation they are owed and rightly deserve for performing the vital services that protect our Nation.

Sincerely,



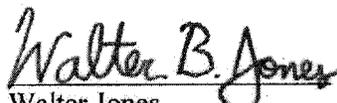
Nick J. Rahall, II  
Member of Congress



Tom Cole  
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



Walter Jones  
Member of Congress

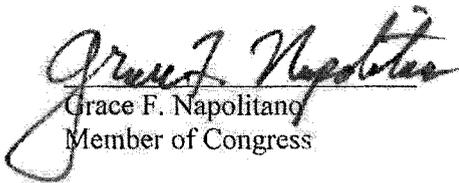




Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress



Shelley Moore Capito  
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



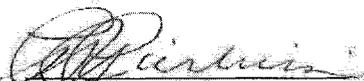
Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress



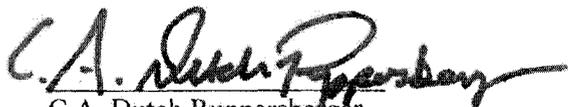
Tulsi Gabbard  
Member of Congress



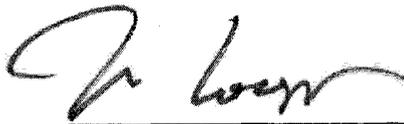
Pedro Pierluisi  
Member of Congress



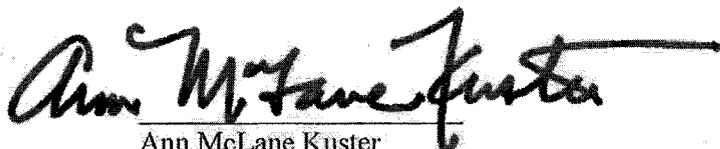
Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress



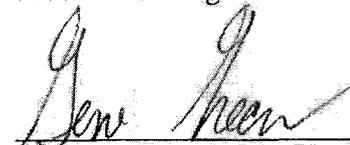
C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress



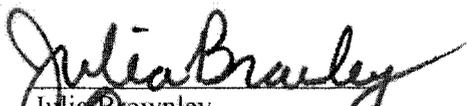
Jim Cooper  
Member of Congress



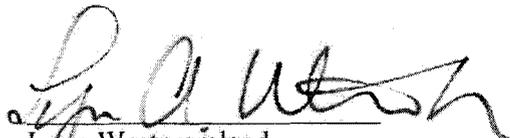
Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



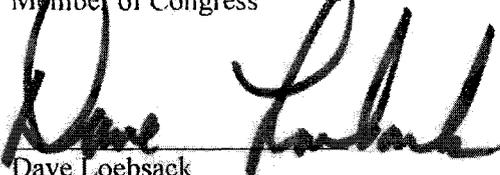
Gene Green  
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



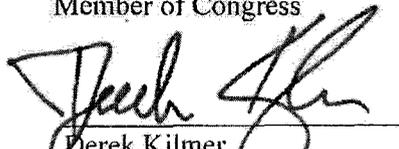
Lynn Westmoreland  
Member of Congress



Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress



Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress

*Daniel Lipinski*

Dan Lipinski  
Member of Congress

*Bruce Braley*

Bruce Braley  
Member of Congress

*David B. McKinley*

David B. McKinley, P.E.  
Member of Congress

*Michael H. Michaud*

Mike Michaud  
Member of Congress

*Candice S. Miller*

Candice S. Miller  
Member of Congress

*Elizabeth H. Esty*

Elizabeth Esty  
Member of Congress

*Peter DeFazio*

Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress

*Jerry McNerney*

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

*Denny Heck*

Denny Heck  
Member of Congress

*Peter Welch*

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

*Richard Hanna*

Richard Hanna  
Member of Congress

*Scott Perry*

Scott Perry  
Member of Congress

*James P. McGovern*

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

*Dina Titus*

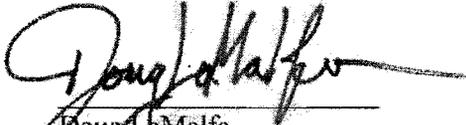
Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

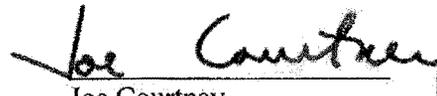
*David Price*

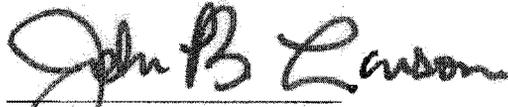
David Price  
Member of Congress

*Mark Takano*

Mark Takano  
Member of Congress

  
Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

  
Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

  
John B. Larson  
Member of Congress

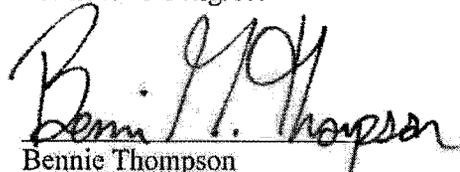
  
Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress

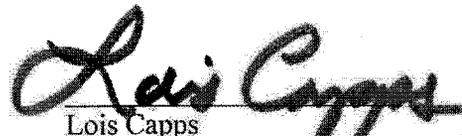
  
Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress

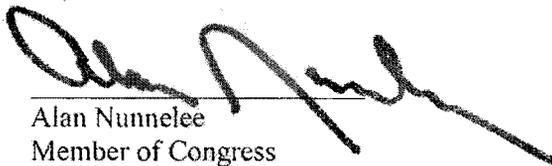
  
Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress

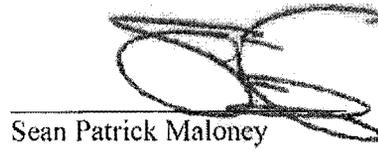
  
Frank Wolf  
Member of Congress

  
Tammy Duckworth  
Member of Congress

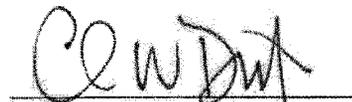
  
Bennie Thompson  
Member of Congress

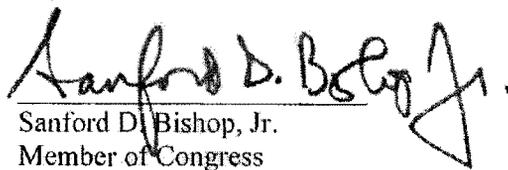
  
Lois Capps  
Member of Congress

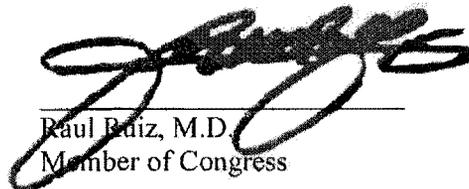
  
Alan Nunnelee  
Member of Congress

  
Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress

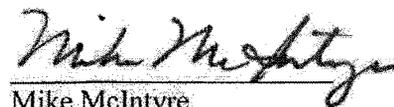
  
Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

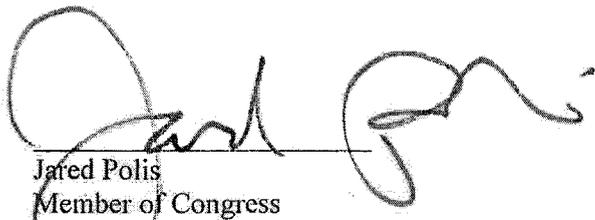
  
Charlie Dent  
Member of Congress

  
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
Cedric Richmond  
Member of Congress

  
Mike McIntyre  
Member of Congress



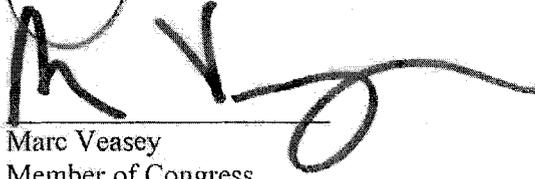
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Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



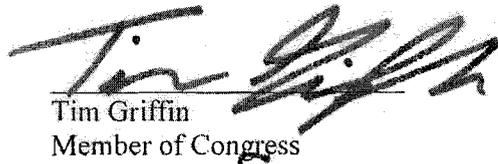
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Bill Pascrell  
Member of Congress



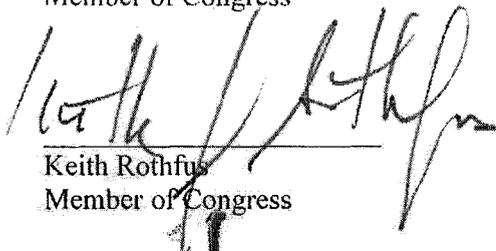
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Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress



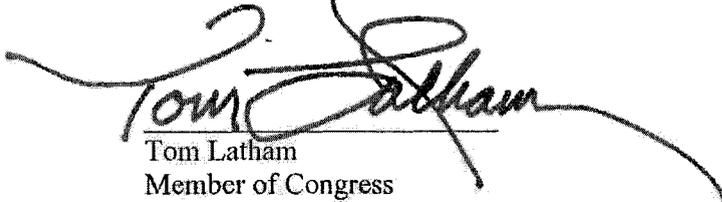
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Tim Griffin  
Member of Congress



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Keith Rothfus  
Member of Congress



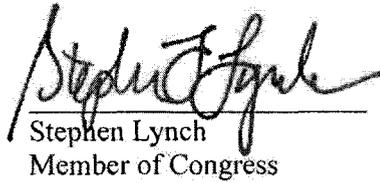
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Tom Latham  
Member of Congress



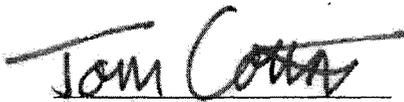
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Colleen Hanabusa  
Member of Congress



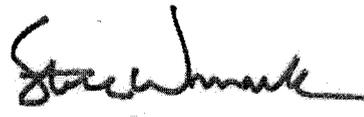
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Stephen Lynch  
Member of Congress



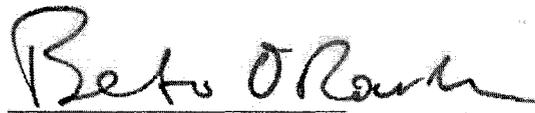
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Tom Cotton  
Member of Congress



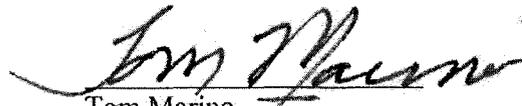
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Steve Womack  
Member of Congress



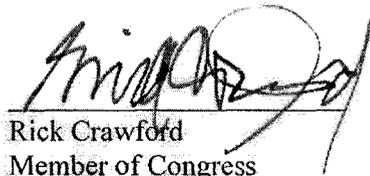
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Beto O'Rourke  
Member of Congress



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Tom Marino  
Member of Congress



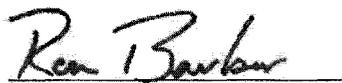
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Rick Crawford  
Member of Congress



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André Carson  
Member of Congress



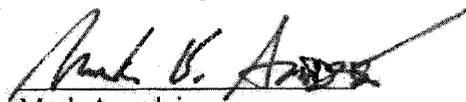
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Ron Barber  
Member of Congress



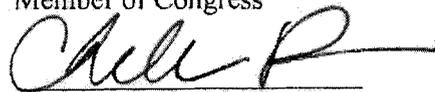
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Mike Simpson  
Member of Congress



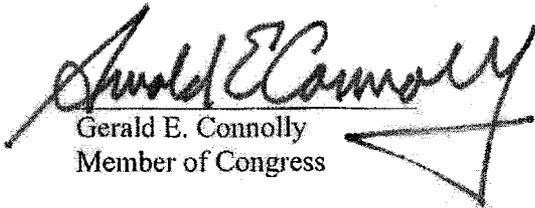
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Mark Amodei  
Member of Congress

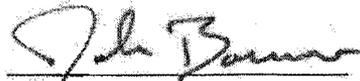


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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

  
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

  
Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress

  
John Barrow  
Member of Congress

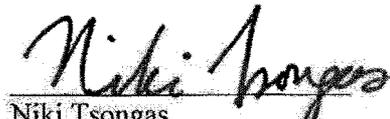
  
Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress

  
Robert A. Brady  
Member of Congress

  
Spencer Bachus  
Member of Congress

  
Robert B. Aderholt  
Member of Congress

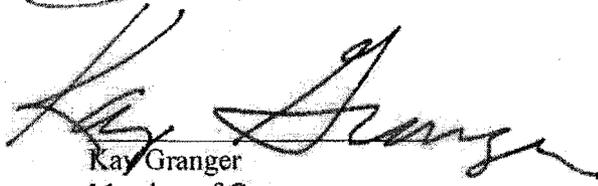
  
Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress

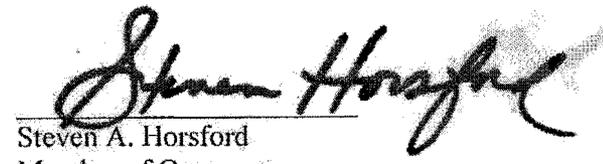
  
Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress

  
Lou Barletta  
Member of Congress

  
Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

  
Marsha Blackburn  
Member of Congress

  
Kay Granger  
Member of Congress

  
Steven A. Horsford  
Member of Congress

CC: The White House, Department of Justice, Office of Management and Budget

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 9, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-100

Dear Secretary Hagel,

We write today to express our opposition to recently reported plans by the United States Air Force to retire the A-10 Thunderbolt II beginning in FY2015. That the Air Force would choose to divest itself of such a critical close air support asset without having a sufficient numbers of follow on platforms in place is a dangerously short sighted decision. While the Air Force may feel it can continue to accomplish its missions without the outstanding capability offered by the A-10, we fail to believe the Army and Marine Corps would agree.

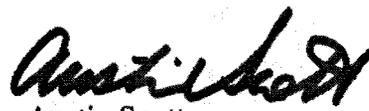
The risk posed to United States and allied ground troops by eliminating the premier close air support platform is simply unacceptable. The Air Force has stated that while the F-35 may not be able to perform close air support missions as well as the A-10, it will offer much more as a multi-mission platform. There is no question the F-35 is a superb aircraft and one that will become the premier platform of the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps in the future. What is in question; however, is how the Air Force intends to protect troops in close contact with the enemy over the next decade, while F-35 production ramps up and operational training gets underway.

After every conflict the Air Force believes there is no longer a roll for a dedicated ground attack fighter such as the A-10, yet time and again we find the United States military absolutely dependent on this plane's capabilities. In Desert Storm the A-10 was responsible for the destruction of thousands of pieces of Iraqi armor, artillery, military vehicles and even SCUD missile sites. In Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, the A-10 has flown nearly one third of all combat sorties in theater, saving the lives of countless soldiers and marines. The reality of future armed conflicts is there will always be ground troops in harm's way, be it as a part of low intensity conflicts in the fight against terrorism or as a part of full scale engagements with hostile nation states.

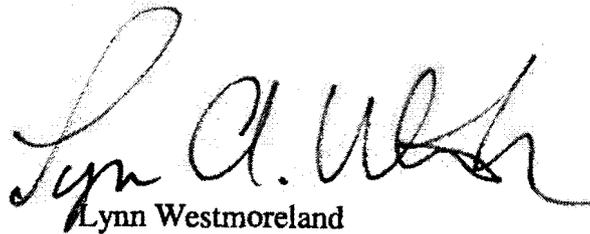
Until there is a proven replacement for the close air support capability of the A-10, it is shortsighted to retire these assets. Close air support is what saves the lives of troops on the ground. We strongly urge you to consider this reality as you review the Air Force budget submission and weigh it against the requirements of all the branches of the military.

Sincerely,

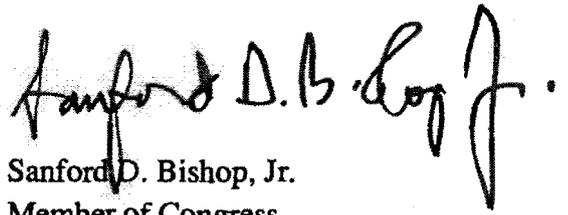
  
Jack Kingston  
Member of Congress

  
Austin Scott  
Member of Congress

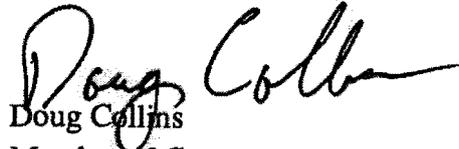




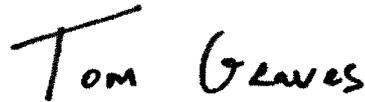
Lynn Westmoreland  
Member of Congress



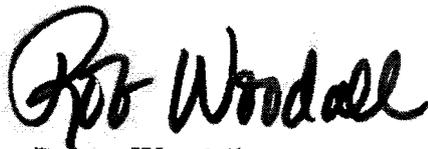
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Doug Collins  
Member of Congress



Tom Graves  
Member of Congress



Robert Woodall  
Member of Congress

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

November 13, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

General Martin E. Dempsey  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Department of Defense  
9999 Joint Chiefs of Staff Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20318

Dear Secretary Hagel and Chairman Dempsey:

We write to express our deep concern regarding the Air Force's plan to divest the A-10 Thunderbolt II. The A-10 provides close air support (CAS) capability unmatched by any other aircraft in the Air Force's inventory. The A-10 plays an essential role in helping our ground forces and special operators accomplish their missions and return home safely. We oppose any effort that would divest the A-10, creating a CAS capability gap that would reduce Air Force combat power and unnecessarily endanger our service members in future conflicts.

We appreciate that the Air Force confronts significant budget pressure and uncertainty that require difficult decisions. However, as you and your staffs assess the Air Force's budget recommendations for fiscal year (FY) 2015, we urge you to scrutinize the Air Force's proposals, as well as the assumptions underlying those proposals. The budget the Department of Defense (DoD) submits to Congress early next year must be based on realistic assumptions that place a priority on operational capability, combat readiness, and the safety of our service members in harm's way.

DoD must make every effort to protect programs that function as core components of our nation's combat power and military readiness. It would be unconscionable to further cut an asset like the A-10 for budget reasons—increasing the risks our service members confront in ground combat—when equivalent savings could be achieved elsewhere in the Air Force budget without reducing operational capabilities. It would be difficult for DoD to justify the divestment of the A-10 while the Air Force continues to expend millions of dollars on conferences, air shows, and bloated headquarters staffs—while also struggling to meet statutory audit deadlines.

The A-10 certainly qualifies as a core component of our nation's combat power and military readiness. The A-10 represents the Air Force's best CAS aircraft—one whose unmatched survivability, maneuverability, and lethal armaments are surpassed only by the deeply-ingrained CAS culture of its pilots. As the report for the FY 2014 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) approved by the Senate Armed Services Committee states, "The A-10 has served as the Air Force's primary close air support asset, having been designed for that specific mission with characteristics that permit it to operate and maneuver at low altitude and slow speeds. The aircraft is also heavily armored to ensure the highest survivability for the pilot and vital aircraft systems." In short, many soldiers and Marines are alive today because of the unique capabilities of the A-10, as well as the focused CAS training and dedicated CAS culture of A-10 pilots.



No other fixed-wing CAS assets are as proficient as the A-10 in conducting visual support operations below 800 to 3,000 foot ceilings with limited visibility. We ask you to consult closely with the geographic combatant commanders and report back to us so that all parties fully appreciate that divestment of the A-10 would significantly undercut the ability of combatant commanders to conduct inclement weather CAS support when exact target coordinates for GPS-guided bombs are not available, or when friendly forces are in close proximity to the enemy. We see this loss of capability as an unacceptable risk, and do not believe that combatant commanders would willingly accept this reduction in CAS capability and increased risk to the service members under their command.

Despite clear evidence that the A-10 provides essential and unmatched CAS capabilities, for reasons we believe are short-sighted and primarily budget-driven, the Air Force has cut or is cutting three squadrons of A-10s at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana; Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany; and Fort Smith, Arkansas. Moreover, based on reports related to the Air Force's FY 2015 proposals for the A-10 and an apparent Air Force document entitled "CAF Force Generation Model" (dated 19 Jul 2013), we are deeply concerned that the Air Force's ill-advised effort to divest the A-10 may be accelerating. Yet, such an Air Force divestment of the A-10 would run counter to a long-standing congressional belief that the A-10's past combat performance, low operating costs, and unique CAS capabilities warrant the allocation of finite resources to ensure the A-10 remains part of the fleet for years to come. That is why Congress blocked the Air Force's effort to cut A-10 force structure even deeper in FY 2013.

That is also why Congress has supported the investment of significant resources to modernize the A-10 fleet—including state-of-the-art cockpit displays, digital data links, advanced targeting pod integration, full laser and GPS-guided munitions integration, and best-of-class integrated threat countermeasures. These modernization efforts will help ensure that the A-10 can continue to provide cutting-edge, one-of-a-kind close air support for years to come. An Air Force acceleration of its plan to divest the A-10 would represent an irresponsible waste of the modernization tax dollars that we have invested in the A-10 and a disregard for congressional intent.

An Air Force plan to divest A-10s may be based on two questionable—and potentially dangerous—assumptions. The first assumption is that the United States will not be fighting wars like Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom in the future. While we hope the U.S. can avoid such conflicts in the future, should they emerge unexpectedly, we have an obligation to ensure that our service members have the best resources at their disposal. The United States has had a poor track record predicting conflicts. When the U.S. military enters a conflict without sufficient training, resources, and capabilities, the cost is measured in the lives of our brave service members. We have a responsibility to not make those mistakes again.

The second assumption related to A-10 divestment appears to be that other aircraft currently in the Air Force inventory can replace the CAS capabilities of the A-10. The F-15, F-16, B-1, and B-52 are incredibly effective aircraft that are important components of the Air Force inventory, yet none of these aircraft can fully replace the capabilities and focus of the A-10 in many CAS situations. Technological advancements in weapons and sensors will not make a "multi-role" aircraft designed for other missions—and with a pilot who only spends a portion of their time training for CAS missions—comparable to the A-10, an aircraft and crew with a

singular focus on CAS missions. Experience in Iraq and Afghanistan clearly demonstrate the A-10's well-documented capability to operate effectively in combat below 800 foot ceilings/2 miles visibility and still provide effective CAS within 50 meters to save the lives of our troops when engaged in close combat with the enemy. In fact, the ability of the A-10 to operate in these conditions close to the point of engagement often results in faster re-attack times and lower civilian casualties.

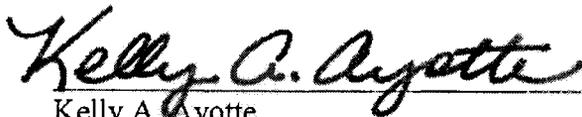
For these reasons, in terms of maintaining the health of the A-10 fleet with pilot training, sufficient flight hours, utilization of active component squadrons, software upgrades, and modernization funding, it is essential that the Air Force not take any additional steps toward divestment. It is also important that the Air Force reverse any actions taken in recent months that could make an A-10 divestment a foregone conclusion before Congress can exercise its constitutional oversight role.

We look forward to reviewing DoD's close air support study that was mandated by the FY 2014 NDAA report approved by the Senate Armed Services Committee. Most importantly, we ask you and your staffs to closely scrutinize the Air Force's FY 2015 proposals as they relate to the A-10.

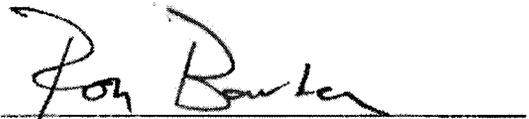
There is no question DoD must make difficult budget decisions. However, as we work together to best protect our nation and address our fiscal challenges, the last cuts we should make are ones that would deprive our troops of the capabilities they need to accomplish their missions and return home safely.

Thank you for your distinguished service to our nation.

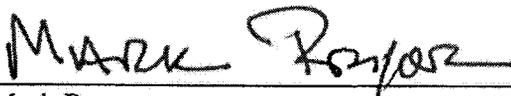
Sincerely,



Kelly A. Ayotte  
United States Senate



Ron Barber  
Member of Congress



Mark Pryor  
United States Senate



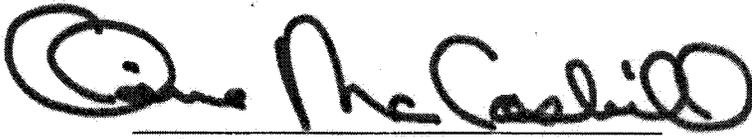
Jack Kingston  
Member of Congress



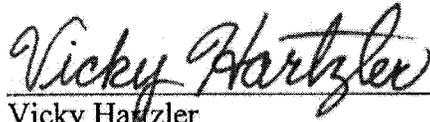
Saxby Chambliss  
United States Senate



Austin Scott  
Member of Congress



Claire McCaskill  
United States Senate



Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress



David Vitter  
United States Senate



C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress



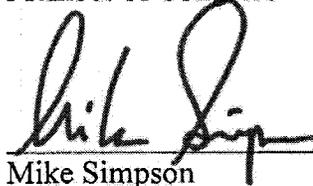
Richard Burr  
United States Senate



Candice Miller  
Member of Congress



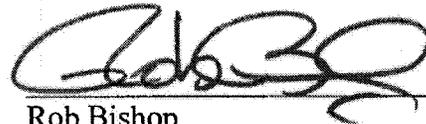
Mike Crapo  
United States Senate



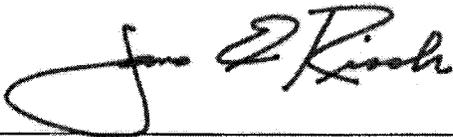
Mike Simpson  
Member of Congress



Roy Blunt  
United States Senate



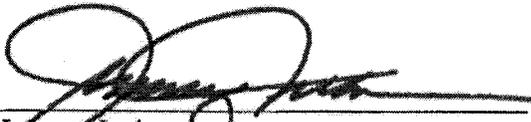
Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress



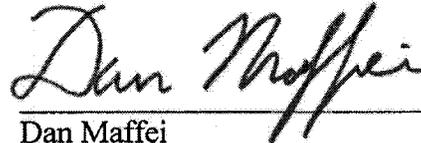
James Risch  
United States Senate



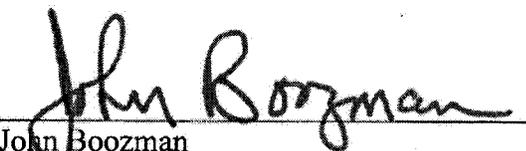
Mike Coffman  
Member of Congress



Johnny Isakson  
United States Senate



Dan Maffei  
Member of Congress



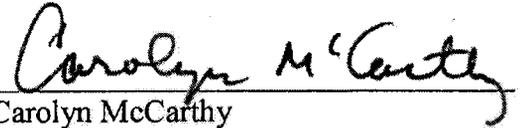
John Boozman  
United States Senate



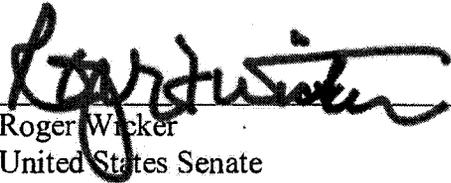
Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress



Ted Cruz  
United States Senate



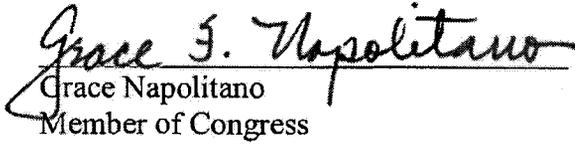
Carolyn McCarthy  
Member of Congress



Roger Wicker  
United States Senate



Ander Crenshaw  
Member of Congress



Grace Napolitano  
Member of Congress



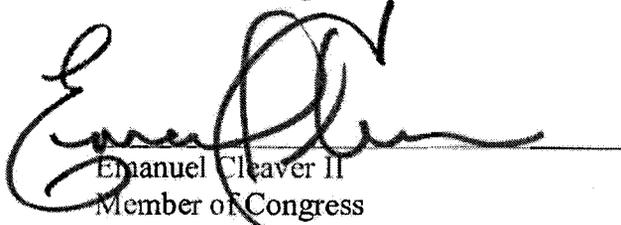
Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Dan Kildee  
Member of Congress



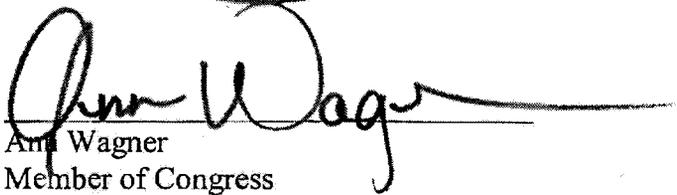
Tim Bishop  
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver II  
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart  
Member of Congress



Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress

Cc: General Mark A. Welsh III  
Air Force Chief of Staff  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

December 12, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We write to express our concern with the Air Force's commitment to the Combat Rescue Helicopter (CRH) program to recapitalize its fleet of search and rescue helicopters. These indispensable assets enable the critical mission of rescuing downed pilots, a mission that former Air Force Chief of Staff Michael Moseley once called a "moral imperative".

As you know, the CRH program will replace aging HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters with the latest technology modified to meet this highly specialized mission. The combat search and rescue mission is one of the highest utilized missions in the entire military. The legacy fleet has saved thousands of lives over the last decade and repeatedly proved the critical nature of this mission. The age and high operations tempo of the current helicopters, however, has driven up Operations and Maintenance costs and challenged mission readiness rates. Two unsuccessful Air Force efforts to recapitalize the legacy fleet have exacerbated this situation and prolonged the use of these more than thirty-year old assets.

The Air Force should be commended for its current effort to develop an effective acquisition strategy centered on a technically acceptable, best value selection likely to survive any protests that have doomed past acquisitions. The Air Force's CRH strategy to utilize a fixed-priced incentivized contract will allow it to recapitalize equipment in a budget constrained environment. We believe this mission is too important to allow arbitrary budget pressures to thwart providing these lifesaving aircraft, and the Air Force should move forward with its acquisition strategy to recapitalize the CRH fleet in an expeditious manner.

We therefore respectfully ask you to provide resolute support for the Combat Rescue Helicopter program in your future budget submissions. We appreciate that the Air Force has competing budgetary demands, but those must not interfere with equipping the Air Force to execute the vital and essential mission of rescuing downed pilots, as well as saving our service-members in harm's way.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of our request. We look forward to working with you on this critical matter.

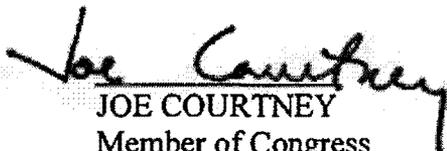
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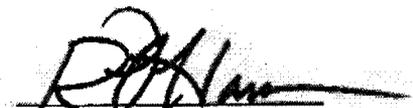
  
ROSA L. DELAURO  
Member of Congress

  
KEN CALVERT  
Member of Congress



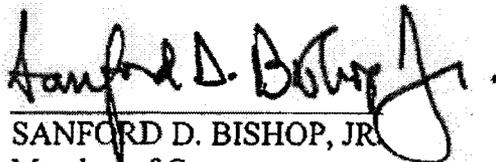
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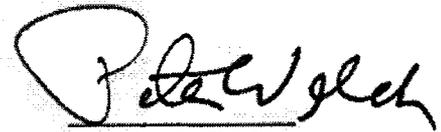
  
JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress

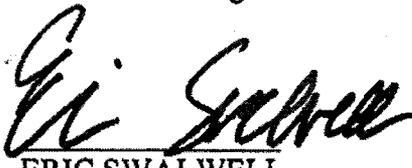
  
RICHARD L. HANNA  
Member of Congress

  
MIKE McINTYRE  
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AUSTIN SCOTT  
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SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.  
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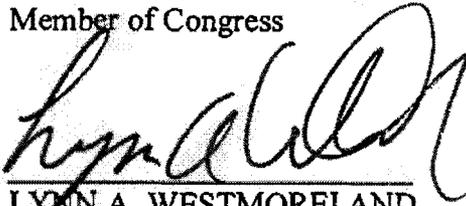
  
PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress

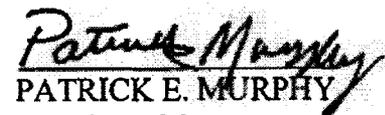
  
ERIC SWALWELL  
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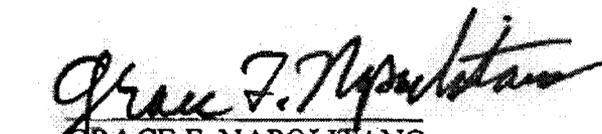
  
RON BARBER  
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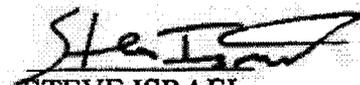
  
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JOHN B. LARSON  
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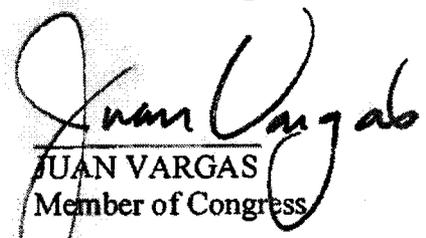
  
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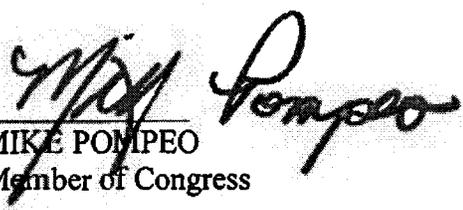
  
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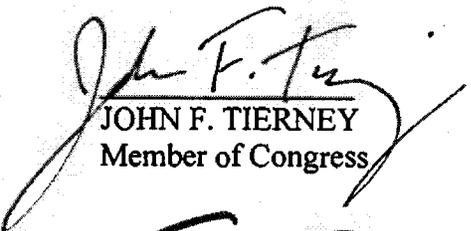
  
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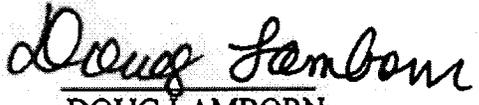
  
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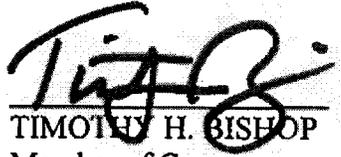
  
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PAUL COOK  
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MIKE POMPEO  
Member of Congress

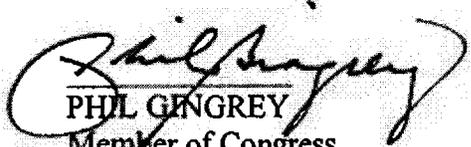
  
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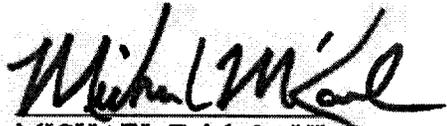
  
DOUG LAMBORN  
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TIMOTHY H. BISHOP  
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JOHN KLINE  
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KEITH J. ROTHFUS  
Member of Congress

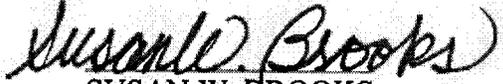
  
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MICHAEL T. McCAUL  
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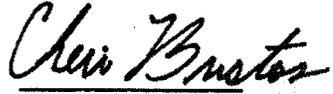
  
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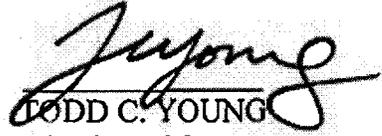
  
TERRI A. SEWELL  
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LORETTA SANCHEZ  
Member of Congress

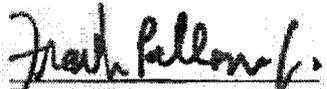
  
SUSAN W. BROOKS  
Member of Congress

  
DUNCAN HUNTER  
Member of Congress

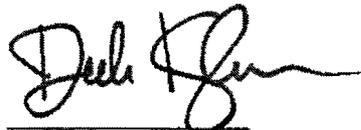
  
CHERI BUSTOS  
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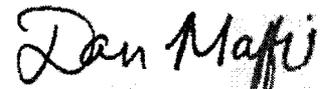
  
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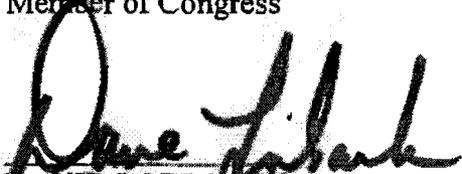
  
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FRANK PALLONE JR  
Member of Congress

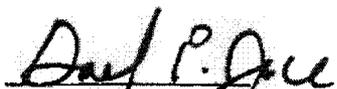
  
NIKI TSONGAS  
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DEREK KILMER  
Member of Congress

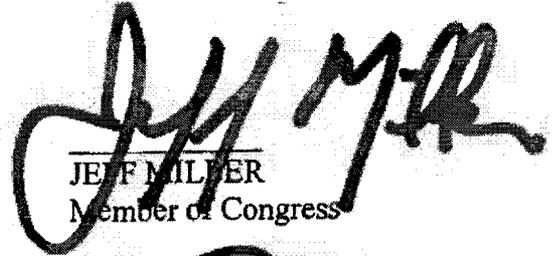
  
DANIEL B. MAFFEI  
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DAVID LOEBSACK  
Member of Congress

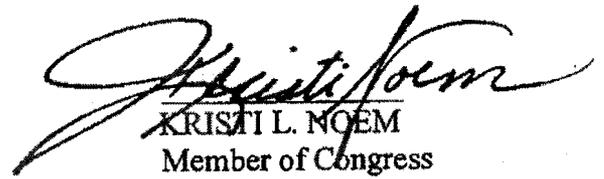
  
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DAVID P. JOYCE  
Member of Congress

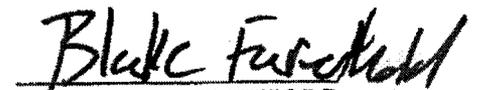
  
TOM LATHAM  
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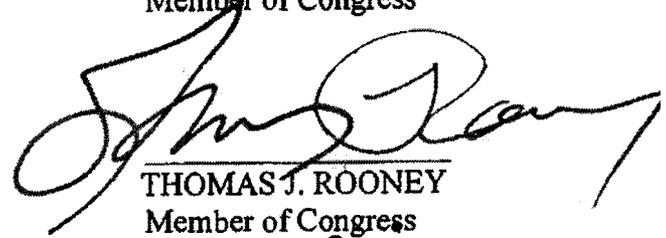
  
JEFF MILLER  
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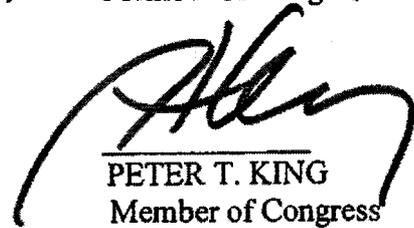
  
SEAN P. DUFFY  
Member of Congress

  
KRISTI L. NOEM  
Member of Congress

  
JOE WILSON  
Member of Congress

  
BLAKE FARENTHOLD  
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THOMAS J. ROONEY  
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PETER T. KING  
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Walter B. Jones  
WALTER B. JONES  
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Tom Graves  
TOM GRAVES  
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster  
ANN McLANE KUSTER  
Member of Congress

Kevin Cramer  
KEVIN CRAMER  
Member of Congress

Jackie Walorski  
JACKIE WALORSKI  
Member of Congress

Mo Brooks  
MO BROOKS  
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham  
MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM  
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Mike Rogers  
MIKE ROGERS  
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Sam Johnson  
SAM JOHNSON  
Member of Congress

Janice Hahn  
JANICE HAHN  
Member of Congress

Jim Bridenstine  
JIM BRIDENSTINE  
Member of Congress

Doug Collins  
DOUG COLLINS  
Member of Congress

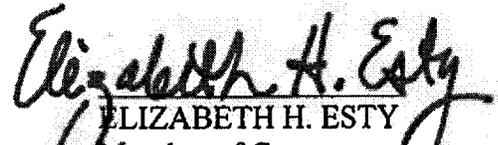
C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER  
Member of Congress

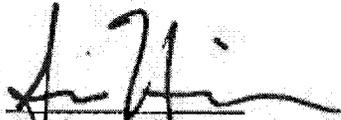
Tim Ryan  
TIM RYAN  
Member of Congress

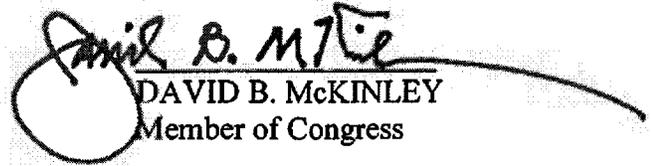
Brad R. Wenstrup  
BRAD R. WENSTRUP  
Member of Congress

Joseph J. Heck  
JOSEPH J. HECK  
Member of Congress

  
MICHAEL E. CAPUANO  
Member of Congress

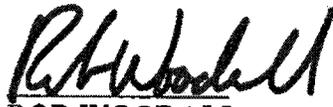
  
ELIZABETH H. ESTY  
Member of Congress

  
JAMES A. HIMES  
Member of Congress

  
DAVID B. MCKINLEY  
Member of Congress

  
COLLEEN W. HANABUSA  
Member of Congress

  
ADAM KINZINGER  
Member of Congress

  
ROB WOODALL  
Member of Congress

  
CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON  
Member of Congress

NICK J. RAHALL, II  
3RD DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
RANKING MEMBER

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4803

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801 FEDERAL STREET, ROOM 1605  
BEOCH, WV 24701-3033  
(304) 325-8222

220 CONGRESS STREET  
LOGAN, WV 25901  
(304) 252-4521

December 13, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2015 Army budget proposal, we urge you to preserve the force structure and end strength of the Army National Guard and to leverage the operational reserve to increase cost-savings in the Total Army.

We understand that your soon-to-be-completed budget review is focused on rebalancing active and reserve forces in our Nation's long-term military strategy, which is commendable. With the operational reserve being rebuilt since September 11, 2001, this generation of Army National Guardsmen and Reservists has proven every bit as effective, committed, and capable as their active counterparts.

We believe that significant end strength and force structure cuts can be mitigated by better utilizing the Reserve Component, which would save money while sustaining defense capacity and capability. Blending Active and Reserve Component Army units, as the Air Force has begun to do with its Active Associate program, could ensure long-term budgetary savings to maintain a robust Total Army. As your Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB) recently noted, a blended Total Army composition means more combat capability at about one-third the cost.

Alternate cost-savings proposals under consideration that would reduce the Army National Guard to 315,000 soldiers – 35,000 fewer soldiers than pre-9/11 levels – are deeply troubling, especially considering the Army National Guard is the most cost-effective dual use force available. Knowing such draconian cuts alone may not be enough if the budget sequester continues and military personnel costs double, as projected, by 2025, we are convinced that end strength reductions in the Reserve Component are not a practical or long-term solution to ensuring our Nation's security in an era of fiscal restraints. As you are aware, Congress last year rightly rejected similar proposals that reduced end strength and force structure for the Air National Guard.

We strongly encourage you to avert a large end strength reduction that would inhibit our Army's ability to respond to world events and domestic emergencies. We look forward to reviewing your final decision, which we understand will be issued in the next several weeks, and to working with you to ensure a robust future Total Army.



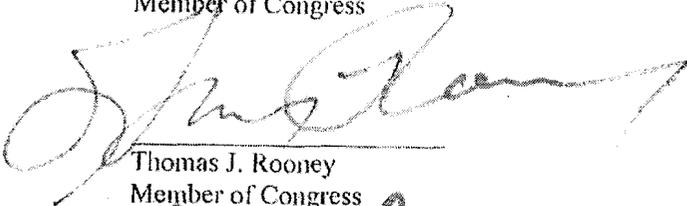
Sincerely,



Nick J. Rahall, II  
Member of Congress



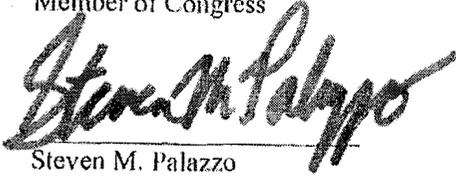
Candice S. Miller  
Member of Congress



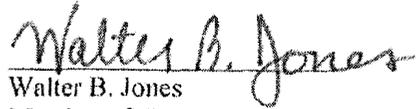
Thomas J. Rooney  
Member of Congress



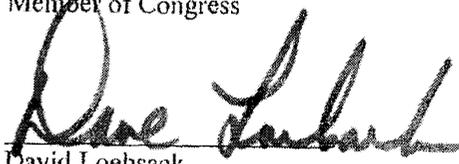
Michael T. McCaul  
Member of Congress



Steven M. Palazzo  
Member of Congress



Walter B. Jones  
Member of Congress



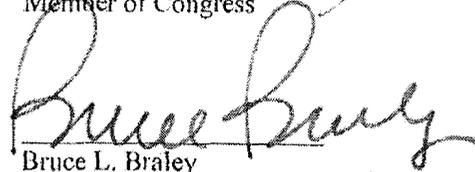
David Loebsack  
Member of Congress



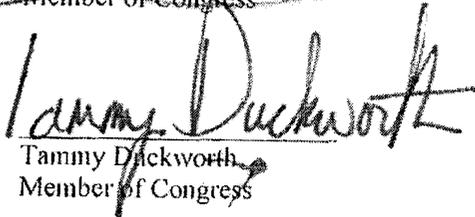
Steve King  
Member of Congress



John L. Mica  
Member of Congress



Bruce L. Braley  
Member of Congress



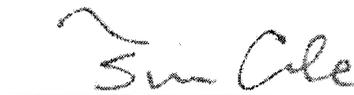
Tammy Duckworth  
Member of Congress



Tim Griffin  
Member of Congress



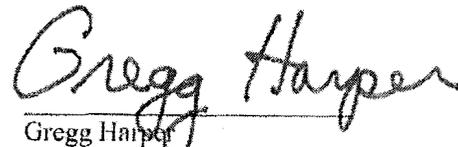
Don Young  
Member of Congress



Tom Cole  
Member of Congress



Steve Womack  
Member of Congress



Gregg Harper  
Member of Congress



Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress



Joe Barton  
Member of Congress



Tulsi Gabbard  
Member of Congress



Kevin Cramer  
Member of Congress



David B. McKinley  
Member of Congress



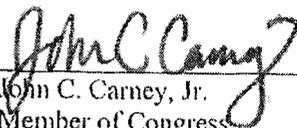
Andy Barr  
Member of Congress



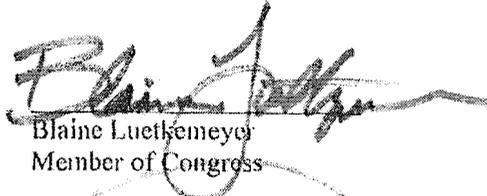
Colleen W. Hanabusa  
Member of Congress



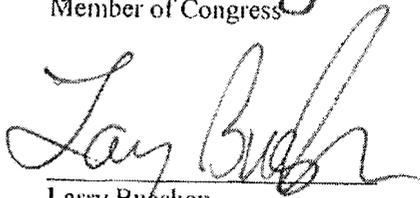
Stephen Lee Fincher  
Member of Congress



John C. Carney, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Blaine Luetkemeyer  
Member of Congress



Larry Bueshon  
Member of Congress



Scott DesJarlais  
Member of Congress



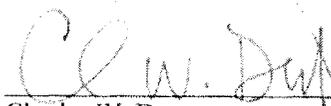
Blake Farenthold  
Member of Congress



Tim Huelskamp  
Member of Congress



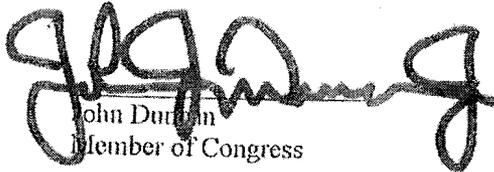
Gene Green  
Member of Congress



Charles W. Dent  
Member of Congress

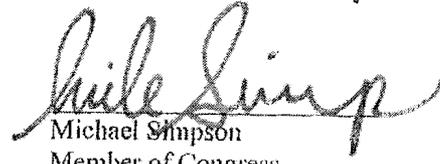
  
Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress

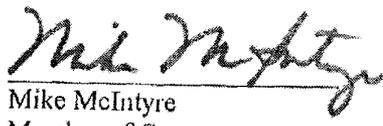
  
Howard Coble  
Member of Congress

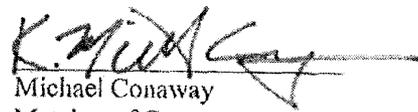
  
John Duthart  
Member of Congress

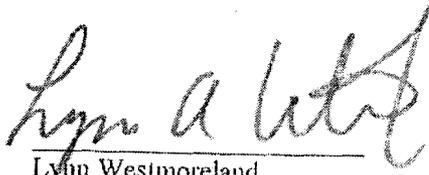
  
Pete Sessions  
Member of Congress

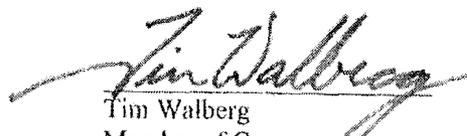
  
Hank Johnson  
Member of Congress

  
Michael Simpson  
Member of Congress

  
Mike McIntyre  
Member of Congress

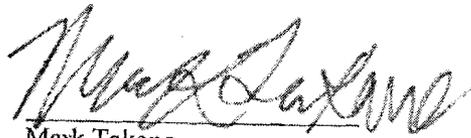
  
Michael Conaway  
Member of Congress

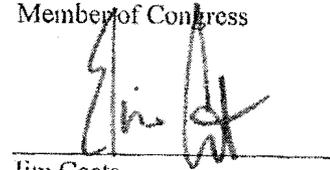
  
Lynn Westmoreland  
Member of Congress

  
Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress

  
Jim Gerlach  
Member of Congress

  
Robert Latta  
Member of Congress

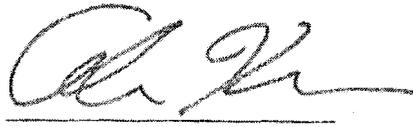
  
Mark Takano  
Member of Congress

  
Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

  
William Enyart  
Member of Congress

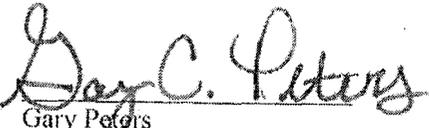
  
Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

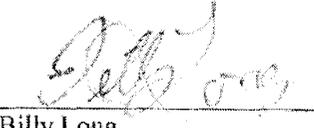
  
Sam Graves  
Member of Congress

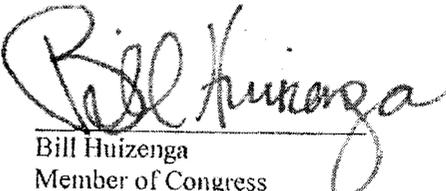
  
Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress

  
Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress

  
Kristi Noem  
Member of Congress

  
Gary Peters  
Member of Congress

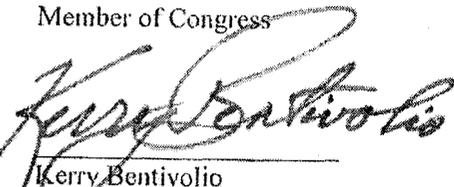
  
Billy Long  
Member of Congress

  
Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress

  
Dan Benishek  
Member of Congress

  
Daniel Maffei  
Member of Congress

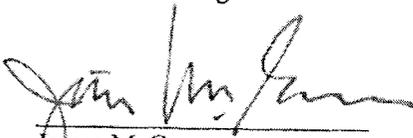
  
Richard Hanna  
Member of Congress

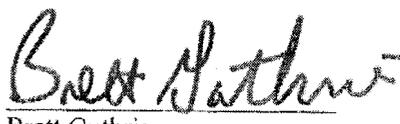
  
Kerry Bentivolio  
Member of Congress

  
Pete Olson  
Member of Congress

  
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress

  
Annie Kuster  
Member of Congress

  
James McGovern  
Member of Congress

  
Brett Guthrie  
Member of Congress



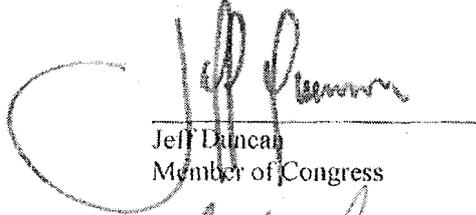
Pat Tiberi  
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader  
Member of Congress



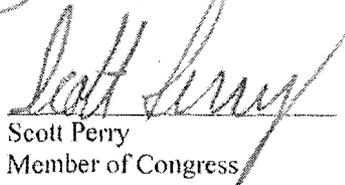
Cynthia Lummis  
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan  
Member of Congress



Glenn Thompson  
Member of Congress



Scott Perry  
Member of Congress



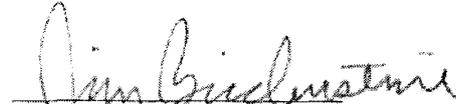
Erik Paulsen  
Member of Congress



Frederica Wilson  
Member of Congress



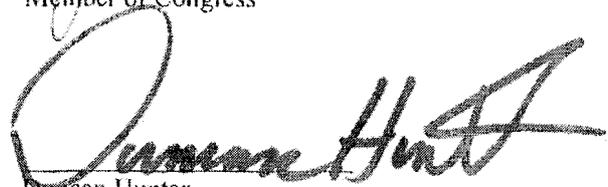
Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



Jim Bridenstine  
Member of Congress



Marsha Blackburn  
Member of Congress



Duncan Hunter  
Member of Congress



Robert Pittenger  
Member of Congress



James Hankford  
Member of Congress



Thomas Massie  
Member of Congress



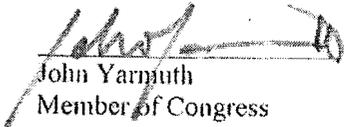
Tom Rice  
Member of Congress



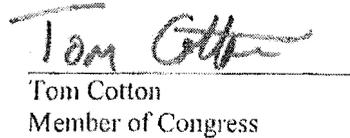
Aaron Schock  
Member of Congress



Peter King  
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

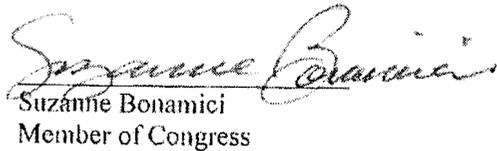


Tom Cotton  
Member of Congress

Ron DeSantis  
Member of Congress



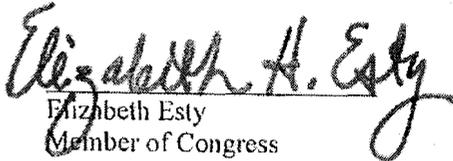
Richard Hudson  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Luke Messer  
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Esty  
Member of Congress



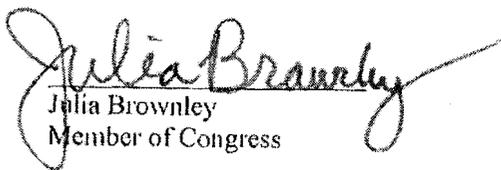
Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



Austin Scott  
Member of Congress



Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



Kay Granger  
Member of Congress



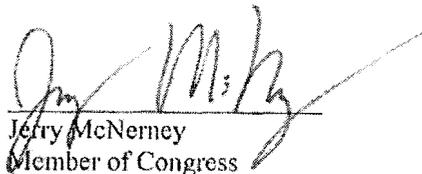
Bill Flores  
Member of Congress



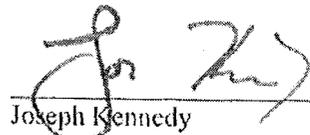
Timothy J. Walz  
Member of Congress



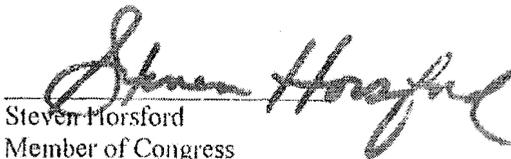
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



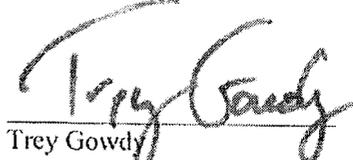
Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress



Joseph Kennedy  
Member of Congress



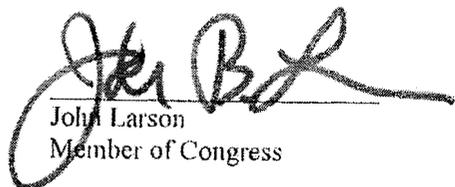
Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



Trey Gowdy  
Member of Congress



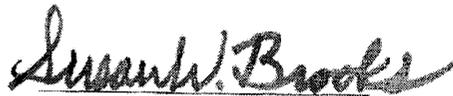
Alan Nunnelee  
Member of Congress



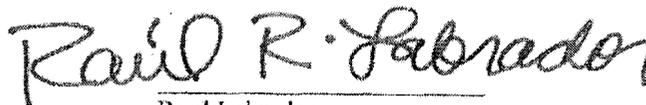
John Larson  
Member of Congress



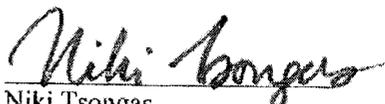
Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



Susan Brooks  
Member of Congress



Raul Labrador  
Member of Congress



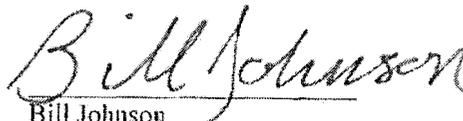
Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress



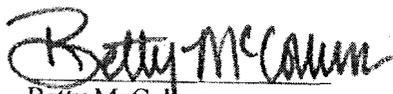
Grace Napolitano  
Member of Congress



Gloria Negrete McLeod  
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

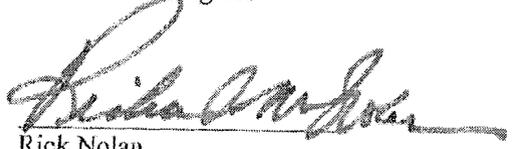


Mike Michaud  
Member of Congress

  
Richard Nugent  
Member of Congress

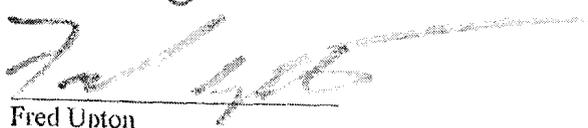
  
Marlin Stutzman  
Member of Congress

  
Collin Peterson  
Member of Congress

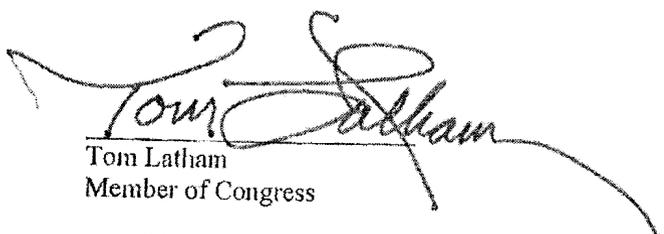
  
Rick Nolan  
Member of Congress

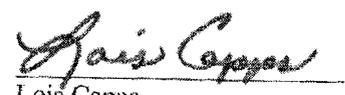
  
Danny Davis  
Member of Congress

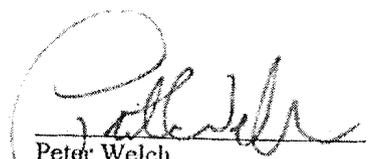
  
David Price  
Member of Congress

  
Fred Upton  
Member of Congress

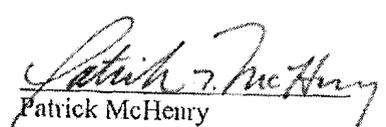
  
Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress

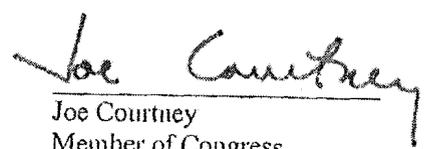
  
Tom Latham  
Member of Congress

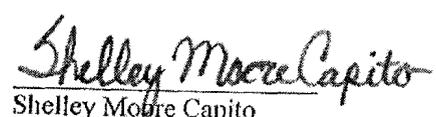
  
Lois Capps  
Member of Congress

  
Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

  
Gus Bilirakis  
Member of Congress

  
Patrick McHenry  
Member of Congress

  
Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

  
Shelley Moore Capito  
Member of Congress

  
Rosa DeLauro  
Member of Congress



C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress



Michele Bachmann  
Member of Congress



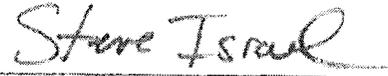
Paul Broun  
Member of Congress



Mike Coffman  
Member of Congress



Thomas Petri  
Member of Congress



Steve Israel  
Member of Congress



Diane Black  
Member of Congress



David Cicilline  
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress



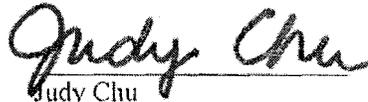
Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress



André Carson  
Member of Congress



Todd Rokita  
Member of Congress



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Cc: General Raymond T. Odierno  
General Frank J. Grass

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 20, 2013

Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We understand you are evaluating options to cut Army National Guard end strength, force structure and aviation assets in order to meet budgetary requirements. We are concerned that such proposals will have irreversible impacts on the Guard's ability to respond to emergency events at home and support future overseas missions. We are also aware of the Guard's separate cost-efficient plan that would save the same amount of money and preserve capabilities for the Nation.

This generation of men and women in the Army National Guard and Reserve has proven effective, committed, and capable—indistinguishable on the battlefield from their Active Component counterparts. This provides the Nation with a unique and limited window for capitalizing on a nearly unprecedented level of professionalism and expertise in its Reserve Component. That is why we believe proposals that reduce the Army National Guard to 315,000 are untenable. Such reductions would threaten its ability to function as a cost-effective, dual-use force and would dangerously reduce our nation's strategic depth.

As you are aware, Congress rejected steep cuts proposed to force structure for the Air National Guard in Fiscal Year 2013. However, since that time, we have been pleased at the cooperation in the Air Force between the Active and Reserve Components within the regular process. We hope that any proposal from the Army will be forged through a process that includes the Army National Guard as a full partner and similarly considers all of the Nation's needs—both foreign and domestic.

We appreciate your willingness to consider multiple courses of action in pursuit of the most effective, efficient Department of Defense. With regards to our Army's end-strength and structure, we strongly encourage you to avoid courses of action that lead to unnecessarily large reductions that inhibit the Nation's ability to respond to world events and domestic emergencies. We look forward to working with you to ensure a strong Total Army in the future.

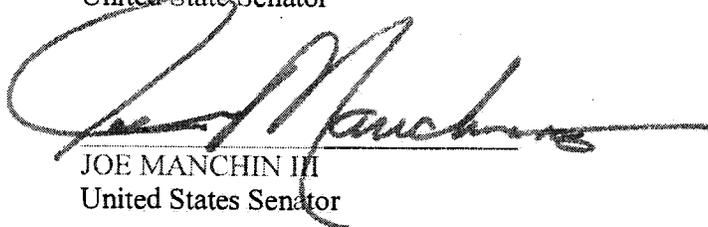
Sincerely,



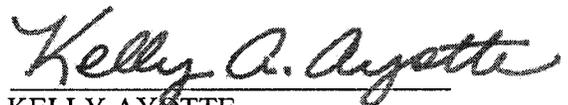
PATRICK LEAHY  
United States Senator



LINDSEY O. GRAHAM  
United States Senator



JOE MANCHIN III  
United States Senator



KELLY AYOTTE  
United States Senator



OSD014681-13

Jay Ruppel

Jay R. Hagan

Susan Collins

Heidi Heitkamp

Tom Karwan

Richard Blumenthal

J. Toth

Mark Royce

B. Sanders

John Barrasso

John Thune

Th. W. J.

Shirley Brown

Michael B. Enzi

Ma R.

Chris Coons

My Bances

John Conroy

James Shaker

Robert Henry G.

Joe Donnelly

Roy Johnson

Amy Klobuchar

Al Franken

Sally Chaudhry

John Bozeman

Jim Johnson

Chuck Grassley

Debbie Stabenow

Pat Shast

Ray Bennett

Pat Romney

Mark F. R. T

Lamar Alexander

Paul Bezek

Quinn Hatch

Bill Wilson

Tom Beldi

Mike Johnson

Max of Gardiner

Elizabeth Ham

Edward J. Markey

Art Tucker

D. Hill

Joe Resbawski

Jerry Moran

John Fourn

Mark

Tom Carper

Tom Hill

Jimmy

Kirsten E. Hillibrand

Jim

Mazzi K. Dianno

Signers:

Leahy  
Graham  
Manchin  
Ayotte  
Rockefeller  
Hagan  
Collins  
Coons  
Rubio  
Enzi  
Pryor  
Wyden  
Barrasso  
Sanders  
Heitkamp  
Thune  
Tester  
Brown  
Harkin  
Blumenthal  
Menendez  
Shaheen  
Cornyn  
Baucus  
Boozman  
Klobuchar  
Franken  
Johnson (Ron)  
Johnson (Tim)  
Grassley  
Stabenow  
Roberts  
Donnelly  
Bennet  
Toomey  
Blunt  
Alexander  
Chambliss  
Hatch  
Begich  
Vitter  
Moran  
NelsonBaldwin  
Warren  
Hoeven  
Murkowski  
Heinrich

Heller  
Landrieu  
Isakson  
Scott  
Markey  
Johanns  
Carper  
Gillibrand  
Hirono  
Fischer