



April 25, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairman Leahy:

With the prospects of another Continuing Resolution (CR) looming, the undersigned organizations, representing the Active and Reserve Components, respectfully request that your committee convey to your colleagues the dire need to pass a Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17), Department of Defense Appropriations Act to provide appropriations for active-duty and reserve personnel in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force (the military departments), and for National Guard personnel in the Army and Air Force. The unnecessary burdens and increased risk placed upon our military because of yearly fiscal uncertainty, compounded by Sequestration is unacceptable, costly to the taxpayers, and jeopardizes our nation.

For example, numerous states hold monthly National Guard and Reserve training during the first weekends of each month. Since DOD has been operating under a CR, we are concerned that a failure of Congress to pass an appropriations bill by April 28, 2017, would force the cancelation of Reserve Component training once again--even if the lapse only lasts a few days. As a result, Services' readiness deteriorates further and will take years to overcome.

Canceling monthly training deteriorates our service members' ability to be ready for conflict and peacetime operations. Failure to fund the Department by the end of this month will result in multiple states and reserve units canceling training for a second time in one year. At least where individual mobilization augmentees (IMAs) are involved, such cancelations will also impact Active Component units. Our organizations are vitally concerned about the increased risk to the Readiness of our force and find Congressional inaction to be an unacceptable approach to ensuring the readiness of our nation's Reserve Component.

As you return from Recess, please collaborate tirelessly with your colleagues to pass a Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017, for the remainder of the fiscal year, so our military can focus its efforts on securing our nation and allies. Thank you for your prompt attention to this call to action, and for your support of our service members, civilians, veterans, and military families.

Sincerely,

Denise Hollywood
Executive Vice President, Air Force Association

Frank Yoakum, Sergeant Major, US Army (retired)
Executive Director, EANGUS

Jessie R. Robinson, Brigadier General, (Ret.)
President, NGAUS

Jeffrey E. Phillips, Maj. Gen., USA (Ret.)
Executive Director

cc: Members of the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate