

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 22, 2020

The Honorable Mark Esper  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1010 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Dr. Esper:

We are writing in support of the 46,000 members of the National Guard who answered the call to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to ensure the Department of Defense (DoD) is aware of our support for the Administration's activation of National Guard service members under 502(f)(2)(A) of Title 32, U.S. Code status. We believe, however, that the duration of 502(f) activation periods must be tied to mission requirements and not arbitrary timelines resulting from budgetary concerns.

The fight against COVID-19 appears to be an enduring one. Accordingly, I find it prudent to continue building upon our recent successes by extending the National Guard service in our states and local communities. Our brave women and men in the National Guard have proven they possess the necessary skills, abilities and occupational specialties to address the challenges in their communities. We should continue to rely on their expertise and experience as we combat this pandemic. Additionally, we should ensure our mobilized service men and women are afforded the same protections as their Active Duty counterparts to the greatest extent possible.

An extension of 502(f) will unquestionably benefit state and local communities in their response to COVID-19. Our National Guard service members are executing a critical mission with honor and we should ensure their service and sacrifice is not taken for granted. Accordingly, we respectfully request that 24 June 2020, not be used as an arbitrary deadline in terminating 502(f) activations.

Sincerely,



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Trent Kelly  
Member of Congress



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Steven Palazzo  
Member of Congress



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Michael Guest  
Member of Congress