June 30, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear House and Senate Leaders,

Throughout the first seven months of 2021, the nation faced unexpected emergencies demanding robust federal responses. As you continue to negotiate a deal to provide emergency appropriations to address these crises, we urge you to resolve the budget shortfall of the National Guard. Following the events of January 6th, the Guard responded to the Capitol in force and served dutifully for almost five months, keeping us, and the democracy we treasure, secure. This response came without hesitation and with the trust that we would take care of the National Guard Bureau and its more than 453,000 Citizen Soldiers and Airmen. As a result of this mission, the Guard is due nearly $521 million in reimbursement.

Department of Defense (DOD) leadership has stated that without a commitment to reimburse the Guard by July 1st, 2021, preparations will begin to cancel August and September annual training and individual duty training assemblies. Citizen Soldiers and Airmen, homeland response capabilities and our military readiness will be gravely affected without immediate action. When asked about the impact of not reimbursing the Guard during a June 23rd House Armed Services hearing on the FY22 DOD budget, Secretary Austin stated, “It will impact their ability in the near term to be able to train and adequately prepare the Guard for its future, for its current responsibilities,” and that failing to fund the Guard would “erode readiness”. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Milley added, “$500 million in the grand scheme of a $715 billion [overall Defense Department] budget may not seem like a lot, but to the National Guard, that is a lot.”

If trainings are canceled, several thousand Army National Guard Soldiers will not have enough service time this fiscal year to receive credit for a good year toward a military retirement. Approximately 2,000 training schools will be canceled, affecting their readiness, pay and career
progression. Ground vehicle and rotary wing operations and maintenance will be halted. Facilities will degrade, including the delay of critical fire safety projects in Maryland, Minnesota and the Virgin Islands. Air National Guard flying operations will be negatively impacted as they begin recovery from the negative readiness effects of the pandemic. Without reimbursement this fiscal year, it will take years to recover our readiness.

Without immediate action, the brave volunteers of our National Guard will suffer and the National Guard Bureau estimates its readiness will decrease by fifteen to twenty percent. We urge you to swiftly come to an agreement on emergency appropriations that includes full reimbursement for the National Guard.

Sincerely,

Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress

Steve Womack
Member of Congress

Scott Desjarlais
Member of Congress

Tom Cole
Member of Congress

Susan Wild
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton
Member of Congress

Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress
Michael F.Q. San Nicolas  
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

Austin Scott  
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

Kaialii’l Kahele  
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

Hal Rogers  
Member of Congress

Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress
Bill Johnson
Member of Congress

Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Cliff Bentz
Member of Congress

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

Susie Lee
Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

Chris Stewart
Member of Congress

Abigail D. Spanberger
Member of Congress

Colin Allred
Member of Congress

Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress

Carolyn Bourdeaux
Member of Congress

Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress

Mark Amodei
Member of Congress

Tom O’Halleran
Member of Congress
Madison Cawthorn
Member of Congress

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress

Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress

John Moolenaar
Member of Congress

Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress

Gonzalez Colon
Member of Congress

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Al Lawson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Jason Crow
Member of Congress

Jeff Fortenberry
Member of Congress

Andy Levin
Member of Congress
Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

Frank J. Mrvan  
Member of Congress

Kelly Armstrong  
Member of Congress

Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

Dusty Johnson  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

Rick Crawford  
Member of Congress

Brett Guthrie  
Member of Congress

Andy Barr  
Member of Congress