



T H E M I L I T A R Y C O A L I T I O N

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April 28, 2017

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member, Committee on
Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey:

The Military Coalition (TMC), representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members, veterans and their families and survivors, writes to strongly encourage you to pass the Fiscal Year 2017 Defense Appropriations bill immediately. We are a nation at war, our uniformed services are suffering dangerously low levels of force structure and readiness, and our country must do a better job on behalf of our brave men and women who serve in them.

A continuing resolution (CR) would stymie the services' ability to sustain and grow the total force necessary to meet today's dynamic, evolving mission requirements. With the current situations in Syria and North Korea becoming more heated this would put a critical strain on our service members by allowing obsolete programs to continue to be funded, wasting precious resources needed to fund crucial new programs. Procurement would languish, and hiring would stop. Mission-critical training would go unfulfilled and required maintenance would be left undone. Families would not even be allowed to transfer to their new assignments this summer, needlessly frustrating their ability to get settled before the new school year starts. These families deserve better.

More than six years after sequestration was created, the world is if anything even more unstable and its impact has served to threaten military personnel pay, benefits, and quality of life programs, in addition to military modernization, training, and other essential readiness programs. CRs serve only to exacerbate this, wasting resources and endangering our warfighters. Our national security requires stable, predictable funding and long-range planning. As such, another CR is dangerous, particularly in the face of alarming growth in the war fighting capabilities of potential enemies around the globe.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this action and your support of our service members, civilians, veterans, and military families.

Sincerely,
The Military Coalition
(Signatures enclosed)

Recent testimony from the service chiefs clearly detailed that another lack of proper funding by a continuing resolution (CR) will have a debilitating effect on our military and a devastating impact on already low readiness. As General Milley stated, *“Time is not our ally.”*

Chairman Mac Thornberry, House Armed Services Committee Chairman

“There is widespread agreement that funding cuts under the Budget Control Act, plus a series of continuing resolutions, coupled with the pace of required deployments have damaged the U.S. military. I believe that the damage has gone far deeper than most of us realize, requiring more time and more money to repair than is generally expected.”

“The most important thing now is to repair the damage. We have the chance to begin doing so by passing a full appropriations bill for this year, acting favorably on the supplemental request, and then enacting adequate authorization and appropriations for fiscal year 2018.”

US Air Force: *“...quite frankly, it's breaking faith with our airmen and their families. They've been at this for 26 years now. They'll stay with ...if they believe they can count on us to ensure that we take care of them and their families as they deploy. They will stay with us if they believe they are given the resources to be the very best they can be.*

“...Pilots who don't fly, maintainers who don't maintain, air traffic controllers who don't control will not stay with us. So that's why you're hearing all of us talk about readiness as our top priority. And being able to fund them to be able to get them in the air is a key priority for the United States Air Force.”

– Gen. David Goldfein, Air Force Chief of Staff, Aug. 24, 2016

US Army:

“This is no time, in my professional view, to increase risk to our national security.” “A year-long CR or a return to the [budget control act] funding will do just that. It will increase risk to the nation, and it will ultimately result in dead Americans on a future battlefield.”

“A year-long CR or a return to BCA funding caps absolutely will result in a U.S Army that is outranged, outgunned, and outdated against potential adversaries.”

“The world is a dangerous place, and it's becoming more dangerous by the day. Pass the budget.”

– Gen. Mark Milley, Army Chief of Staff

US Navy: *“So, Chairman, I urge us -- Congress to pass the FY 17 bill and give favorable consideration to the supplemental. It will make us more ready, more competitive and relieve a lot of stress that is on our people. Together, we can find ways to maintain our edge. There is so much at stake.”*

– ADM. John Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations

Air Force Association
Air Force Sergeants Association
Army Aviation Association of America
AMSUS, the Society of Federal Health Professionals
Association of the United States Army
Association of the United States Navy
Chief Warrant & Warrant Officers Association, USCG
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
Fleet Reserve Association
Gold Star Wives
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
Marine Corps Reserve Association
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Military Family Association
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Non Commissioned Officers Association
Reserve Officers Association
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors
The Retired Enlisted Association
United States Army Warrant Officers Association
United States Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Military Coalition Letter in re: April 28, 2017