



May 18, 2018

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed,

As you begin consideration of the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (FY19 NDAA), the National Guard Association of the U.S. (NGAUS) and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S. (EANGUS) urge you to include legislative provisions in S.1086, S.2416 and S.2801. These three bipartisan bills represent major priorities for our associations and their inclusion will help ensure the readiness and well-being of our citizen soldiers and airmen.

S.1086 – TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) eligibility for federal employees: We request you include S.1086, sponsored by Senators Hatch and Manchin, which would modify 10 United States Code § 1076d to expand TRS to all members of the Selected Reserve of the Reserve Component, including more than 70,000 dual status military technicians. We believe inclusion of this legislation would help fill shortages in the federal technician program by reducing out-of-pocket costs and resolving continuity of care by ensuring TRS for all service members regardless of civilian employment. Additionally, codifying these changes into law would result in an estimated \$1.2 billion in discretionary savings for the Department of Defense over a ten-year period.

S.2416 – The Guard and Reserve Benefit Parity Act: Thank you for your efforts to provide pre-mobilization and transitional health benefits to National Guardsmen and women and Reservists deployed under 12304b mobilization authority in Public Law 115-91. We kindly ask that you go a step further by incorporating legislative provisions of S.2416, sponsored by Senators Wicker and Coons, concerning reduction in age for eligibility of retired pay for National Guard and Reserve servicemembers deployed under 12304b. With more than 12,000 Guardsmen and women scheduled to deploy under 12304b orders over the next two years, we believe it is critical to provide servicemembers with the same benefits currently afforded other Reserve Component servicemembers deployed around the world, under other Title 10 authorities.

S.2801 – National Guard Promotion Accountability Act: We ask you include legislative provisions included in S.2801, sponsored by Senators Warren and Daines, to provide National Guard officers back-pay and credit for time spent doing the work of a higher rank, require the Army and Air Force to thoroughly review the promotions process, and recommend efficiencies to Congress. Currently, more than 7,000 National Guardsmen and women are waiting an average of 285 days for federal recognition of their promotion. These undue delays within the Department of Defense affect retention, morale, and career progression.

NGAUS and EANGUS firmly believe inclusion of the provisions highlighted above are critical for ensuring that Reserve Component servicemembers are fairly compensated. We appreciate your consideration of these provisions as you meet to consider the FY19 NDAA, and thank you for your continued support of the soldiers and airmen of the National Guard.

Sincerely,

Roy Robinson
Brigadier General (Ret)
President, NGAUS

Frank Yoakum
Sergeant Major (Ret)
Executive Director, EANGUS