



National Guard Association of the United States

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February 13, 2020

The Honorable Mark T. Esper
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

General Mark Milley
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
9999 Joint Staff Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20318

Dear Secretary Esper and GEN Milley,

On behalf of the nearly 500,000 soldiers and airmen of the National Guard, we are extremely concerned about the reprogramming of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 appropriations by the Department of Defense (DoD). We respectfully request DoD take swift action to restore **\$3.8 billion** in FY20 appropriations, a significant portion of which is intended for the National Guard.

Reprogramming this congressionally-directed funding would severely undermine the lethality and readiness of National Guard soldiers and airmen. It would also significantly derail the timetable for safety upgrades and modernization efforts critical to National Guard weapon systems and equipment.

National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (\$1.3 billion)

Since 1981, the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) has been a vital readiness tool for the Reserve Component to address unfunded requirements and ensure weapons platform compatibility across the Total Force. According to DoD's FY20 National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report, without this funding, "there are RC [Reserve Component] units...that could deploy with less capable platforms, limiting their ability to integrate with the Joint Force." NGREA is designed to supplement budget requests and ensure National Guard and Reserve equipment interoperability. NGREA funding is also a direct response to the articulated and demonstrated needs of the warfighter in the field and funding must be restored.

We also have concerns on the validity of the statement regarding obligated funds, "Over the past 5 years, from FY 2015 to FY 2019, an average of only \$112 million, or 9 percent, was obligated in the first year of availability for this appropriation." While the notification describes this as a "congressional special interest item," we contend that it is instead a special interest item for national security.

Army National Guard High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) Modernization Program (\$100.0 million)

The Army National Guard HMMWV Modernization Program has modernized over 3,800 HMMWVs, out of 43,000, since it was established in FY13. DoD's reprogramming notice contains the incorrect assertion that the program procures "legacy vehicles...inconsistent with the goals to modernize the Tactical and Support Vehicle fleet in support of the NDS [National Defense Strategy]." In actuality, the program returns already-procured vehicles in a brand new or like-new, zero hours and zero miles status. The

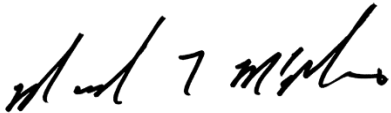
HMMWV will be in Army National Guard formations for at least the next 25 years and to guarantee combat readiness when deploying in support of overseas contingency operations, funding to modernize its HMMWV fleet must be restored.

Air National Guard C-130J Super Hercules Procurement (\$169.0 million)

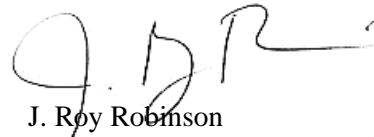
Currently, the Air National Guard operates 40% of the Total Air Force C-130 tactical airlift mission while most Air National Guard C-130 wings operate 30-year old C-130H Hercules aircraft. Because the Air Force plans to continue utilizing the C-130 aircraft beyond 2040, it is critical to modernize the Air National Guard C-130 fleet by continuing to replace some C-130H aircraft with new C-130J aircraft. Restoring this Air National Guard C-130J procurement funding will ensure the safety, reliability and effectiveness of the Air National Guard C-130 fleet, both at home and abroad.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of our concerns as we work toward ensuring our servicemembers have the resources needed to continue their role in the Total Force mission in support of the National Defense Strategy. Thank you for your continued support of the men and women of the National Guard.

Sincerely,



Michael McGuire
Major General, U.S. Air Force
NGAUS Chairman of the Board



J. Roy Robinson
Brigadier General (Ret.), U.S. Army
President, NGAUS

cc: The Honorable Ryan McCarthy, Secretary of the Army
The Honorable Barbara Barrett, Secretary of the Air Force
General James McConville, Chief of Staff of the Army
General David Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force
General Joseph Lengyel, Chief, National Guard Bureau