

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 1, 2010

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Vice Chairman Cochran:

The Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee has led congressional efforts to ensure that the National Guard and Reserves have the equipment they need. As the Subcommittee reviews the Fiscal Year 2011 Department of Defense budget, we hope the panel will consider adding \$870 million to the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account. This additional equipment is essential for the National Guard, enabling this force of citizen-warriors to carry out missions at home and abroad.

The Army National Guard desperately needs at least \$500 million to fill critical equipment gaps. Its fleet of trucks (consisting of the Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles and High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles) faces a \$5.2 billion funding shortfall. The Army National Guard helicopter fleet needs at least \$200 million to purchase 10 Blackhawk helicopters for medical evacuation and other missions. Last, but certainly not least, Army National Guard soldiers need \$75 million for Improved Outer Tactical Vests, modern personal protective equipment that will help our soldiers survive in combat environments like Afghanistan. This list includes only the Army Guard's top priorities.

Modernizing the Air National Guard will require at least \$370 million. This figure includes funding for the F-15 Active Electronically Scanned Array, Helmet Mounted Integrated Targeting systems for the A-10 and F-16 aircraft, Center Pedestal Displays for the F-16, new engines for the E-8C aircraft, Advanced Infrared Countermeasures for the C-130 and KC-135, Aircraft Defensive Systems for the C-5, an upgrade to the Eight Bladed Propeller for LC-130, the purchase of Pararescue Recovery Vehicles for maritime operations, the purchase of two Deployable Radar Approach Control systems to help update the Guard's 1950's-era air traffic control infrastructure, and new body armor for Air Guard security forces. We also note that in addition to these equipment items, the Air Guard's tactical fighter and mobility shortfalls present the largest and most significant equipment challenge in the mid- and long-term. The Senate Guard Caucus will continue to urge the Department of Defense and the Air Force to address these looming shortfalls by considering all cost-effective remedies that will preserve existing Air Guard units.

National Guard Caucus Letter on the National Guard & Reserve Equipment Account

The Services have requested additional Guard and Reserve procurement funding in recent years, but the remaining shortfalls still necessitate congressional action. Service budgets also do not account for disaster relief missions, and congressionally added funding has also helped rectify that imbalance in the past. Considering the importance of the National Guard to our security, we hope the Subcommittee will support additional Guard and Reserve Equipment funding this year. We appreciate your strong leadership, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to further to support our military reserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick Leahy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

PATRICK LEAHY
Co-Chair
U.S. Senate National Guard Caucus

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Bond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

CHRISTOPHER S. BOND
Co-Chair
U.S. Senate National Guard Caucus