



NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

Bruce W. Starr
*Senator
Oregon
President, NCSL*

Thomas W. Wright
*Chief of Staff to Speaker
Alaska
Staff Chair, NCSL*

William T. Pound
Executive Director

July 15, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
United States Capitol H-232
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
United States Capitol S-221
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
United States Capitol H-204
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
United States Capitol S-230
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner, Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader Pelosi, & Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), we are urging you to maintain current funding levels for the Army National Guard (ARNG) in the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The ARNG is an important tool for states in dealing with emergencies and natural disasters, being among the first to bring order and relief domestically while sustaining readiness to answer the call to serve abroad. Beyond these duties, the ARNG is a strategic asset in acting as a reserve force for the nation's active duty military branches. Any cuts to funding for the Guard would dissolve their overall worth and repudiates their achievements at home, and abroad as a combative force.

While NCSL appreciates the need for budget reductions to address the larger federal deficit, we believe that such reductions should only be made upon examining the Army structure as a whole – including active, Guard, and Reserve components. Because the ARNG plays such an expansive role throughout the states, the input of state policymakers should be sought and considered when discussing defense budget reductions or reallocations.

We appreciate that the House passed version of the NDAA (H.R. 4435) froze any cuts to the Guard and included language to form a commission to study Guard force structure. We urge you to maintain these provisions in a final version of the bill.

NCSL's Executive Committee recently approved an emergency resolution to preserve the ARNG – a copy is attached for your review. If you have any questions, please contact Jon Jukuri (jon.jukuri@ncsl.org or 202.624.5400).

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Starr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bruce" being more prominent than the last name "Starr".

The Honorable Bruce Starr
Oregon Senate
NCSL President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debbie Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Debbie" being more prominent than the last name "Smith".

The Honorable Debbie Smith
Nevada Senate
NCSL President-Elect