



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

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May 14, 2015

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

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Capitol S-230
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Minority Leader
United States Capitol S-221
Washington, DC 20510

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

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), we urge you to maintain current funding levels for the Army National Guard (ARNG) in the FY 2016 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 reductions to funding for the Guard would dissolve their overall worth and repudiates their achievements at home, and abroad as a combative force.

Last year, Congress established a National Commission on the Future of the Army to conduct a thorough review of the Army's budget proposals. While NCSL understands the need for budget reductions to address the larger federal deficit, we believe that such reductions should only be made after examination of the Commission's recommendations next year. Army structure as a whole – including active, Guard, and Reserve components – should not be sacrificed until Congress has time to review the Commission's report. In addition, with the ARNG playing 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 the action taken by Congress to form a commission to study Guard force structure. Until their work is completed, we urge you to avoid any reductions to the Army National Guard in a final version of the NDAA.

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NCSL has a policy resolution to preserve the ARNG – a copy is attached for your review. If you have any questions, please contact Jon Jukuri or Jeff Hurley at 202.624.5400.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Anna MacKinnon

Alaska Senate

Co-Chair, NCSL Labor & Economic Development Committee



The Honorable Maggie Carlton

Nevada State Assembly

Co-Chair, NCSL Labor & Economic Development Committee



Senator Richard Madaleno

Maryland Senate

Co-Chair, NCSL Budgets and Revenue

Committee



Senator Ryan Silvey

Missouri Senate

Co-Chair, NCSL Budgets and Revenue Committee

Attached: NCSL Military and Veterans' Affairs Resolution: “**Preserve the Army National Guard**”