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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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July 9, 2015

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter Visclosky
Ranking Member
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Gentlemen:

We are strong supporters and have profound admiration for our country's National Guard. Transferring Apache helicopters from the National Guard to the Active Army and reducing Army National Guard end-strength and Full-Time Support could cause irreversible damage to the National Guard. It could also cause serious harm to our national security. The Commission on the Future of the Army reports out next February and Congress must have time to review their findings and respond appropriately.

The National Guard is battle-tested and combat proven—an indispensable, operational force throughout thirteen years of constant conflict. In the true spirit of the Citizen-Soldier, New York Guardsmen were among the first responders at the World Trade Center on 9/11. Since then, the National Guard has filled every request for forces with over 760,000 individuals mobilized for overseas operations.

With more than fifty percent of its soldiers having combat experience, today's Army National Guard is more capable, more experienced, and more rapidly deployable than ever in our nation's history. They are interchangeable with the Active Army and stand strong as our nation's strategic hedge against unforeseen world events.

Congress established the Commission on the Future of the Army to ensure we have all of the information needed to make informed and responsible decisions. We must allow the Commission to report its recommendations without presupposition. Allowing changes to the National Guard prior to the Commission's report defeats the entire purpose of the Commission.

America's security is our top priority. Protecting the capabilities of the National Guard is vitally important to that security. As the FY16 National Defense Authorization and Appropriations bills are conferenced, we ask you to halt the transfer of Apaches from the Army National Guard and stop reductions in Army Guard end-strength and Full-Time Support until FY 17. This will ensure Congress has sufficient time to review all recommendations and to thoughtfully deliberate the issues before making a final decision on matters critical to national Security.

Sincerely,

TN-04

LA-05

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Joseph R Pitts

Denny Heck

Paul A. Gosar

Luke Messer

Stuart E. Plaskett

Randy K. Weber

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Jeyoung

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Diane Black

Pat Tiberi

[illegible]

[illegible]

Bill Huizenga

[illegible]

[illegible]

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Brenda L. Lawrence

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LW Bowsbury Jr

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Trey Gowdy

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[illegible]

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Bill Johnson

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Grace F. Napolitano

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Andy Barr

Joe Barton

Pete DeFazio

Pete Olson

Danny L. Davis

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[illegible]

Bobby L Rush

Marcy Kaptur

[illegible]

Cl W. Dut

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

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Mr Ocio

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Tim Walberg

Blaine Luetkemeyer

Tom Graves

Mike Coffman

[illegible]

[illegible]

Steph Lee Fund

Randy Hultgren

Gene Green

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Paul D. Tonko

Wm. Lacy Clay

Jim Sensenbrenner

[illegible] IL-15

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Walter B. Jones

Bob Goodlatte

Peter Welch

Marsha Blackburn

Bill Shuster

John Culberson

Tim Murphy

Sam Johnson

J. John

Mac Kelly

Suzanne Bonamici

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