United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 3, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel,

One of the issues that this divided Congress can agree on is ensuring that our troops who serve in harm's way, and those that support them, receive the pay and benefits that they have earned. That is why Congress unanimously passed the "Pay Our Military Act" and the President quickly signed the bill into law.

The "Pay Our Military Act" gives the Department of Defense broad latitude to pay service members and civilians. The bill does not limit the provision of pay to civilians or certain service members who were previously categorized by the Administration as 'excepted' or 'essential' during sequestration furloughs. The law that we recently passed is explicitly clear: all members of the Armed Forces, including Reserve component personnel who perform active service, will be paid in the event of a government shutdown. Further, the bill requires that civilian Department of Defense personnel "providing support to members of the Armed Forces" continue to receive their pay and allowances.

Unfortunately, we are receiving disturbing and conflicting reports from constituents and military personnel that uniformed service members and civilians who are directly supporting troops, including those in combat, are being furloughed. It is our understanding that under the current Department of Defense guidance, our National Guard and Reserves are seeing disruptions for personnel, to include:

- Traditional members of the Guard or Reserve who attend drill and annual training, including those who are performing domestic disaster relief and recovery operations; and
- Dual-status technicians, who are uniformed service members, and also non-dual status technicians; and
- Active Guard Reserve (AGR) personnel; and
- Personnel on short-term, mission-essential, active duty tours (commonly known as ADOS); and
- Federally reimbursed state civilians, such as firefighters, air traffic controllers and other civilians in direct support of military operations

Beyond the impact on the National Guard and Reserves, we have also received reports of civilians who have been furloughed, even though they directly support deployed troops and their family members.

Therefore, we urge you to review the policies that the services are disseminating to their commands to ensure that the spirit of the "Pay Our Military Act" is upheld and that guidance is standard across the services. Congress has given you the authority to maintain our national security without interruption. We strongly believe that all service members, and the civilians that support them, should receive equitable and fair treatment under this law.

Thank you for reviewing this matter.

Sincerely,

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

Jerry Moran
United States Senator

Mark Udall
United States Senator

Mark Pryor
United States Senator

Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator

Pat Roberts
United States Senator

John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Michael Bennet
United States Senator

Patrick Leahy
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Mark Kirk
United States Senator

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

Saxby Chambliss
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

John Hoeven
United States Senator

Tom Udall
United States Senator

John Boozman
United States Senator

Johnny Isakson
United States Senator

Joe Donnelly
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Mark Begich
United States Senator

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

Robert Menendez
United States Senator

Chris Coons
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

Mary Landrieu
United States Senator

Bill Nelson
United States Senator

Angus S. King
United States Senator

Tim Johnson
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Roy Blunt
United States Senator

Jon Tester
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

Max Baucus
United States Senator

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator

Al Franken
United States Senator

Pat Toomey
United States Senator

Richard Burr
United States Senator

Dan Coats
United States Senator

Chris Murphy
United States Senator

Jeff Sessions
United States Senator

James Inhofe
United States Senator

Kay Hagan
United States Senator

Dean Heller
United States Senator

Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator