



ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

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General Gordon R. Sullivan
United States Army (Ret.)
President

June 18, 2009

On behalf of the more than 100,000 members of the Association of the United States Army, I write to urge the Congress to increase the authorized end strength of the Army by at least 30,000 with funding for the increase in the base budget.

Because more troops are headed to Afghanistan and troop strength in Iraq has yet to decline significantly, the number of deployed soldiers will increase into next year. Defense Department leaders have testified in Congress that it will be difficult to increase dwell time at home over the next 18 to 24 months, and rotational requirements will continue for the next 10 to 15 years. Also, there are at least 30,000 soldiers who are on the rolls but not deployable due to injury or duty manning the Wounded Warrior units.

Recruiting new personnel clearly is not a problem – the Army's next budget reduces recruiting funds because the Army has reached its authorized end strength and has no "legal" room for thousands of high quality, patriotic Americans who want to serve. Further, retention of currently serving troops has exceeded Army expectations. The problem appears to be the willingness to pay for more troops, not any difficulty in recruiting or retaining them.

We say that we want to ease the stress and strain on soldiers and their families; now is the time to do the one

thing that will provide immediate relief. Allow the Army to increase its size and give it the money to pay for it.

Sincerely,

GORDON R. SULLIVAN
General, USA Retired