



ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

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11 February 2014

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

The Honorable John Boehner
United States House of Representatives
1011 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

As president of the Association of the United States Army and a former Chief of Staff of the Army, I write to oppose proposed legislation that would create a congressional commission to determine the proper force mixture of the active and reserve components. In my view, such a commission is unnecessary, could damage Army readiness, and would impede the Army's ability to implement spending reductions required by the 2011 Budget Control Act. There is no reason to empower a committee to redesign the Army. The Army components' senior leaders are best qualified to organize train and equip a total force that will reflect the Army's role in deterrence, meeting treaty obligations, supporting domestic crises and disaster relief and ultimately fighting and winning the nation's conflicts.

It seems premature to consider a commission before the FY 15 budget proposal is released and posture hearings are conducted, during which members of Congress can question Army leaders regarding the president's plan and its impact on national security. It is important to know what overall budget level is proposed and where tradeoffs are made and priorities are set. Freezing the size and equipment of one Army component for the next two years when funding will no doubt diminish, leads toward a "hollow Army" that is poorly trained and equipped.

I am confident that senior Army leaders – active, National Guard and reserve – will work together to carry out their responsibility to our nation's civilian leaders to organize, train, and equip the Army for land combat. Defending our national interests and our nation is the goal. Leave the design of a coherent and balanced Army to the civilian and military leaders who have been confirmed by Congress. They can do the job, and ultimately, do it right.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon R. Sullivan".

GORDON R. SULLIVAN
General, USA Retired

GRS/wbl

CC: Rep. Pelosi, Rep. McKeon & Rep. Adam Smith