



November 9, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

On behalf of the members of the undersigned organizations, we write to urge immediate action to prevent the triggering of sequestration in January, 2013. The far reaching effects of sequestration include increasing unemployment by millions and compromising our national security.

Our military forces already are absorbing \$487 billion in budget reductions. Sequestration would double that amount at a time when our forces are balancing a broad array of missions with aging equipment and falling personnel strength. The Army and Marine Corps are in desperate need of equipment reset, having been in combat for more than a decade; the Air Force has been at war continuously since Desert Storm in 1991, resulting in a high-flying time inventory of aircraft that average 25 years in age; the Navy attempts to conduct its global mission with a fleet that is its smallest in almost 100 years; and the Coast Guard is active in 11 mission areas with an aging fleet.

We must not balance the budget on the backs of our military, and yet more cuts to defense investment will erode our security and undercut one of the last bastions of American manufacturing strength. Business leaders are cancelling capital investments and delaying hiring because of the uncertainty surrounding the implementation of sequestration. The defense industrial base is a strategic national asset; assuring its survival requires careful planning and foresight – not shortsighted draconian cuts.

Failing to avert sequestration will only assure that our country's economy will plunge back into recession, while ignoring the needs of the war fighter who is called upon when foreign policy is challenged abroad.

Ending the specter of sequestration hovering over our defense industrial base and manufacturing sector must occur immediately, and the solution must be a balanced one that acknowledges that our nation faces a wide array of security threats. Congress must act quickly in the lame duck session to solve this potentially devastating blow to our national security.



General Gordon Sullivan USA, Retired
President, Association of the United States Army



Lieutenant General George Muellner USAF, Retired
Chairman of the Board, Air Force Association



Captain Dale Lumme USN, Retired
National Executive Director, Navy League of the United States

CC: The Honorable Carl Levin, Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
The Honorable John McCain, Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee
The Honorable Daniel Inouye, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee
The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member, Appropriations Defense Subcommittee
The Honorable Howard McKeon, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
The Honorable Adam Smith, Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
The Honorable C.W. Young, Chairman, House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee
The Honorable Norm Dicks, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee