



September 26, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Republican Leader McConnell, Speaker McCarthy, and Democratic Leader Jeffries:

The Military Coalition (TMC), representing more than 5.5 million current and former uniformed service members, veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors urges you to pass all of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 appropriations bills supporting our uniformed services – in particular the Defense Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies' Appropriations (MilCon-VA) - as soon as possible and at no less than the Senate Appropriations Committee-passed levels.

Our nation faces many threats, and our uniformed services operate in a very challenging environment. From responding to Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, China's aggression in the Indo-Pacific, as well as countering the malign activities of Iran and North Korea – the uniformed services continue to answer our nation's call around the globe. Domestically, without fail or delay, the uniformed services have executed essential support to civilian authorities during natural disasters of historical scales, and residual effects from the pandemic. The numerous fiscal demands are already exacerbated by inflation but would be even more so if appropriations are delayed.

If a continuing resolution (CR) is required to avert a harmful and counterproductive government shutdown, it should be a short one. Funding the government at last year's rate diminishes national security and the capabilities of the uniformed services (both Regular and Reserve Components) by hurting readiness, modernization, and quality of life programs. Uniformed service members who have concerns regarding quality-of-life issues cannot dedicate their full attention to the mission. The negative impact to quality of life will do nothing but harm those who are currently serving and will paint a negative picture for any recruiting efforts from an already scant pool of eligible candidates. CRs also do not permit new starts or increase the level of investment in modernization priorities. Further, new family housing and barracks projects cannot be started. Delaying funding damages our defense posture nationally and globally. CRs also hurt the defense industrial base, including small businesses, by adding uncertainty to the procurement and manufacturing processes. CRs damage the joint force's ability to prepare to fight and win in the future and impedes readiness to counter threats today.

Further, our nation's service members, veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors deserve the best possible care. Shutdowns and CRs hinder new investments to enhance care for veterans, the ability to hire additional health professionals, and improve facilities.

We believe that a strong national defense begins at home. The uniformed services, their families, and our veterans benefit from on-time appropriate domestic spending which contributes to national security.

As such, TMC, as represented by the organizations listed below, urge you to swiftly pass all the FY 2024 appropriations bills as soon as possible. This would provide the predictability and resources commensurate with the demonstrated need and the urgency that our national security challenges require, and our veterans have earned.

Thank you for your continued service to our nation in Congress.

Sincerely,



Jack Du Teil
President
The Military Coalition

The Military Coalition:

Air & Space Forces Association
American Veterans
AMSUS, The Society of Federal Health Professionals
Association of the United States Army
Association of the United States Navy
Blinded Veterans Association
Chief Warrant Officers Association of the United States Coast Guard
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Fleet Reserve Association
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
Marine Corps League
Marine Corps Reserve Association
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Military Family Association
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Non Commissioned Officers Association
Reserve Organization of America
Service Women's Action Network
The Independence Fund
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors
United States Army Warrant Officers Association
United States Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America