



Oklahoma



Connecticut

March 13, 2018

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan
Deputy Secretary of Defense
1010 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1010

General Joseph Lengyel
Chief, National Guard Bureau
1636 Defense Pentagon Ste 1E169
Washington, DC 20301-0001

Dear Deputy Secretary Shanahan and General Lengyel:

We appreciate you hosting the recent Council of Governors plenary session last month at the Pentagon, and making the Council a priority for the Department of Defense.

As we discussed at the meeting, governors continue to be concerned over the lack of a formal process or mechanism to request the activation of our National Guard under Title 32 in response to catastrophic disasters. Your leadership on this critical issue is refreshing, and we sincerely appreciate your commitment to finding a resolution by our July plenary session.

We noted in the meeting our desire to work as a Council – both states and the federal government - to identify any relevant gaps in authorities that can be either addressed in policy or legislation, to ensure a rapid coordination and response process moving forward.

The status quo is insufficient to meet the needs of our citizens during large scale disasters that require a large intra-government response. We believe that a more streamlined and operationally effective model is attainable, even if new authorities are required.

Additionally, governors continue to be concerned that our Guardsmen deploying over long distances and for long durations in response to natural disasters are not afforded the same protections and benefits as federal forces who also respond. We must ensure equal protections for all those put in harm's way. We believe the Council can also work to resolve these disparities, to include streamline funding and reimbursement mechanisms.

Thank you again for your leadership, and we look forward to our conference call with you in the April.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mary Fallin in black ink.

Governor Mary Fallin
Governor of Oklahoma
Co-Chair, Council of Governors

Handwritten signature of Dannel Malloy in black ink.

Governor Dannel Malloy
Governor of Connecticut
Co-Chair, Council of Governors

cc:
Secretary of Homeland Security
FEMA Administrator