

November 14, 2014  
The Honorable Carl Levin  
Chairman  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Ranking Member  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Howard "Buck" McKeon  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Levin, Ranking Member Inhofe, Chairman McKeon and Ranking Member Smith:

Thank you for your efforts to preserve the Army National Guard's combat aviation capability and to establish a National Commission on the Future of the Army (Commission). As you finalize the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 we encourage you to preserve these provisions and ensure the Army does not implement its plan to remove the National Guard's Apache helicopters until completion of a thorough and independent review.

Despite continuing Congressional deliberations, as well as ongoing discussions through the Council of Governors with Department of Defense senior leaders, the Army is moving forward with its Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI), which would transfer the Army National Guard's Apache helicopters to the active service. If left unchecked, this unilateral preemptive action would undermine Congressional efforts to ensure an independent Commission can review the ARI's effect on national security and the security of our states. We encourage you to request that the Army suspend implementation of the ARI until a Commission completes its review and ensure compliance by prohibiting the transfer of Apaches in the NDAA for FY 2015. For more than a decade, the National Guard has demonstrated it is a cost-effective, operational force that is critical to our national security at home and abroad. The Army's plans, however, suggest a pre-9/11 strategic reserve construct for the National Guard.

Today's National Guard is a highly experienced and capable combat force and an essential state partner in responding to domestic emergencies. A return to a pre-9/11 role squanders the investment and value of the Guard and discredits its accomplishments at home and as an active combat force.

We respectfully request that the NDAA for FY 2015 maintain flexibility for the nation by preserving Army National Guard capabilities while an independent Commission reviews future Army aviation and force structure requirements.

Sincerely,

Governor Rick Snyder  
Chair  
Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety

Governor Terry McAuliffe  
Vice Chair  
Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety

Governor Terry E. Branstad  
Co-Chair  
Council of Governors

Governor Martin O'Malley  
Co-Chair  
Council of Governors

Cc:

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairwoman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

The Honorable Pete Visclosky  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense