



NGAUS

Reserve  
Organization of  
America



January 5, 2024

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 Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
568 Cannon 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 Johnson, and Democratic Leader Jeffries:

The Association of the United States Army (AUSA), Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), Global Special Operations Forces Foundation (GSOFF), National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), Reserve Organization of America (ROA), and U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA) appreciate your leadership in the House of Representatives and Senate. We urge you to pass all of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 appropriations bills, and, in particular, the Defense Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations (MilCon-VA) bills as soon as possible and at no less than the level authorized in the recently enacted FY24 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). We also ask that you provide additional funding commensurate with the threats facing our nation and to support adequate domestic spending which is critical to our service members, veterans, and national security.

As you know, our nation faces many threats, including Chinese aggression in the Pacific, responding to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the current crisis in the Middle East, North Korean malign activities, the continued threat of terrorism, and domestic emergencies like floods and wildfires – which makes timely and sufficient appropriations critical. If another continuing resolution (CR) is required to avert a damaging government shutdown, it should be a short one.

Indeed, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III and Secretary of the Army Christine E. Wormuth wrote in letters dated 12 December, that neither the Department of Defense (DoD) nor the Department of the Army has ever operated under a year-long CR. They outlined the potentially devastating impacts this could have on our national security and those who dedicate their lives to serving our country – while also being an incredibly wasteful misalignment of funds. Secretary Austin stated, “[a] year-long CR would misalign billions of dollars, subject Service members and their families to unnecessary stress, damage our readiness, and impede our ability to react to emergent events.” Similarly, Secretary Wormuth wrote, “[w]hile the Army and its Soldiers will always show up to protect our nation, a full-year CR would severely constrain our ability to achieve our mission while making crucial investments in future capabilities.” It is clear that CRs diminish national security and the capabilities of the Armed Forces (both Regular and Reserve Components) by hurting readiness, modernization, and quality of life programs – while negatively impacting our service members and their families.

Further, CRs do not permit the Armed Forces to make new starts or increase the level of investment in modernization and other priorities. New family or service member housing projects cannot be started – a fact highlighted by Secretary Wormuth, as “[m]ilitary construction projects cannot begin under a CR, so the Army

would have to delay initiation of 35 projects, including five barracks and four family housing projects...” Also, at a time when recruitment presents a significant challenge, full and timely funding is necessary to “...increase marketing efforts, and complete projects needed to maintain the Army’s competitiveness in the talent marketplace...” CRs also hurt the defense industrial base, including small businesses, by adding uncertainty to the procurement and manufacturing processes – while a year-long CR also “would delay eight projects vital to the operation of the Organic Industrial Base (OIB).” This includes munitions, as “[t]he Army cannot exercise Multi-Year Procurement authority to purchase additional Patriot missiles or begin construction on a Guided Missile Maintenance Building under a CR” according to Secretary Wormuth.

Additionally, CRs are also detrimental to providing the best possible care to our nation’s veterans. This includes preventing new investments to enhance care for veterans, hire additional health professionals, and improve facilities.

We believe that a strong national defense begins at home and our service members, their families, and the Armed Forces benefit from appropriate domestic spending. For example, whether providing certain health care and services to veterans, investing in the industrial base, educating the next generation of service members and scientists, making important investments in public safety, or improving infrastructure to move goods and provide services – our national security and competitiveness are underpinned by domestic spending, too.

Once again, we urge you to swiftly pass all twelve appropriations bills, as soon as possible, and to add additional funding for national security priorities. This will 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 and leadership in Congress.

Sincerely,



Robert B. Brown  
General, U.S. Army, Retired  
President and CEO  
Association of the United States Army



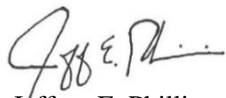
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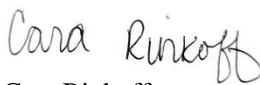
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