



25 for 25 Fighter Missions

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), representing over 440,000 Guardsmen across the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia urges Congress to ensure the Air National Guard maintains the 25 fighter missions it currently provides by legislating the recapitalization of units at a one for one rate as the Air Force divests legacy combat aircraft.

The 25 Air National Guard (ANG) fighter squadrons are essential to the United States air defense and homeland security. These squadrons provide a highly skilled and ready force of experienced pilots, maintainers, and aircraft that can be rapidly mobilized in times of crisis. Additionally, the ANG is pivotal in training new pilots and maintainers and supporting civil authorities during natural disasters and other emergencies.

Charged with defending United States airspace against enemy aircraft, the ANG's 25 fighter squadrons constitute 21% of the total Air Force, 30% of the United States' total combat power, and carry out 94% of the homeland defense air combat mission – all while consuming a mere 7% of the Air Force's total budget.

As an integral component of the Air Force's Total Force Concept, the ANG is critical to overall wartime readiness. During conflicts, the ANG can be rapidly mobilized to bolster the active duty Air Force. The 25 fighter squadrons are exceptionally well-trained and equipped.

The ANG also plays a crucial role in training new pilots and maintainers. These squadrons provide a realistic training environment for pilots and teach maintainers the latest aircraft systems, ensuring that the Air Force maintains a highly trained force capable of meeting any challenge.

In the 118th Congress, Senator Mike Crapo introduced S 2307 and Representative Don Bacon introduced HR 3392, companion bills, that would have required that the aircraft inventory of the Air National Guard must include at least 25 fighter aircraft squadrons, each of which must have a minimum of 18 primary aircraft authorized.

In the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), there is language that requires the Secretary of the Air Force to develop a plan to sustain and recapitalize all 25 fighter aircraft squadrons in the Air National Guard. This report is to be delivered no later than July 1, 2025. EANGUS eagerly awaits this report as any reduction in the Air National Guard's force structure directly diminishes the nation's combat power. Therefore, maintaining the ANG's 25 fighter squadrons is critical to the current national defense strategy.

We urge the 119th Congress to pursue any possible avenues to ensure that all 25 fighter squadrons across the Air National Guard retain their flying mission to continue protecting and defending our nation.

For more information regarding this issue or any other issues concerning the National Guard, contact the EANGUS legislative team at legislative@eangus.org.