

Governor Beshear:

It is with great pleasure that I write to you today to nominate Robert E. Kumpf, Jr. to be commissioned as a Kentucky Colonel. Mr. Kumpf's record of service to others before himself is quite lengthy for a man of 29 years, beginning as a volunteer firefighter in his hometown of Mendham, NJ at the age of 16. Soon after volunteering to serve as an emergency responder for his town, Mr. Kumpf took on the role of being a positive role model for four children, ages 3 to 10, of a family friend who perished in the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. After graduating from high school, he left home to attend Bloomsburg University where he, again, volunteered to serve as a firefighter and quickly enrolled in Army ROTC.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were raging when Mr. Kumpf enlisted in the Army Reserve in 2005. He immediately volunteered to deploy despite the assurance that his membership in the ROTC program would have allowed him to complete his education first. Mr. Kumpf felt that it was his duty as a volunteer to deploy, and his chance came in 2006 when he was sent to Iraq. While in Iraq, Mr. Kumpf served as member of a quick reactionary team at an entry control point. During his off duty hours, he volunteered with a military training team and served on a medical humanitarian mission, which put his emergency medical training to good use by helping the citizens of Iraq. For his service in Iraq, he would earn the Combat Action Badge among other awards.

Mr. Kumpf returned from his deployment and moved to Harrisburg, PA where he continued his reserve service and was employed in the city as an Emergency Medical Technician. In his off hours, he again served as a volunteer firefighter in the city's busy fire department. After three years serving as one of only a handful of volunteers in a mostly paid department, Rob ranked in the top three volunteer responders and had been twice recognized for his bravery and meritorious service. Mr. Kumpf's stay in Pennsylvania was not long, as he again volunteered to serve our nation on active military service, this time finding him assigned to a medical brigade in New York.

Mr. Kumpf's nine months of active duty in New York was marked by his service in multiple positions, either above his paygrade or training level, and his supervisors rated him as one of their best non-commissioned officers. Mr. Kumpf's supervisors noted that he was usually one of the first soldiers to arrive at work, regularly gave up his bed and meals to other soldiers and was almost always the last soldier to leave. Despite his dedication to his assignment, Mr. Kumpf volunteered, yet again, to serve as a volunteer firefighter in New Jersey. His assignment in New York came to a close and Mr. Kumpf decided to complete his college education at Norwich University, a private military college in Northfield, VT. His objective was finish his degree and commission into the Army as an officer in order to continue serving our country.

Mr. Kumpf wasted no time becoming a prominent member of both the Norwich and Northfield communities. He served on Norwich's student government, was a founding member of the university's student veteran group and was an active member of the Army ROTC detachment.

Even with all of these activities filling up his free time in addition to tackling 43 academic credits in a single calendar year, Mr. Kumpf was best known for his time spent talking with freshman cadets in the Chapel. He would spend time talking to the cadets about their studies, about life on deployment and encouraged them to continue in the school's cadet program.

Mr. Kumpf's studies were put on hold in December 2011 after he was told that he was on a short list for a deployment to Afghanistan. Without thinking twice, Mr. Kumpf volunteered and was deployed in 2012. While in Afghanistan he was regarded as the sort of leader you could depend on. He volunteered to take on responsibilities in addition to his duty assignment so as to lessen the load on others. He was known for accommodating his fellow soldiers to ensure they were well, most notably; Mr. Kumpf would spend his own money to pick up snacks, phone cards and other provisions for wounded soldiers being treated at a nearby hospital. In an unfortunate circumstance, Mr. Kumpf's deployment to Afghanistan ended early when he was medically evacuated. His injury would soon prove to be one that would end his military career and with it, his dream of serving as a commissioned officer.

I firmly believe that Mr. Kumpf is deserving of your consideration for this honor not only for his dedicated public service in his past, but because of his perseverance in the face of adversity. Since his medical retirement, Mr. Kumpf has run for public office, served as a legislative intern in the Michigan House of Representatives, volunteered his time to multiple museums and returned to Norwich to complete his long awaited degree. Mr. Kumpf is determined to use all of his skills and his education to serve the greater good in an effort to make the world a better place for those around him. The Kentucky Colonel is known the world over to have a great strength of character, to be a leader and to be dedicated to the welfare of others. Those very same attributes are how I would describe Robert Kumpf, and it is for this reason that I earnestly recommend him for a commission as a Kentucky Colonel.

Best,

Lt. Governor Phil Scott