

From: Cray, Steven A Maj Gen USAF NG VTANG (US) [steven.a.cray.mil@mail.mil]
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 8:56 AM
To: Allen, Susan; Springer, Darren
Subject: NGA letter
Attachments: 1602XX Letter Govs to Congress - RE Military Technicians (FOR SIGNATURE
....docx

Darren and Sue

I received this today and think it was sent to all states last night. This is a result of the meetings last weekend and asks all Gov to sign. I believe Leahy office will have an issue with the last line but will check today. It will be good to ask other states for their thoughts.

Maj Gen Steve Cray
Sent from my BlackBerry

[NGA LETTERHEAD]

February [XX], 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Leader McConnell and Leader Reid:

The nation's governors call on Congress to repeal Section 1053 of the fiscal year (FY) 2016 National Defense Authorization (NDAA), which requires the conversion of certain Title 32 National Guard military technicians into non-uniformed Title 5 federal civilian employees. We are gravely concerned about how this provision will affect overall National Guard readiness and our ability to use the Guard to respond to emergencies.

In a January 7 letter to armed services committee leadership, the Council of Governors (Council) co-chairs emphasized the changes required by Section 1053 represent a serious shift in authority from governors, whose constitutional duty it is to protect our citizens and lead our National Guard. We are responsible for the safety and welfare of our citizens and are in the best position to manage our full-time military technicians.

For years governors have raised concerns about reductions to full-time National Guard personnel as cuts have been made to end strength in the face of ongoing budget challenges. These conversions would exacerbate two consecutive years of reductions in National Guard uniformed end strength and deny governors' access to thousands of dual-status technicians available for immediate military response to domestic emergencies. The Council discussed this issue at its recent plenary meeting on February 19, and senior leadership from the Department of Defense voiced equally grave concerns about the impact this conversion will have on National Guard readiness.

Governors appreciate the commitment to collaboration expressed by Senate Armed Services Committee leadership in their February 3 response to the Council's letter. We are committed to working with Congress and the Department of Defense on collective solutions to address technical adjustments, if any, that may be warranted in military technician program. Unfortunately, the deadlines provided in the FY 2016 NDAA provide little time for our input into the process before implementation is set to begin in January 2017. Consequently, we call on Congress to repeal Section 1053 as part of this year's defense authorization bill.

Sincerely,

[GOVERNORS SIGNATURES]

DRAFT