Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 8, 2015

National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA)
Attn. Executive Director
2530 Crystal Dr., Suite #5000
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear NCFA Commissioners:

We write today to express our support for the 450,000 dedicated troops in the National Guard of the United States (Guard), whose selfless service and sacrifice provide a critical service to our country. The Louisiana delegation has been actively involved in ensuring that the funding needs for the National Guard and Army are proportionately met, including drafting language during the Armed Services Committee negotiations which led to the ultimate establishment of this Commission on the Future of the Army.

The combined Air and Army National Guard components play an essential role in preserving our national security. As the Commission is set to release its recommendations on February 1, 2016, we strongly urge you to maintain the Guard's operational effectiveness by avoiding unwise force structure reductions. The Congress earlier this year included legislation to ensure Army National Guard helicopter assets were properly counted in future force structure decisions.

Guardsmen have proven themselves as valuable members of our military community and provide an effective and efficient structure for national defense. Maximizing our national security while maintaining a cost-effective structure should be a priority and preventing cuts to the National Guard will help make that priority a reality.

As you know, the National Guard performs a vital mission protecting our citizens from threats, both foreign and domestic. In 2005, more than 50,000 Guardsmen and women were sent to support the Gulf States and provided invaluable services during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The Guard has also contributed over 300,000 troops to the respective U.S. campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Please join us in supporting the National Guard as a key component of our national defense by avoiding reductions to National Guard end strength and force structure. If you would like to discuss this matter further, we are eager to continue the conversation. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us going forward.

Regards,

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David Vitter
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

Charles Boustany, M.D.
Member of Congress

Cedric Richmond
Member of Congress

Ralph Abraham, M.D.
Member of Congress

Garret Graves
Member of Congress