



Connecticut



Iowa

March 12, 2015

The Honorable Ash Carter
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

The Honorable Robert Work
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1010

Dear Secretary Carter and Deputy Secretary Work:

On behalf of the Council of Governors (Council) thank you for hosting our recent meeting and for your commitment to enhancing transparency on National Guard budget and cybersecurity matters. We greatly appreciated the constructive dialog with you, senior officials in your department and Army leaders regarding both matters, particularly the FY2016 budget proposal. Governors would like to partner with you and support the Department of Defense (DoD) budget request, but cannot do so while it includes Army proposals that would return the Guard to a pre-9/11 strategic reserve. We hope you will reconsider the department's position and work with us to find alternative solutions that meet the needs of the nation and our states.

As commanders-in-chief of the National Guard, we understand the need to restructure military forces and reduce costs. Decisions to adjust the makeup of our forces should be based on cost, value and mission capability. DoD studies have demonstrated that the National Guard is one of the most cost-effective, battle-tested forces and is uniquely positioned to support governors' critical needs including disaster response and cybersecurity.

The DoD budget requests nearly \$40 billion in additional funds over last year's budget, but continues to request Congressional authorization to reduce Army National Guard (ARNG) end strength and to transfer all of its Apache helicopters to the active component. The proposed end strength reductions of 8,200 personnel would bring the ARNG's size to its lowest level in decades. Maintaining ARNG readiness and the ability to meet state missions will require that an estimated 20,000 positions will need to be retrained and shifted, which will have far-reaching implications for our states. We appreciate your willingness to look into these consequences and associated costs (for example, "turbulence" costs), which we believe should be included in any thorough review of the Army's proposal.

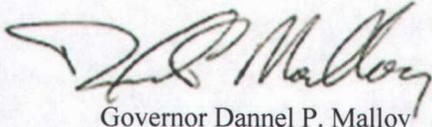


Similarly, the Army's Aviation Restructure Initiative continues to propose removing all ARNG Apaches and replacing them with Blackhawk helicopters. Governors do not oppose the Army's request to divest itself of obsolete airframes, which would produce the vast majority of the estimated \$12 billion in cost savings. We specifically oppose the proposal to remove the Apaches from the ARNG and believe it is important for the nation to preserve the Guard's role as the combat reserve of the Army. Congress opposed the Apache proposal last year and instead authorized an independent national commission. Governors are united in our belief that the commission should provide its report to Congress prior to the Apaches being transferred. Secretary Carter, we look forward to hearing your views on the Army's proposals during our May 26 conference call.

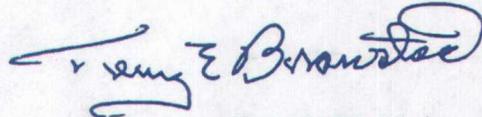
We greatly appreciate the expeditious outreach and coordination on policy guidance for states' use of National Guard cyber resources. The National Guard is in a unique position to assist in cyber planning, mitigation, response and recovery. The collaborative process put in place following our last meeting will provide clarity and facilitate state efforts to leverage the National Guard's unique skill sets and authorities to better protect critical networks and systems across the country.

Again, thank you for your leadership and spirit of collaboration. Governors value the Council as a collaborative forum to exchange views and ideas and look forward to continuing to work with you to address these and other matters of national significance.

Sincerely,



Governor Dannel P. Malloy
Co-Chair
Connecticut



Governor Terry E. Branstad
Co-Chair
Iowa

cc:

The Honorable John McHugh, Secretary of the Army
The Honorable Eric Rosenbach, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security Affairs
General Ray Odierno, Chief of Staff of the Army
General Frank Grass, Chief, National Guard Bureau