



NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES, INC.

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December 21, 2005

Senator John W. Warner
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Warner:

I am writing to express our grave concern over recurring reports in the media (The Wall Street Journal; Baltimore Sun, etc.) of discussions underway in the Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force that would call for dramatic force reductions in those services. More importantly, those reductions are rumored to be directed largely toward the Army and Air National Guard.

It is most unfortunate that these proposals appear to be in progress without participation by the National Guard Bureau, the statutory line of communication between the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force and the respective states. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau has publicly stated that the Army has not told him about any decisions on troop reductions. It is astounding that DoD or the service secretaries and senior leadership would even consider such actions based on the current overall level of exhaustion of the manpower resources of the Armed Forces.

Further, the very idea that a reduction in strength of reserve components so fully involved in current missions and projected as the linchpin for future operations, both overseas and in the defense and security of the homeland, is ludicrous.

Moreover, should the American people calculate the threat to their security is better served by reducing military manpower as a cost-savings measure, then it seems obvious that the most expensive forces (the Active component) should be sacrificed first, followed by the least expensive (the Guard and Reserve). We would not advocate either of these options absent a full, open debate on the actual savings and the specifics of where the savings would be spent.

The National Guard Association of the United States respectfully urges you and your colleagues to bring the Department of Defense "in from the cold" for a thorough

airing of these rumored changes. They run counter to the recent conclusions of the Congress that we need more manpower, not less.

Thank you for your continuing support for our men and women in uniform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen M. Koper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Stephen M. Koper
Brig. Gen., USAF (ret)
President

Cc: Senator Levin
Senator Bond
Senator Leahy
Rep. Hunter
Rep Skelton
Rep. Davis
Rep. Waxman
NGA