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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

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July 9, 2015

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee  
H-405, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter Visclosky  
Ranking Member  
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee  
H-405, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Gentlemen:

We are strong supporters and have profound admiration for our country's National Guard. Transferring Apache helicopters from the National Guard to the Active Army and reducing Army National Guard end-strength and Full-Time Support could cause irreversible damage to the National Guard. It could also cause serious harm to our national security. The Commission on the Future of the Army reports out next February and Congress must have time to review their findings and respond appropriately.

The National Guard is battle-tested and combat proven—an indispensable, operational force throughout thirteen years of constant conflict. In the true spirit of the Citizen-Soldier, New York Guardsmen were among the first responders at the World Trade Center on 9/11. Since then, the National Guard has filled every request for forces with over 760,000 individuals mobilized for overseas operations.

With more than fifty percent of its soldiers having combat experience, today's Army National Guard is more capable, more experienced, and more rapidly deployable than ever in our nation's history. They are interchangeable with the Active Army and stand strong as our nation's strategic hedge against unforeseen world events.

Congress established the Commission on the Future of the Army to ensure we have all of the information needed to make informed and responsible decisions. We must allow the Commission to report its recommendations without presupposition. Allowing changes to the National Guard prior to the Commission's report defeats the entire purpose of the Commission.

Y. Kinspatt

John

Paul Blum

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