

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 13, 2020

Hon. Mark Esper
Secretary
Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Hon. Chad Wolf
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20528-0150

Dear Secretary Esper and Acting Secretary Wolf,

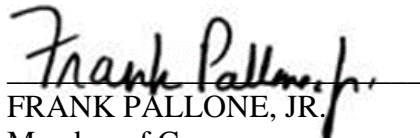
We are deeply concerned by the announcement that the Trump Administration plans to end 100 percent federal cost-share for National Guard units in most states. Memos signed by President Trump on August 3 would require all states and territories, with the exception of Texas and Florida, to pay for Title 32, Section 502(f) National Guard deployments to address the COVID-19 pandemic beginning August 21 to December 31. The abrupt end of the 100 percent federal cost-share for Title 32 activations appears to be a premature and baseless decision that would strip away essential federal funding from states that are already facing major economic shortfalls directly linked to the coronavirus. We urge you to immediately reverse this decision and reinstate full federal support for National Guard units for every state and territory.

We appreciate the federal support the New Jersey National Guard and other National Guard units around the country have received since April 3. The New Jersey National Guard has played an instrumental role in the response to the pandemic, acting as a critical backstop for health care professionals and public safety officials. The Guard's effectiveness is one of the reasons New Jersey has been able to increase testing, lower the rate of transmission, and lower the daily number of COVID-19 deaths since the state's peak in April. As a result, we were shocked to learn of the Administration's plan to remove the 100 percent federal cost-share for Title 32 activations. This decision also comes at a time when the United States continues to see major increases in confirmed coronavirus cases and deaths across the country. Meanwhile, Texas and Florida have seemingly been offered special treatment without explanation.

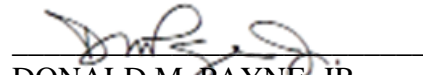
As states grapple with historic budget shortfalls that are direct result of the coronavirus, this Administration should not add further financial burdens to already overwhelmed resources. The 100 percent federal cost-share of Title 32 activations for all states was a commonsense approach to help states facing the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge you to immediately reinstate full federal support for the continued deployment of the National Guard for every state and territory until we can declare an end to this national public health emergency.

We look forward to your immediate response.

Sincerely,

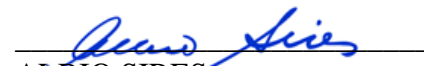

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Member of Congress


DONALD NORCROSS
Member of Congress



DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.
Member of Congress

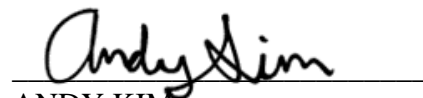

TOM MALINOWSKI
Member of Congress

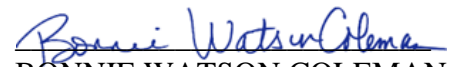

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Member of Congress


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