April 14, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned seconds-in-command (Lieutenant Governors, Senate Presidents, and Secretaries of States) of the nation’s states and territories oppose potential cuts to the Army National Guard as found in the fiscal 2016 U.S. Army budget proposal. As a unique state-based military force, the National Guard is the only military force that is shared by the states and the federal government. It is a ready, reliable, and essential force that responds to national disasters and emergencies, and is critical to peace and security at home and abroad.

As the executive branch seconds-in-command of the states and territories, we appreciate the need to examine military structure and readiness to meet both ongoing and new threats amidst current budget considerations. However, the Army has proposed to eliminate more than 8,000 Army National Guard positions, including 1,700 full-time positions necessary to maintain the Guard’s readiness and transfer its Apache helicopters to the active component.

These National Guard budgets would cut Army National Guard forces to a pre-2001 level. A return to these levels is contrary to the interest of the states and nation and we encourage transparent discussion of active duty and National Guard force structure pre- and post-9/11.

Congress responded to these concerns last year by limiting the transfer of Apaches and establishing an independent commission to review these proposals. We encourage you to maintain the Army National Guard’s personnel and combat aviation capability until the commission has had time to complete its review.

Across the many and diverse states we represent, the accomplishments of the National Guard are unparalleled in response to flood, wildfire, storm, and serving our nation overseas. We stand together in support to maintain Army Guard operational capabilities.

Sincerely,

Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman  
Connecticut  
NLGA Chair

Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds  
Iowa  
NLGA Chair-elect
Lt. Governor Matt Michels  
South Dakota  
NLGA Treasurer

Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno  
New Jersey

Lt. Governor Phil Scott  
Vermont

Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch  
Wisconsin

Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann  
Indiana

Secretary of State David E. Bernier  
Puerto Rico

Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul  
New York

Lt. Governor John A. Sanchez  
New Mexico

Lt. Governor Tim Griffin  
Arkansas

Lt. Governor Kay Ivey  
Alabama

Lt. Governor Peter Kinder  
Missouri

Lt. Governor Angela McLean  
Montana

Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne  
Louisiana
Lt. Governor Jeff Coyler  
Kansas

Secretary of State Michele Reagan  
Arizona

Lt. Governor Tate Reeves  
Mississippi

Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey  
Tennessee

Lt. Governor Shan S. Tsutsui  
Hawaii

Lt. Governor Spencer Cox  
Utah

Secretary of State Edward F. Murray III  
Wyoming

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Wyoming

Lt. Governor Mike Stack  
Pennsylvania

Lt. Governor Osbert Potter  
U.S. Virgin Islands

Lt. Governor Brad Owen  
Washington