

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2010

The Honorable Robert Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Gates,

We are writing in our capacity as members of the Military Family Caucus to express our concern with the sudden suspension of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Account (MyCAA). Authorized in 2009 in the National Defense Authorization Act, this program provides critical support to military spouses allowing them to pursue portable careers in high demand, high growth occupations. We are seeking your help to better understand the basis for this “pause,” how long the “pause” will be in effect, and the impact it will have on spouses.

While military spouses often would like to follow a traditional education path, their lifestyles prevent them from doing so. Many access online courses as opposed to enrolling in semester long “in-person” courses to better suit their family needs. The MyCAA provides the critical support that these military spouses need to succeed in school and in their careers.

We have heard from military spouses who are directly impacted by this program termination. They explain that a disruption in funding may cause many of them to miss a final term or delay the completion of their degrees – possibly without the opportunity to finish once they are relocated. Many military spouses have planned their careers and lives around the assumption that this program would continue without interruption.

The sudden abatement of this program has significantly impacted an overwhelming number of spouses - preventing them from moving forward with their lives. To our knowledge, the Department of Defense has yet to fill this gap or provide any detailed information as to when this program will resume. With 133,000 military spouses participating in this program, we are concerned with the practical impact of this “pause”.

The MyCAA program not only provides training and benefits, but gives military spouses much needed confidence that they are contributors to their families’ needs. Halting this program without notice is not the way to support those who sacrifice so much to make our military what it is today. We look forward to your response and are hopeful that the program is up and running very soon.

Sincerely,


Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
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Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress

John Carter

John Carter
Member of Congress

Bob Filner

Bob Filner
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Todd Russell Platts
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Randy Forbes
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Jim Moran

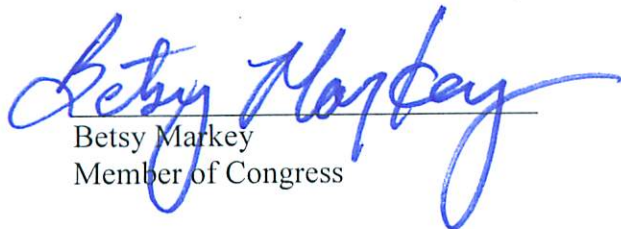
James P. Moran
Member of Congress

Edolphus Towns

Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress

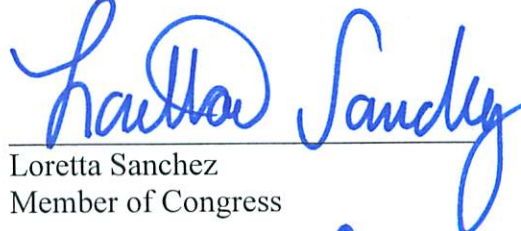
Roy Blunt

Roy Blunt
Member of Congress

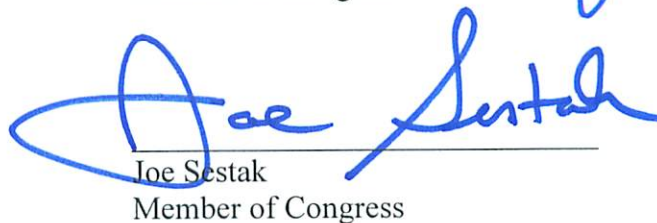

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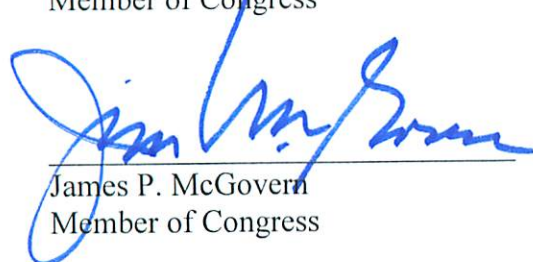

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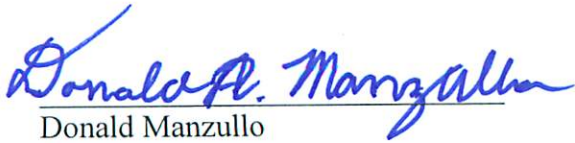

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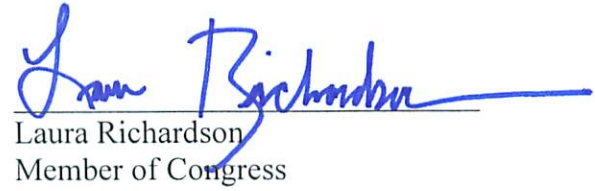
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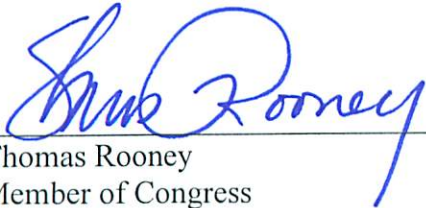
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Tim Walz
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Betty Sutton
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Thomas Rooney
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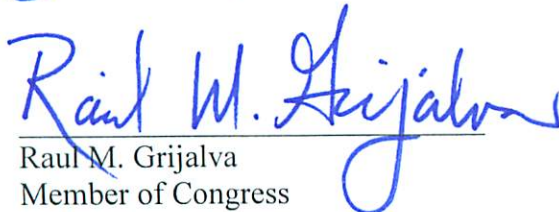
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Robert Aderholt
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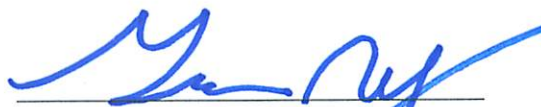
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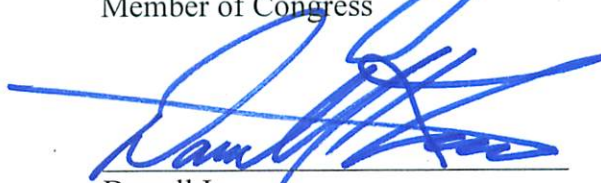
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Member of Congress



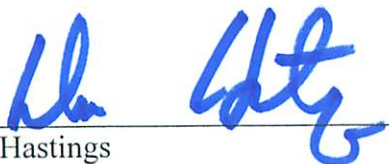
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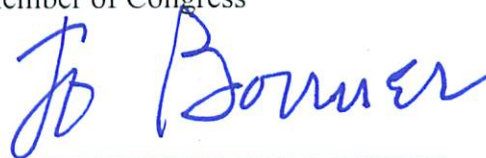
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