



Wednesday, February 20, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Boehner,  
and Minority Leader Pelosi:

America's uniformed personnel stand on the brink. Corrosive budgetary effects created by the ongoing continuing resolution, paired with the threat of sequestration, threaten to undermine the basic preparedness of our Nation's Armed Forces.

National security and economic surety are critical imperatives on which America's future rests. Such priorities can only succeed if managed in an aligned, mutually supportive fashion. The Department of Defense has already absorbed \$487B in budget cuts—contributing its fair share to help put the Nation's fiscal house back in order. Additional funding reductions precipitated through the continuing resolution and sequestration will fundamentally undermine basic military preparedness. It is one thing to be prudently efficient, quite another to be strategically foolish.

The Nation has many interests around the globe, but a select few are existential in nature—things like stemming nuclear proliferation, managing the rise of near-peer competitors, ensuring access to key resources, fulfilling our obligations in the triad for nuclear deterrence and assurance, maintaining strategic alliances, and protecting open access to the global commons. These missions are not optional. They stand as fundamental imperatives necessary to ensure national solvency—from both an economic and security perspective.

American military personnel have put their lives on the line repeatedly in near-continuous combat engagements throughout the past two decades. They take this risk with the firm belief that our Nation's leaders will do everything possible to equip them for success. The combined effects of the continuing resolution and sequestration will break that pledge.

Whether discussing the Air Force whose aircraft average a quarter of a century in age—with some dating back to the Eisenhower Administration; the Navy and Coast Guard struggling to maintain global presence with anemic fleet numbers; the Marine Corps and Army in need of reset after Iraq and Afghanistan; or

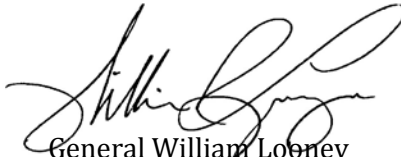
Guardsmen stretched thin as they strive to support their local communities—American military forces require focused investment, not sweeping cuts.

Our uniformed men and women never hesitate to answer the call of duty. We owe them our full support. This means passing an FY 2013 budget and finding a prudent, sustainable alternative to sequestration.

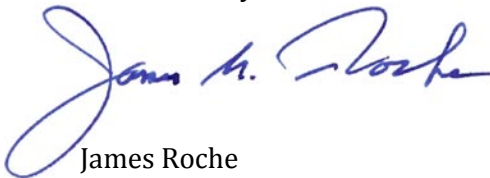
Respectfully,



F. Whitten Peters  
19<sup>th</sup> Secretary of the Air Force



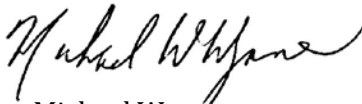
General William Looney  
USAF (Ret.)



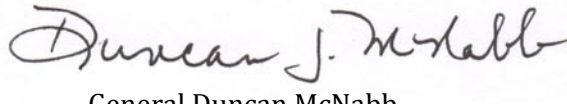
James Roche  
20<sup>th</sup> Secretary of the Air Force



General Lance Lord  
USAF (Ret.)



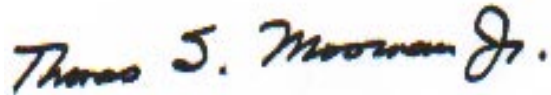
Michael Wynne  
21<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the Air Force



General Duncan McNabb  
USAF (Ret.)



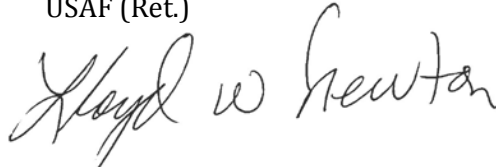
General Ronald Fogleman  
USAF (Ret.)



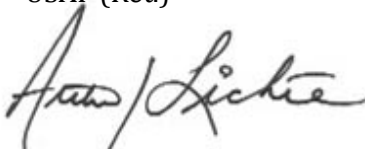
General Thomas Moorman  
USAF (Ret.)



General Ronald Keys  
USAF (Ret.)



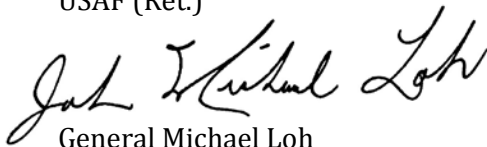
General Lloyd Newton  
USAF (Ret.)



General Arthur Lichte  
USAF (Ret.)



General Victor Renuart  
USAF (Ret.)



General Michael Loh  
USAF (Ret.)



General Charles Wald  
USAF (Ret.)

*JR Baker*

Lieutenant General John Baker  
USAF (Ret.)

*John Conaway*

Lieutenant General John Conaway  
USAF (Ret.)

*David A. Deptula*

Lieutenant General David Deptula  
USAF (Ret.)

*Michael M. Dunn*

Lieutenant General Michael Dunn  
USAF (Ret.)

*Robert Elder*

Lieutenant General Robert Elder  
USAF (Ret.)

*Marvin Esmond*

Lieutenant General Marvin Esmond  
USAF (Ret.)

*Mark Lewis*

Dr Mark Lewis  
Former Chief Scientist USAF

*George K. Muellner*

Lieutenant General George Muellner  
USAF (Ret.)

*Stephen D Wood*

Lieutenant General Stephen Wood  
USAF (Ret.)

*Bruce Wright*

Lieutenant General Bruce Wright  
USAF (Ret.)

*Curtis M. Bedke*

Major General Curtis Bedke  
USAF (Ret.)

*Richard P. Hallion*

Dr. Richard Hallion  
Former Historian of the Air Force

*Michael Haugen*

Major General Michael Haugen  
USAF (Ret.)

*Donald W. Sheppard*

Major General Donald Sheppard  
USAF (Ret.)

*Paul Weaver*

Major General Paul Weaver  
USAF (Ret.)

*Sanford Schlitt*

Brigadier General Sanford Schlitt  
USAF (Ret.)

*Gerald Murray*

Gerald Murray  
Chief Master Sergeant of the USAF (Ret.)