



May 21, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We support our brave National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who are deployed in the fight against COVID-19 and request you extend their Title 32 deployment orders beyond the current date of June 24, 2020. This decision will enable them to continue serving the nation against this deadly disease. As a number of state governors are now advising, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic clearly suggests our nation will need our National Guard to continue the fight well beyond June 24. Additionally, this is also the right decision to make because extending the Title 32 deployments by just one day will also authorize additional Federal benefits, including Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and early retirement benefits, for our National Guardsmen.

In addition to extending Title 32 authorization for the National Guardsmen supporting the nation's fight against COVID-19, we also recommend you authorize DoD healthcare benefits (TRICARE) to be provided for these Soldiers, Airmen and their families for six months following their deployments. This authorization of TRICARE benefits for six months is similar to what National Guardsmen receive when returning from overseas deployments; and the benefit to the nation with this authorization is that it reinforces the overall medical – healthcare – military readiness of our National Guard for future deployments when the nation needs their support once again.

Our nation's National Guard, like our Regular and Reserve Forces are committed to serving our nation and the American people. We see this every day in America and around the world. Extending Title 32 to enable Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and early retirement benefits and authorizing TRICARE healthcare benefits for six months following deployment is a win – win decision; by better enabling national security through military readiness and demonstrating to our Guardsmen and their families that the nation has their best interest at heart.

Thank you for considering these recommendations in support of America's National Guard.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bruce A. Wright".

Bruce "Orville" Wright
Lieutenant General, U.S. Air Force Retired
President
Air Force Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carter F. Ham".

Carter F. Ham
General, U.S. Army Retired
President & CEO
Association of the United States Army