

United States Congress

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

May 27, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We are writing to urge you to approve the extension of funding for the continued use of the National Guard under 502(f)(2)(A) of Title 32, United States Code, through July 31, 2020. Governor John Bel Edwards has recently requested this authority to ensure the National Guard can continue to respond to your Major Disaster Declaration in connection with COVID-19. Furthermore, without this much needed deployment extension many national guardsmen who were activated at the start of this pandemic would end up being just one day shy of the 90 day threshold necessary to receive benefits for active duty service. This funding remains critical to Louisiana's ongoing fight against the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The National Guard's unique capabilities have been an irreplaceable part of Louisiana's front line response to COVID-19. As of the time of this letter, Louisiana's Soldiers and Airmen have supported the testing of over 47,000 citizens, provided distribution of over 26 million items of personal protective equipment, provided foodbank distribution of over 5 million pounds of food, as well as participating in concurrent interagency planning and Incident Command Team augmentation. Sustaining the National Guard forces through July 31, 2020, will enable Louisiana to continue to reopen the state's economy by supporting aggressive action towards meeting phased testing goals, distribution of medical supplies and protective equipment, and state-wide foodbank operations. The unique capabilities of the National Guard remain a vital component of Louisiana's governmental and interagency efforts.

We urge your prompt approval of this request so that Louisiana may continue to employ the National Guard as deemed necessary to support COVID-19 response efforts. Thank you for your assistance in this important request.

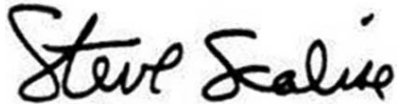
Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy
United States Senator



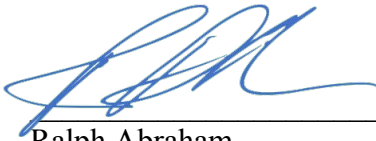
John Kennedy
United States Senator



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress



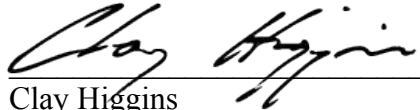
Cedric Richmond
Member of Congress



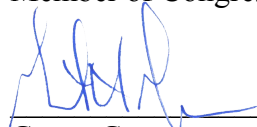
Ralph Abraham
Member of Congress



Mike Johnson
Member of Congress



Clay Higgins
Member of Congress



Garret Graves
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Mark T. Esper, Secretary of Defense