

DUNCAN HUNTER
52D DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY AND
SECONDARY EDUCATION

COMMITTEE ON
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U.S. House of Representatives
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November 30, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

With the inability of the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction to come to an agreement, there is now a direct threat to U.S. security with \$600 billion in cuts to defense programs required through sequestration. Added to \$450 billion in cost-savings already in motion, these cuts present tremendous risk to the nation's basic defense functions and the ability to prepare for the future.

The ongoing budget debate is far from over. The federal budget will continue being examined for cost-savings and structural reforms, both of which are needed to improve the country's fiscal outlook. Of course, there will also be significant attention on the defense budget and the necessity to put our national security interests at the forefront.

I was ardently opposed to the idea of targeting defense in sequestration, especially on such a disproportionate level, and I am committed to preventing the \$600 billion in defense cuts from taking hold. The Secretary of Defense and the military service chiefs have provided you and Congress with their concerns and strongly warned against any cuts beyond the \$450 billion already required.

These reductions will have a direct effect on readiness and force structure. While I am aware of your public statements on sequestration, it is important to emphasize that the men and women of our military are the core foundation of the Armed Forces. There is sure to be disagreement on the size and scope of cuts, but one thing that we should be able to agree on is that America's service men and women must not be used as leverage in future budget negotiations.

The Budget Control Act does provide you—the Commander in Chief—with discretion over whether to make certain cuts, including the authority to exempt military personnel accounts. Using this authority, I ask that you show your commitment to our military families and take action or at least indicate your intent to exempt military pay for active duty service personnel under sequestration.

America is at war, with men and women in harm's way. At various points throughout the budget process, the possible disruption of military pay caused rightful frustration among military families, which already have enough to worry about during deployments and extended training.

By exempting military pay for active duty personnel from what is likely to be a contentious budget debate in the coming months, we can provide a sense of security and relief to military families. This is the least we can do given the tremendous sacrifice these families are making on our behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duncan Hunter", written in a cursive style.

Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress