

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 16, 2020

The Honorable Mark T. Esper
Secretary of Defense
United States Department of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20318

Dear Secretary Esper,

We write to request that you extend the authorization of the New Hampshire National Guard to serve at the direction of the Governor, pursuant to your authority under by 502(f) of Title 32, U.S. Code. The extension of this authorization will enable the New Hampshire National Guard to continue its support of the fight against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) through December 31, 2020. As you know, this funding is currently authorized through August 21, 2020 and an extension is vital to ensuring the health and safety of New Hampshire citizens.

The New Hampshire National Guard continues to play a critical role in the state's COVID-19 emergency response. Our Guardsmen are staffing testing sites, conducting voluntary contact tracing, staging and distributing medical supplies, maintaining food bank operations, providing critical support to N.H. Employment Security and are continuing to support the transition to reopen the economy. All of these efforts are essential to mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on New Hampshire citizens and the need for this support is expected to persist into the foreseeable future. As we continue to see a resurgence of coronavirus cases across the country, we share the Governor's concern that prematurely ceasing federal funding for National Guard COVID-19 support operations will hinder New Hampshire's ability to respond and could contribute to increased infections in the state.

Therefore, we request that you extend the 502(f) funding authorization through the remainder of 2020 in order to allow the New Hampshire National Guard to continue its critical support to our state. We look forward to working with you to keep Americans healthy and safe.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Ann McLane Kuster
United States Representative



Chris Pappas
United States Representative