

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 4, 2019

Chairman Adam Smith  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman James Inhofe  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510


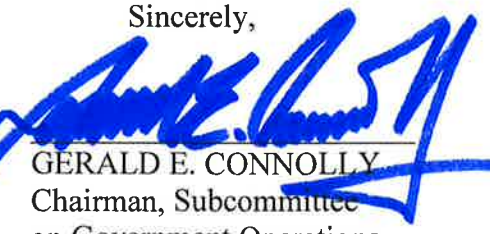
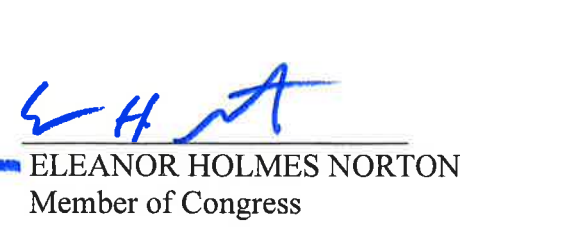

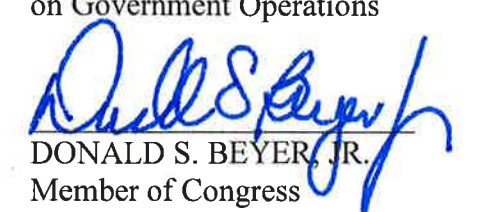




Dear Chairman Smith and Chairman Inhofe:

On July 12, the House passed H.R. 2500, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for 2020, which invests in a strong and ready military, provides for a pay increase for our troops, promotes a more diverse and inclusive armed forces, and ensures close collaboration with our allies in standing against aggression from Russia. The Senate passed its own version in June. Reaching agreement in conference to move a final version to passage in the House and the Senate soon will provide certainty to our military and reassurance to our men and women in uniform that Congress has their backs.

Among the provisions appended to this bill in the House is legislation to extend twelve weeks of paid family and medical leave to federal civilian employees. We were proud to advocate for its inclusion and to work closely with the House Armed Services Committee Members and staff to ensure that it enhanced this year's NDAA by helping to recruit and retain the best and brightest Americans to work at the Department of Defense and other agencies throughout our government. This would also set a strong example for the private sector, where too many employees still do not have access to paid family and medical leave. We understand that the conferees are considering extending mandatory paid family and medical leave solely to Department of Defense employees. This would be an unacceptable outcome, as it would create two classes of federal employees and deny a benefit to a majority of federal workers for no reason other than the agency at which they work. We urge the conferees to preserve the progress made in the House bill on behalf of all federal employees and their families.

Thank you for your bipartisan work on this matter, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure that paid family and medical leave for our nation's hardworking federal employees can be signed into law soon.

Sincerely,

 STENY H. HOYER House Majority Leader	 GERALD E. CONNOLLY Chairman, Subcommittee on Government Operations	 ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON Member of Congress
 JOHN P. SARBANES Member of Congress	 DONALD S. BEYER, JR. Member of Congress	 ANTHONY BROWN Member of Congress
 JAMIE RASKIN Member of Congress	 DAVID TRONE Member of Congress	 JENNIFER WEXTON Member of Congress