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United States Senate

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May 20, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to express my concern with recent reports that members of the National Guard will see their deployments end on June 24, 2020, and to request an extension of 32 U.S.C. 502(f) funding for the Arizona National Guard. It is incredibly troubling that reporting on this decision indicates it was not made in light of new information on the spread of the coronavirus, but rather because members of our National Guard would be eligible for early retirement and education benefits under the Post 9/11 GI Bill if their orders extended to June 25, 2020 and beyond.

The Arizona National Guard has been serving on the front lines of the coronavirus response, risking their own health to provide critical assistance to Arizona communities. The decision to end their deployment must be based solely on the needs of the community, as well as progress in battling COVID-19. Ending deployments in an effort to avoid providing early retirement and educational benefits is an affront to the sacrifices each member of the armed forces makes for the United States.

Furthermore, the job of the National Guard is not complete. As we begin the work of reopening our country and economy, it is imperative that Arizona has the personnel necessary to combat the coronavirus so that our citizens may safely resume their routines. Currently, the Arizona National Guard has over 900 members working to perform testing, provide medical flights, keep food banks well stocked, and respond to coronavirus-related medical needs as they arise.

If we are to open safely, it is vital that the Arizona National Guard continues operations for as long as their help is requested. To do otherwise risks the health and wellbeing of all Arizonans.

Mr. President, I appreciate your prompt attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kyrsten Sinema", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator