



WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2269 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3906
FAX: (202) 225-3303

REGULATORY REFORM, COMMERCIAL,
AND ANTITRUST LAW
SUBCOMMITTEE

VISTA DISTRICT OFFICE:
1800 THIBODO ROAD, SUITE 310
VISTA, CA 92081
(760) 599-5000
FAX: (760) 599-1178

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0549

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE MIDDLE EAST AND
NORTH AFRICA SUBCOMMITTEE

TERRORISM, NONPROLIFERATION,
AND TRADE SUBCOMMITTEE

DANA POINT OFFICE:
33282 GOLDEN LANTERN, SUITE 102
DANA POINT, CA 92629
(949) 281-2449
www.issa.house.gov

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, Chairman Thornberry, and Ranking Member Smith,

As a conferee for House Judiciary Committee for the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), I write to request that the bill include a provision to fix the California National Guard's outrageous decision to punish nearly 10,000 current and retired veterans for the incompetence and wrongdoing of others.

On October 22, 2016, the Los Angeles Times reported that nearly 10,000 soldiers in the California National Guard have been ordered to repay enlistment bonuses of \$15,000 or more that they were granted, in return for enlisting or reenlisting in the Guard during the peak of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Due to extreme mismanagement of this bonus program that was discovered in subsequent years, the Department of Defense has decided to renege on its commitment and order the repayment of these enlistment bonuses.

This is an undue financial hardship that veterans who enlisted and went to war simply do not deserve. Although California Guard officials have pledged to work with veterans that wish to file appeals to the National Guard Bureau and the Army Board for Correction of Military Records to clear these debts, this is insufficient. Accountability demands much more. This is not how any veteran should be treated.

It is unconscionable that the burden of bureaucratic malfeasance and corruption over a decade ago is being borne by heroes who stepped forward, put themselves in harm's way and fought to keep our nation safe.

Therefore, I request specific language to waive the unjust penalty be included in the final 2017 NDAA. I stand ready to work with you to resolve this veteran hardship promptly. I appreciate you time and attention to this most important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Darrell Issa', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darrell Issa
Member of Congress