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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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March 19, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to urge you to consider authorizing the National Guard to support state COVID-19 response efforts under Title 32. States across the country are working quickly to contain the spread of the virus, and the federal government must do its part to empower response on the ground in the communities that need it most. This includes my home state of Michigan, where Governor Whitmer requested authorization for this action in a letter to you last night. Utilizing Title 32 authorities to activate and deploy National Guard resources is a direct and effective way to support response efforts in this crisis.

On March 13, you declared a national emergency, which granted the federal government the authority to utilize a number of actions to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ One of these authorities is the ability to activate the National Guard for operational support in states under 32 U.S.C. § 502(f). This action allows governors to maintain command and control over their state's National Guard to directly support the jurisdictions in their state that require assistance. The authorization would provide federal funding for pay and benefits to National Guard members, as well as the use of federally-owned equipment. This would help conserve limited state resources, because under the current emergency declaration, they incur the costs of deploying the National Guard up front – a burden that can pose challenges because the reimbursement process often exceeds six months or more before states' treasuries receive the funds. Authorizing Title 32 authorities will streamline state response abilities and ensure that the capacities of the National Guard are utilized to the fullest extent possible.

¹ President Donald J. Trump: *Proclamation on Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak* (Mar. 13, 2020).

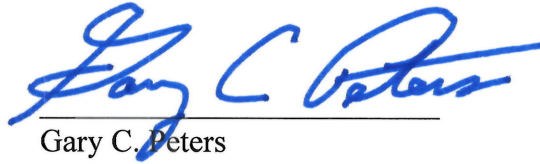
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In times of crisis, the American people look to the federal government to aid and empower response efforts. Enabling the National Guard to utilize their unique capabilities in their own communities will provide much-needed reassurance for the public at this critical hour. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs

cc: The Honorable Mark Esper, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense