

May 21, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Thune, Leader Jeffries, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing millions of servicemembers, veterans, and military families, we write to express concern about the blocking of military promotions in the furtherance of broader political and policy disputes unrelated to the servicemember's qualifications. We respectfully urge a path forward that safeguards military readiness and preserves the integrity of the personnel system.

Military promotions are a routine but essential function of force management. They ensure continuity of leadership, maintain the chain of command, and enable units to operate effectively. When promotions are delayed, the impact is not limited to individual nominees. Senior leader nominees typically bring in a command team of both officers and enlisted. When the leaders' promotions are delayed, their command team's transitions are delayed. Other uniformed members would move up to fill that command team's positions, and so on, and so on, so that each promotion delay affects multitudes of military members and their families. It damages national security, creates gaps in leadership, slows decision-making, harms careers, and places great strain on military families. Commanding officers often move with a broader command team, including other officers and senior enlisted leaders. When a commander's promotion and subsequent move are delayed, it can delay the movement and advancement of that entire team. This disruption cascades down the force, affecting those who would have filled those roles, and so on.

These delays also have downstream effects that extend beyond the workplace. Uncertainty around promotions can disrupt permanent change of station timelines, delay transitions, and create challenges for military families navigating housing, employment, and schooling. While these impacts vary, they reflect the broader strain placed on the force when routine personnel decisions are delayed. Each delay can mean a disrupted move, changes to a spouse's employment, interruptions in children's schooling, financial strain, or even periods of family separation. None of these outcomes supports the military mission.

We fully respect Congress's important oversight role and the responsibility to address policy concerns. At the same time, there is an opportunity to reinforce a shared

commitment to approaches that avoid unintended consequences for those serving in uniform.

While senior politically-appointed civilian officials oftentimes expect politics to interfere with their careers and goals, our active duty military leaders must be able to operate without disruption from such dynamics, allowing them to focus solely on the national security needs of the nation.

We, therefore, call on you to separate military promotions from broader policy negotiations and permanently ensure they are not subject to politically motivated holds moving forward.

Sincerely,

Blue Star Families
Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS
Marine Corps League
Psycharmor
Fleet Reserve Association
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
Military Spouse JD Network
United States Army Warrant Officers Association
Army Aviation Association of America
Service Women Action Network
Reserve Organization of America
U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association & Enlisted Association