



September 18, 2020

Honorable Nita Lowey  
Chairwoman, Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairwoman, Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Shelby, and Ranking Members Granger and Leahy:

The Military Coalition (TMC), representing more than 5.5 million current and former uniformed service members, veterans, and their families and survivors requests your assistance in including language, in the next COVID-19 bill or continuing resolution, to provide the 6,100 uniformed officers of the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) an extension of the 60-day annual leave cap. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, USPHS officers have been deployed to hot spots and remain in 100 percent deployment readiness status, thus limiting their ability to take leave. On September 30, 2020, these officers will lose all leave in excess of 60 days unless Congress acts to extend their leave accrual.

All other branches of the uniformed and federal service have been granted special leave accrual extensions, through memoranda, to carry over 120 days of leave through September 30, 2023. USPHS officers are the *only* federal employees who will lose leave beyond 60 days. Because the 60 days leave accrual is contained in statute, the Department of Health and Human Services has determined that despite efforts to address this problem administratively, it can only be corrected through legislation.

We request the following be included in next COVID-19 bill or continuing resolution: "Notwithstanding section 210 of Title 42 of the United States Code, any officer credited with more than sixty days of accumulated and accrued leave on September 30, 2020 shall be permitted to carry over 120 days of accrued leave to be used no later than September 30, 2023: Provided, That this provision shall not apply to any officer on terminal leave preceding separation, retirement, or release from active duty."

This is a matter of fairness and parity. Given the sacrifices these officers are making, they should be treated the same as the other uniformed and Federal service employees. We appreciate your continued support for those who serve in the eight uniformed services and look forward to working with you to rectify this matter.

Sincerely,

Jack Du Teil  
President  
The Military Coalition

Air Force Association (AFA)

Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS)

Association of the United States Army (AUSA)

Association of the United States Navy (AUSN)

Coast Guard (CWOA)

Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS)

Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)

Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)

Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV)

Marine Corps League (MCL)

Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America (MCA)

Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)

National Military Family Association (NMFA)

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA)

Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA)

Reserve Officers Association (ROA)

Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)

The Independence Fund (TIF)

The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)

United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)

USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)

Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)