

October 3, 2025

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

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate

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

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate

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

On behalf of the nearly 20 million service members, veterans, and their families that we represent, we write to you today with an urgent request that you prioritize passing all appropriations bills necessary to fund the government for the full Fiscal Year 2026. The repeated reliance on continuing resolutions (CRs) and brinkmanship leading to potential shutdowns inflicts predictable, severe, and unnecessary harm on our military, veterans, their families, and the American people, while jeopardizing our economy and our national security.

A government shutdown is not simply a political or fiscal issue — it has direct and devastating consequences for those who serve and have served, as well as their families. Recent survey data shows that **1 in 3 military families have less than \$3,000 in savings**, which can cause them to put expenses onto credit cards or to use payday loans during a shutdown. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports, approximately **1.2 million veterans, more than 20,000 active-duty military families, and 213,000 National Guard and Reserve families depend on SNAP benefits** to put food on the table. Any disruption to federal funding threatens access to these benefits, pushing already vulnerable families into crisis.

A government shutdown is not a negotiation tactic; it is a failure of leadership that immediately halts critical services, disrupts economic stability, and casts uncertainty over millions of lives. Predictable funding is essential for effective federal operations, allowing agencies from defense to public health to plan, execute, and deliver services efficiently. We urge you to conclude this essential business now, putting aside partisan differences to complete the full appropriations process and provide the stability the nation deserves.

Furthermore, we ask that Congress immediately ensure the financial stability of our dedicated service members and their families by protecting their pay during a government shutdown. Regardless of the broader funding debates, the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces and their families must not suffer because Congress cannot agree on funding the government. **We, therefore, urge swift passage of the bipartisan Pay Our Troops Act**, which guarantees that military personnel — including Coast Guard personnel — receive their paychecks on time, without interruption, in the event of any funding lapse. Our commitment to those who defend this nation must remain steadfast and non-negotiable.

The nation is watching. We urge you to act with urgency and responsibility this moment demands.

Respectfully,

Air Force Sergeants Association

AMVETS

Blinded Veterans Association

Blue Star Families

Burn Pits 360

Chief Warrant and Warrant Officers Association, United States Coast Guard

Code of Support Foundation

Fleet Reserve Association

Gold Star Spouses of America, Inc.

Hire Heroes USA

Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America

Military Family Advisory Network

Military Officers Association of America

National Military Family Association

Project Sanctuary

Secure Families Initiative

Service Women's Action Network

The Enlisted Association (TREA)

Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors (TAPS)

United States Army Warrant Officers Association

U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers & Enlisted Association

United States Military Spouse Chamber of Commerce

Veterans of Foreign Wars

With Honor Action