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May 14, 2020

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inhofe:

I write to you concerning the current COVID-19 pandemic and the National Guard's mission to support the national emergency declaration. I urge you to include language in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), or additional COVID-19 legislation, to ensure any National Guard members who are unable to drill during this unprecedented time receive enough retirement points in 2020 to achieve a satisfactory year of service.

As you are aware, COVID-19 is an ongoing pandemic that has the ability to spread rapidly with a concerning mortality rate. Every day, our National Guard personnel are asked to support the national effort to address this crisis. National Guard personnel are currently unable to drill during this pandemic due to required social distancing protocols within their local jurisdiction. As such, the current minimum points allowed are not adequate to ensure that service members in the final years of their service are eligible to retire with the time they have served. Do to the lengthy time away from drill, many service members will be unable to reach the 50 retirement point minimum to fulfill a satisfactory year.

I request a temporary change to the minimum retirement points necessary to achieve a satisfactory year of service to account for the limitation on drill time during the current pandemic. Many guardsmen and women who have dedicated a life of service, face the very real possibility of being a couple points short of retiring with 30 years due to no fault of their own. This is a retirement that, under normal circumstances, would have been assured but is currently in question.

I hope you will support my request to ensure the men and women who have served our nation can maintain their year of satisfactory service for retirement. I look forward to working with you to protect our guardsmen and women during this emergency.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator