

September 16, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

*Stars and Stripes* Funding for Fiscal Year 2021

Dear Chairman Shelby and Vice Chairman Leahy:

We write to you today to express our support for *Stars and Stripes* and the exceptional reporting it provides on important military topics.

In the Department of Defense's fiscal year 2021 budget request, the Department proposed to eliminate all federal funding for the publication. We appreciate the Department's recent decision to reverse course and now respectfully urge the Committee to immediately appropriate the Department funding for *Stars and Stripes*, so that the newspaper will be able to continue publication after funding runs out on September 30, 2020.

*Stars and Stripes* has dutifully served not only the U.S. Armed Forces, but the American public with vital reporting on critical topics for decades. It is an invaluable resource that informs and educates while providing needed transparency and accountability as an editorially independent newspaper.

As a group of fifteen bipartisan Senators recently [wrote](#) to the Department on September 2, "*Stars and Stripes is an essential part of our nation's freedom of the press that serves the very population charged with defending that freedom.*" We could not agree more.

Since 2001, more than 3 million service members—including many of the signatories to this letter—have relied on *Stars & Stripes* as a source for information while deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. To dissolve *Stars and Stripes* would not only deny service members and veterans an opportunity to be more informed, it would represent an insurmountable loss in the ability of the larger military-connected community to communicate directly with our fellow service members and veterans. The benefits it provides vastly outweigh its small cost. We urge you to act fast to provide the necessary funding to continue its vital role in our national discourse. Thank you.

Sincerely,



AMSUS, the Society of Federal Health Professionals



Blue Star Families

*Kristina Kaufman*

Code of Support Foundation

*John S. P.*

High Ground Veterans Advocacy

*J. B. T.*

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

*Rebecca I. Porter*  
Rebecca I. Porter, PhD  
President and CEO  
Military Child Education Coalition

*Dana T. Atkins*  
Dana T. Atkins  
Military Officers Association of America

*Bill W.*  
National Military Family Association

*[Signature]*

Student Veterans of America

*Brian Caswell*  
Tragedy Assistance Program for  
Survivors

*Ryan Manion*

Travis Manion Foundation

*Randy Reid*  
U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers  
Association & Enlisted Association

*C. S. W.*  
Veterans Education Success

*Amel Al-Hadi*  
Veterans for Common Sense

cc: Secretary of Defense Esper, Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations,  
Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger of the House Committee on Appropriations