

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel,

We write today to share our concerns about the Department of Defense's decision to halt the processing of Military Tuition Assistance Programs (TA) in light of the government shutdown. President Aoun of Northeastern University wrote earlier this week that over 100 Northeastern students are currently serving on active duty, and many have received counsel not to enroll in courses beginning after October 1, or to withdraw from their current programs of study due to the lapse in government funding.

As the Armed Services maintain an all-volunteer force, TA is an important recruitment tool that attracts talented and motivated high school graduates to military service. These individuals and their families deserve the same unquestioning loyalty that they demonstrate to their fellow Americans through their service. They deserve to know that they will receive the benefits they have earned and that we will keep the promises we have made to them.

We share your frustration with this ongoing shutdown, and we regret the disruption and uncertainty that it has caused the Department of Defense. As a delegation, we are united in our commitment to funding American government so that it can serve the American people. House members of the Massachusetts delegation have written to Speaker Boehner, asking him to bring to the House floor a clean continuing resolution, a measure we believe would pass the House and immediately restore funding to the federal government.

We ask, however, that while we work to bring this shutdown to an end, you allow the Department of Defense to continue reviewing, processing, and approving TA applications on a contingent basis. Northeastern University has announced that no active duty member of the Armed Services will be responsible for tuition charges incurred as a result of the shutdown. We applaud this decision, but we know it was a tough one. We hope that it will not become a financial tradeoff faced by colleges and universities around the country in the coming days.

We request that the Department of Defense continue to process TA applications and consider all available resources and procedures to ensure that no active duty personnel will have their academic or professional studies interrupted at this time. Thank you for your consideration of this issue. We look forward to working with you to ensure that we can continue to support the success, education, and professional development of our men and women in uniform.

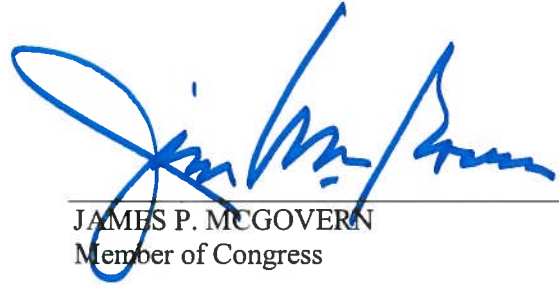
Sincerely,

  
EDWARD MARKEY  
United States Senator

  
ELIZABETH WARREN  
United States Senator



RICHARD E. NEAL  
Member of Congress



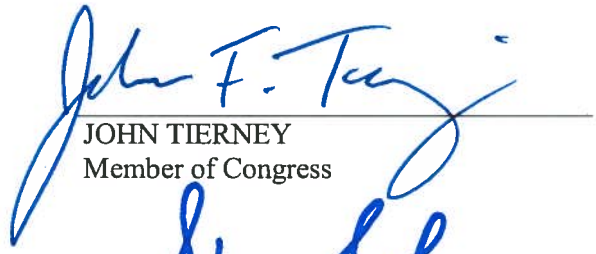
JAMES P. MCGOVERN  
Member of Congress



NIKI TSONGAS  
Member of Congress



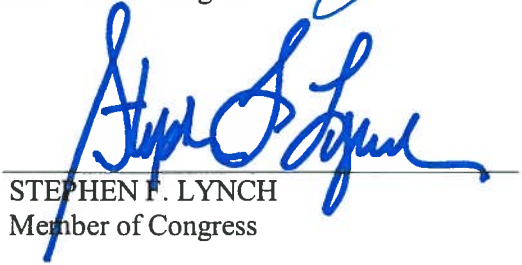
JOSEPH P. KENNEDY  
Member of Congress



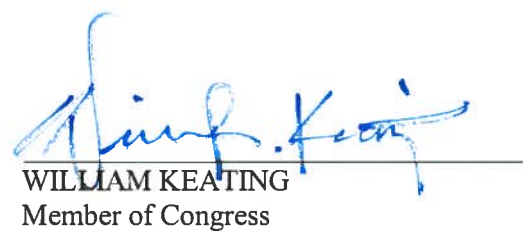
JOHN TIERNEY  
Member of Congress



MICHAEL E. CAPUANO  
Member of Congress



STEPHEN F. LYNCH  
Member of Congress



WILLIAM KEATING  
Member of Congress