



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Austin:

We write to request a temporary extension of the increase to the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for all military branches in order to provide eligible servicemembers and their families with housing security in the midst of the public health and economic challenges facing our nation.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has left the rental market with shortages and rising costs. This challenge, combined with the rising cost of housing and utilities across the United States, has led servicemembers and their families to experience higher-than-normal financial strain, threatening their livelihoods and housing security.

We are grateful that the Department of Defense recognized this issue and recently implemented a short-term increase in the housing allowance for eligible servicemembers and their families.¹ However, this increase is set to expire on December 31, 2021. We are concerned that this impending deadline will leave military families facing the same challenges that initially prompted the BAH increase.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on our economy are unlikely to subside by the end of the year. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects the prices of electricity, heating oil, and natural gas in the United States will rise or remain at their current high levels through 2022, which is likely to result in higher costs of living for servicemembers and their families well into next year.² We urge you to extend the increased BAH for all branches of the military until June 30, 2022 in order to provide much needed housing relief for servicemembers and their families.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

¹ Army plans to increase housing pay for Soldiers strained by pandemic, Army News Service, September 27, 2021 https://www.army.mil/article/250589/army_plans_to_increase_housing_pay_for_soldiers_strained_by_pandemic

² U.S. Energy Information Administration, Recent Data, Price summary (historical and forecast) <https://www.eia.gov/analysis/>



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Member of Congress



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Sara Jacobs
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Kathy Manning
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