

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 18, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel,

We write to you today to urge that you consider providing service secretaries and Department of Defense (DoD) agencies full flexibility to decide to what extent, if any, furloughs are to be conducted in response to the current sequester. Although we applaud the recent decision to reduce likely furlough days from 22 to 14 days, thousands of Virginians still face a significant loss of pay, which will have a particularly disproportionate impact on the citizens of our state. We sincerely hope DoD will do all it can to lessen the impact of possible furloughs on our civil servants and believe there are additional steps that can be taken to support this effort.

For instance, we understand that the Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force may be able to complete the fiscal year without conducting any civilian furloughs. Additionally, we understand that approximately 180,000 of the estimated total DoD civilian workforce are paid for through Working Capital Funds (WCF). As you know well, WCF employees are paid through reimbursements from the Services and there are no direct savings in appropriated dollars to be rendered from furloughing these employees. In fact, furloughing WCF employees simply creates a resource mismatch between labor and material, resulting in lost productivity, increased costs and decreased output of repaired equipment to our uniformed servicemembers.

A blanket DoD-wide policy mandating uniform furloughs would not be a vote of solidarity; instead, requiring defense civilians to take unpaid furlough days when they are not necessary would unacceptably erode employee morale. Allowing the service secretaries and agencies to make their own decisions based on their individual budgetary constraints will serve to best protect our civil servants at a difficult time.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of this policy option which we believe is in the best interest of our nation and its Department of Defense civilian workforce.

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

Sincerely,

Mark R Warner

Sen. Mark Warner (VA)

Tim Kaine

Sen. Tim Kaine (VA)

Rob Wittman

Rep. Rob Wittman (VA-1)

Scott Rigell

Rep. Scott Rigell (VA-2)

Bobby Scott

Rep. Bobby Scott (VA-3)

Randy Forbes

Rep. Randy Forbes (VA-4)

Hurt

Rep. Robert Hurt (VA-5)

Bob Goodlatte

Rep. Bob Goodlatte (VA-6)

Morgan Griffith

Rep. Morgan Griffith (VA-9)

Frank Wolf

Rep. Frank Wolf (VA-10)

Gerald Connolly

Rep. Gerald Connolly (VA-11)