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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

June 5, 2023

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Chairman  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker  
Ranking Member  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Reed and Ranking Member Wicker:

Over the weekend, President Biden and Speaker McCarthy reached a deal to avoid default on the U.S.' debt, agreeing to total defense spending in accordance with the President's budget request. This limit on the defense budget may result in SASC cutting more items in the President's budget request than in previous years in order to add Congressional priorities. One of the features of the President's request is a 5.2% pay increase for service members. I am writing to ask that, despite the fiscal restraints imposed by the *Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023*, this pay increase be included in the chairman's mark of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024.

As you know, people are the armed services' greatest asset. As you also know, we are facing a recruiting crisis, making retention of our service members' expertise and experience more important than ever. Meanwhile, twenty-four percent of service members face food insecurity, and chronic unemployment and underemployment of military spouses compounds the financial difficulties service members and their families face. We cannot afford to make budgetary trade-offs that negatively impact those in uniform.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator