

June 30, 2023

The Honorable Jack Reed
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
425 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Reed and Ranking Member Wicker:

The undersigned organizations are writing to ask Congress to restore the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to 100 percent — a step that would create a positive ripple effect on the well-being of those who serve and their families. In many cases, BAH fails to cover the intended 95 percent. Recent [surveys](#)¹ show out-of-pocket costs for servicemembers and their families average over \$250 per month, well over DoD-estimated amounts to cover the 5 percent gap. Nearly 70 percent of active duty families [report](#)² having to pay more than they can comfortably afford for housing.

We share the following for consideration in advance of the report that DoD will deliver to Congress on the examination of the accuracy of BAH and housing profiles:

- **Families, in many cases, are paying beyond what DoD intends.** Previous years' military pay increases lagged which, combined with a volatile housing market and record inflation, led to increased financial challenges, especially for junior enlisted families.
- **Restoration would offset the choice many face between paying for housing or paying for other basic necessities.** Active duty families who pay more than their BAH for housing every month are significantly more likely to experience food insecurity, as identified by the USDA Food Security Scale.
- **Increasing BAH to 100 percent will help ensure the long-term sustainability of military housing.** The five percent increase would provide critical funding for military housing improvements amid labor shortages and pandemic-related material cost increases.
- **Servicemembers who live on base have 100 percent of their housing costs covered by BAH, yet only 30 percent of military families have the option of living on base.**

We appreciate your leadership and focus on identifying ways to better care for our servicemembers and their families. Success in implementing BAH restoration is an important step toward safeguarding the economic security of our military families in the face of extraordinary pressures. This action will reinforce your commitment to those who provide the solid foundation for our Force.

¹ Blue Star Families. Pulse Check: Relocation and Housing. September 2022.

https://bluestarfam.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/BSF_PulseCheck_Report_Sep2022.pdf

² Military Family Advisory Network. 2021 Military Family Support Programming Survey. June 2022.

<https://www.mfan.org/researchreports/2021-military-family-support-programming-survey-results-2/>

Sincerely,

The undersigned list of supporting military and veteran organizations.

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| Air Force Aid Society, Inc. | Military Spouse JD Network |
| Air Force Sergeants Association | MILLIE |
| American Red Cross | National Military Family Association |
| Armed Services YMCA | Operation Homefront |
| Association of Military Banks of America | Partners in PROMISE |
| Blue Star Families | RallyPoint |
| Code of Support Foundation | Safe Military Housing Initiative |
| Cohen Veterans Network | Secure Families Initiative |
| Defense Credit Union Council | Student Veterans of America |
| Dixon Center for Military & Veterans Services | Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) |
| Elizabeth Dole Foundation | The American Legion |
| Hope For The Warriors | Tricare for Kids Coalition |
| Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America | UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center |
| Jewish War Veterans of the USA | United Through Reading |
| JWB Jewish Chaplains Council | U.S. Military Spouse Chamber of Commerce |
| Lauren Hope Collective | Veterans of Foreign Wars |
| Military Family Advisory Network | Vets' Community Connections |
| Military Officers Association of America | Wounded Warrior Project |
| Military Spouse Advocacy Network | |

cc:

Chair Jon Tester, Senate Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee

Ranking Member Susan Collins, Senate Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee