

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

May 19, 2023

The Honorable Ronald S. Moultrie
Under Secretary of Defense
Intelligence and Security
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Moultrie:

We appreciate the Department of Defense's efforts to develop a DoD-wide fitness standard for installation access that applies evenly and routinely across all services and military installations in the U.S. As you know, the Department welcomes millions of visitors annually at military installations across the country. These visitors play critical roles supporting the Department's readiness, recruitment, retention, and other key missions and priorities. As such, it is important that the Department get this policy right and put it into action promptly.

We recognize that setting base access policy is complex, and we understand the Department is making progress on a DoD-wide fitness standard. However, in April 2018 – at Congress' urging – the Department said that a DoD-wide fitness standard would be completed "in late 2018 or 2019" as part of an update to DoD Manual 5200.08. Unfortunately, this update has yet to happen, and visitors are still navigating a complex mix of policies that vary from base-to-base, service-to-service, and sometimes day-to-day. It is important to note that a uniform fitness standard would not have an impact on the individual base commander's ability to limit installation access based upon the installation's Force Protection Condition.

All of this has a profound impact on those with legitimate reasons to get on base, including military veterans seeking healthcare, Gold Star Families wanting to visit the gravesite of a loved one, household goods movers charged with relocating our troops, and truck drivers that deliver arms and ammunition, parcel packages, and food and retail goods that are destined for commissaries and exchanges. Businesses especially are feeling the impact of the current approach, and some have already or are considering pulling back from serving DoD as a customer due to the high level of difficulty.

More recently, the NDAA FY23 included report language that noted the Department's ongoing delays dating back nearly 15 years, and several instances since then where Congress has repeatedly directed the Department to develop and implement a DoD-wide fitness standard. Our understanding is that even following many years of development, the Department is planning to

publish a final standard without providing for external review and input. Standards must be workable and structured to ensure that visitors can have a high level of confidence in compliance before they arrive at the gate – for instance, a DoD requirement for a 10-year background check is difficult to meet as most states only permit businesses to look back seven years. After all this time, it would be a shame for the Department to publish something that simply does not work.

Accordingly, we strongly encourage the Department to move forward with a DoD-wide fitness standard for installation access. However, we request that the Department share its proposed standard with us and allow us enough time to review it and provide feedback before it is finalized and published by the Department for implementation.

Thank you for your service to our nation.

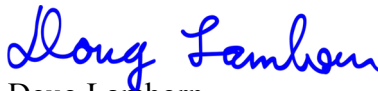
Sincerely,



Mark Alford
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Readiness



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress



Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress



Don Bacon
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Sam Graves
Member of Congress



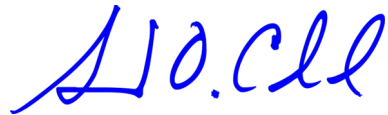
Ronny L. Jackson
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Sara Jacobs
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Dale W. Strong
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
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