

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

July 11, 2013

Lieutenant General David H. Huntoon  
Superintendent  
United States Military Academy  
600 Thayer Rd  
West Point, NY 10996

Lieutenant General Michael C. Gould  
Superintendent  
United States Air Force Academy  
4700 Ponderosa Drive  
Air Force Academy, CO 80840

Vice Admiral Michael H. Miller  
Superintendent  
United States Naval Academy  
121 Blake Rd  
Annapolis, MD 21402

Rear Admiral Sandra L. Stosz  
Superintendent  
United States Coast Guard Academy  
31 Mohegan Ave  
New London, CT 06320-8103

Dear Superintendents,

With strong missions of moral, academic, and physical excellence, the service academies shape our future leaders and prepare young cadets and midshipmen to serve our nation as officers. Your stewardship of the academies, our proud and vital national institutions, allows you to have an outsized impact on the future of the United States military. That is why we strongly believe it is imperative you do everything in your power to ensure the academies' culture includes zero tolerance for sexual assault, an epidemic that is plaguing the military.

During the 2011-2012 academic year, the academies reported 80 cases of sexual assault, a 23 percent increase. According to a separate Department of Defense report released on May 6, approximately 26,000 military personnel experienced unwanted sexual contact last year, of which only 3,374 were reported. This indicates that the number of sexual assault cases at the academies may be significantly greater than the number of reported cases. In May of this year alone, five incidents of sexual assault in the military made headlines, two of which involved the Army and Navy academies.

Many victims are afraid to come forward and report the crime, fearing their careers or reputations will be damaged. Complaints are filed and often ignored, closed without action, or the victims are accused of wrongdoing. As *The Invisible War* documents, the professional retaliation after filing a complaint was almost as bad as the sexual assaults. Many victims contemplate suicide, and too often leave military service early as a result of these horrific experiences.

There is a bipartisan effort in Congress to address this grave problem. Taken together, individual provisions in the Fiscal Year 2014 Defense authorization and appropriations measures making their way through the legislative process would provide support for sexual assault

prevention. These measures aim to strengthen protections for victims and penalties for perpetrators, reform the Uniform Code of Military Justice by stripping commanders of their authority to dismiss a finding by a court martial or from reducing guilty findings to a lesser offense, and require the academies to incorporate sexual assault prevention in their ethics curricula and provide training within 60 days of each academic year and annually thereafter.

As we approach a new academic year, we implore you to do everything in your power to adopt policies that will prevent sexual assault, protect victims, and fully prosecute perpetrators. In addition, efforts at the service academies are essential to instill in our young future leaders the values that will change the culture in the military that propels the epidemic of sexual assault. We look forward to working with you and your fellow officers to ensure that every possible step is taken to protect the young men and women you groom to serve our nation honorably.

Sincerely,

Rita Murray

Lois Frank

Jan Schultz

Bob L. Miller

Barbara Lee

Michael R. Jensen

Adam B. Schiff

Charles B. Rangel

Chris Rock

Paul D. Tonko

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Steven L. Largent

Corine Brown

Grace Meyer

Janet Ann

Ti Gr

Matthew K. Carter

Jack Gr

Rod M. Quigley

Betty Miller

Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Ann M. Fane Foster

Mark A. Schmitt

Yu K. Kinspatt

Jess M. Fomen

Wibbi

Elizabeth H. Esty

Brian Higgin

Alan Cal

Kay Ganser