

December 6, 2024

Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs
700 Capitol Avenue
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Friends:

We are gathered here today to celebrate yet another incredible year for Kentucky's military installations, servicemembers, Department of the Army civilians, and many defense suppliers. I am honored to share a few thoughts on the hard work we have undertaken together on behalf of the Commonwealth and our Nation.

The KCMA's work in advocating for Kentucky's servicemembers and their families could not be more critical than today. Our Nation is staring down the most dangerous international environment since World War II, as Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea are conspiring to displace our country's role in the world. That makes the work of Kentucky servicemembers, whether it be the 101st Airborne Division, the Kentucky National Guard, or the hard-working men and women at the Blue Grass Army Depot and Fort Knox, vitally important for our national defense. In working to improve and expand Kentucky's military installations, raise the quality of life for its servicemembers, and grow its defense industry, KCMA is cementing the Commonwealth's importance in solving our country's most urgent security challenges.

2024 has been a year of firsts for Kentucky and our national defense. Last month, the Army announced it was opening a domestic production source of TNT right here in the Commonwealth, the first stateside supplier in decades. In August, we celebrated the opening of the first of new and improved barracks at Fort Campbell, replacing near fifty-year-old housing. And, throughout the year, the Blue Grass Army Depot community has worked closely with state and federal government partners to help locate the first of the installation's new missions after its pivotal role in destroying the US chemical weapons stockpile. These are but a few of the notable accomplishments that Kentucky has achieved over the last year for the servicemembers, military units, and defense companies that call the Commonwealth home.

As I continue to serve as Kentucky's senior senator, I will remain committed to bolstering our national defense and confronting our adversaries with the mantra of "peace through strength." I see Kentucky's military installations and servicemembers as playing a critical role in these efforts, bringing to bear our military's world-class fighting units to defend our Nation. I look forward to using my position as the incoming chair of the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee to equip these units with the resources they need.

In closing, I want to thank the servicemembers serving across the Commonwealth and our Nation, protecting the freedoms and prosperity that we all enjoy. It has been a privilege as Kentucky's senior senator to help ensure that these brave men and women are well-resourced and looked after in Washington. I also want to extend my sincere thanks to KCMA's Executive Committee for its cooperation in advocating for Kentucky's servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

Sincerely,



MITCH McCONNELL
UNITED STATES SENATOR

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