

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 4, 2010

The Honorable Robert Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Gates:

I am very concerned about the Department of Defense's decision to pause the implementation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Account (MyCAA). Improving the quality of life for our military families is fundamentally important. My state has a significant number of military personnel deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. I want to make sure their spouses are taken care of so there is one less thing they have to worry about as they fight each day to preserve our national security and freedom. Pausing implementation of the program not only affects our Active Duty members, but also our National Guard and Reserves who are activated on Title 10 orders.

MyCAA helps spouses of military personnel to increase their professional skills and improve their quality of life. Spouses of military personnel often have to overcome obstacles in finding a job due to the realities of military life that require constant moving from place to place. While I understand that there was a six-fold increase in enrollment in the program in January 2010, I believe the increase was foreseeable given our current economy and the difficulty military spouses have in coping with their loved ones' repeated deployments.

It appears military spouses did not receive any notification regarding the pause of the program. Such actions affect family readiness, and can have a severe impact on the morale of our deployed military personnel.

I am specifically inquiring regarding how the Congress can assist the Department in addressing the program's budgetary constraints, as well as human capital requirements to meet the demand of the program. I commit to working with you however I can to resolve this matter as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Kay R. Hagan
United States Senator