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March 5, 2012

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta  
Secretary of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Panetta:

On January 18, 2012, I wrote to you requesting information on the Department of Defense's dramatic changes to the Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence (PDMRA) program. Unfortunately, the response from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness was unworthy of the respect deserved by our men and women in uniform and provided little justification for the Pentagon's decision to release new guidance reducing PDMRA benefits service members were promised.

During the recent House Armed Services Committee hearing, you reiterated the importance of the PDMRA program and stated you would look at the implications of the policy change. I can tell you from my own experience and after listening to my constituents who are affected by these deployments that this policy change will have negative implications. PDMRA days allow for a healthy and successful reintegration after extended mobilizations and deployment, a benefit our men and women have earned.

Recently, I introduced H.R. 4045, legislation to exempt any member of the National Guard and Reserve from the Department of Defense's PDMRA reduction policy. In addition, I intend to pursue a change to this policy in the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act.

The Minnesota National Guard's "Red Bulls," and all service members who have been deployed to defend our nation, should be able to count on the time off they were promised and deserve. Promises made should be promises kept and we absolutely cannot break faith with our troops and their families. Should you have any questions, your staff can contact Ryan Silverberg in my office at (202) 225-2271 or [ryan.silverberg@mail.house.gov](mailto:ryan.silverberg@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

  
JOHN KLINE  
Member of Congress