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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

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FEDERAL LANDS

March 3, 2025

Pete Hegseth
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hegseth,

I am writing to express concern regarding the recent workforce reductions within the Department of Defense (DoD) and the significant impact this would have on both national security and the veterans who reside in my district. As you are aware, the DoD has laid off thousands of employees, many of whom are veterans who have dedicated their careers to serving our country. These layoffs are not just a loss of jobs but also a loss of the skilled workforce that is essential to ensuring our defense readiness. I was encouraged to hear President Trump pledge that he would work to minimize job losses for veterans; it is imperative that the DoD follows through on that promise.

I represent Virginia's Second Congressional District, home to the U.S. Navy's Atlantic fleet and the second largest veteran population in the United States. This means my constituents are particularly vulnerable to these cuts. Our community in Hampton Roads is deeply connected to the military, with many veterans who have served our country now serving in civilian jobs at DoD that directly support the defense of our great nation. Many of these veterans already experience the daily challenges of transitioning to civilian life, and facing such layoffs only add to their undue burden. At a time when we are seeing global instability rise and increased threats from adversaries like China and Russia, it is vital that we protect our skilled workforce and focus on maintaining a robust and capable Department of Defense.

Given your commitment to both our national defense and the well-being of our veterans, I respectfully ask that you consider action to:

1. **Prioritize Veterans in Workforce Reductions:** Ensure that veterans employed by the DoD are not disproportionately affected by these layoffs. Their unique skills and dedication are critical to maintaining the strength of our military.

2. Provide Timely Support for Transitioning Veterans: Offer veterans priority access to other available federal positions, particularly in roles that leverage their expertise and commitment to national defense.

3. Use our Veterans to Strengthen National Security: These reductions risk weakening our defense capabilities, particularly as we face increasing global threats. Ensuring DoD personnel—especially those with military experience—remain in positions where they can contribute to our national security is essential.

I am confident that under your leadership, DoD can take decisive action to both support our veterans and preserve the integrity of our national defense workforce. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to working with you to address this issue and to ensure that our defense workforce remains strong and ready to meet the challenges ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J.A. Kiggans" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jen A. Kiggans

Member of Congress