

LORETTA SANCHEZ

46TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1211 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0546
(202) 225-2965
(202) 225-5859 FAX

DISTRICT OFFICE
12397 LEWIS STREET, SUITE 101
GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840-4695
(714) 621-0102
(714) 621-0401 FAX

E-mail:
Loretta@mail.house.gov

Website:
www.house.gov/sanchez



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEES:
RANKING MEMBER, TACTICAL AIR AND
LAND FORCES
STRATEGIC FORCES

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEES:
BORDER AND MARITIME SECURITY
CYBERSECURITY,
INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION AND
SECURITY TECHNOLOGIES

October 24, 2016

The Honorable Ash Carter
U.S. Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Carter,

As a senior member of the House Committee on Armed Services, I am deeply concerned that the Department of Defense is demanding an estimate of 10,000 soldiers pay back their enlistment bonuses and student loan repayments.

These enlistment bonuses and student loan repayments were created as incentives to ensure our country was able to recruit the necessary manpower to succeed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Promises were made when these men and women signed up to sacrifice their lives to defend and protect this country, and we have the moral responsibility to keep them.

Soldiers in California should not be held responsible for the government's lack of oversight. They did their job and it is time for us to do ours. Currently, California has one of the largest National Guards in the country and is responsible for the largest veteran population. As you know, veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars continue to struggle with health conditions such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), challenges of transitioning back into civilian life and homelessness. Continuing to require soldiers to pay back these debts is unconscionable and an injustice to California veterans

We strongly urge the Department of Defense to immediately cease collecting these incentives and bonuses and to work with Congress to ensure the right laws and policies are in place in order to protect California National Guard soldiers from being forced to pay back bonuses that were received by no fault of their own. This is a disservice to all the service members and their families who have served this country valiantly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Loretta Sanchez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "L".

Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress