

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 14, 2016

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Carter:

We write to express our concerns about recent decisions made by the Defense Department that are dramatically impacting Troops to Teachers initiatives across the country. We are supportive of efforts to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and federal programs are operating as efficiently as possible. However, the Department's recent decision to halt funding for Troops to Teachers while a review of the grant process is underway is having negative impacts on student veterans and Troops to Teachers employees in our states and is a perfect example of the type of financial mismanagement the current review is attempting to address. Therefore, we urge you to complete this review as quickly as practically possible, while also taking appropriate steps to better support grantees while the review is conducted.

Troops to Teachers works towards an important goal – helping military members transition into the teaching profession when they separate from the armed forces. Not only does this initiative help veterans as they re-enter civilian life, it also helps our schools address teaching shortages. This work is especially impactful in states like ours that are home to high numbers of veterans and rural, under-resourced schools.

Troops to Teachers staff have informed us that while the Department's review is ongoing, they cannot use any of their federal funding to maintain operations. Their employees will soon be forced to find employment elsewhere unless funding is quickly restored. Further, without funding and the ability to pay rent, Troops to Teachers offices are in jeopardy of losing office space with no ability to account for equipment and supplies.

When these steps are taken and Troops to Teachers offices close their doors, the process to restart the initiative will not be quick, easy, or cheap. This will result in countless missed opportunities to provide teaching career advice and assistance to veterans across the country. We know you share our goal of ensuring that Defense Department resources are spent responsibly, but we question the wisdom of abruptly halting funding for such an important effort before the review results in any final determinations.

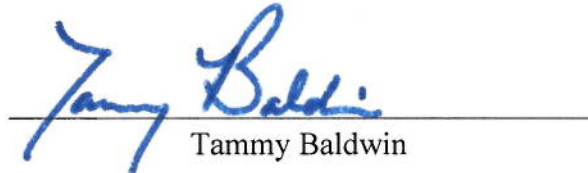
We strongly encourage you to finalize your review as quickly as is responsibly possible and find ways to better support grantees during this review period so that they can keep their doors open and continue serving veterans and their communities. We stand ready to work with you to address these concerns, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



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Jon Tester



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Tammy Baldwin