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

October 8, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
H-232, the Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
H-204, the Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Eric Cantor
Majority Leader
H-329, the Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Minority Whip
H-148, the Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Whip
H-107, the Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner, Leaders Cantor and Pelosi, and Whips McCarthy and Hoyer:

On September 18, the House Armed Services Committee heard testimony from the Joint Chiefs of Staff that they do not have the capabilities to meet the requirements necessary to comply with the Defense Strategic Guidance of 2012, which already had reduced the two-decade-old standard previously set for our military. The uniformed leadership of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps warned that should we continue these devastating cuts for another year, the services will simply be unable to execute the missions our national defense strategy requires. This means potentially abandoning core U.S. interests or placing our men and women in uniform in the unacceptable position of attempting to execute missions with woefully inadequate resources and training.

When asked whether their service can meet the requirements necessary if we continue sequestration the way it is currently moving forward, all four service chiefs - General Odierno, Admiral Greenert, General Welsh, and General Amos - said "no."

The Committee has received one frightening briefing after another; however, only a fraction of the Members of this body are aware of the full impact that cuts to our national defense will have on the security the country, and readiness of our Armed Services.

We understand and fully appreciate that as our leaders, you are navigating how to best address our nation's current fiscal challenges. As such, we believe it is critical that the current state of our military readiness be understood by the entirety of the House of Representatives

before we conclude our debate on the debt ceiling. Therefore, we ask that you hold a joint, classified briefing with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Martin Dempsey, and the Joint Chiefs, so that each of you and all Members are afforded the opportunity to hear first-hand, the grave danger to the national security of the United States that is being caused by sequestration cuts to defense spending.

Sincerely,

J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress

Mike Turner
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson
Member of Congress

Rob Wittman
Member of Congress

Mike McIntyre
Member of Congress

Mike Rogers
Member of Congress

Jeff Miller
Member of Congress

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

Bill Shuster
Member of Congress

Mike Conaway
Member of Congress

Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress

Austin Scott
Member of Congress

Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress

Jim Bridenstine
Member of Congress

Paul Cook
Member of Congress