

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 15, 2024

The Honorable Christine E. Wormuth
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

General Daniel R. Hokanson
Chief of the National Guard Bureau
111 S. George Mason Dr.
Arlington, VA 22204

Dear Secretary Wormuth and General Hokanson:

We write to request the Army's execution plan and fielding strategy relevant to funding provided in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023* (P.L. 117-328) for the procurement of the first Gray Eagle Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) for the Army National Guard.

Together, we successfully championed the inclusion of \$350 million for the procurement of 12 modernized MQ-1C Gray Eagle UAS platforms for the Army National Guard. Under current Army doctrine, Guard units must be prepared to deploy as a Division-sized element and utilize the same equipment and training as their Active Duty counterparts. Illinois and Kentucky Army Guard units are among those that comprise the 38th Division, which is well postured for fielding of these unmanned aircraft systems in support of state and federal missions.

The Gray Eagle provides unique intelligence, surveillance, and armed reconnaissance capabilities for the Army, as well as increased endurance, improved reliability and maintainability, and greater payload capacity to support the National Military Strategy. The current lack of Gray Eagles in Army Guard divisions restricts the component's ability to train for and conduct large-scale combat operations impacting overall readiness, and the procurement of these aircraft will help fulfill a long-standing Army Guard operational requirement that has been ignored for far too long.

While it has been more than a year since the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023* was signed into law, the Army has yet to put these funds on contract. We request a response by April 12, detailing the Army's plan for executing this \$350 million appropriation for the Army National Guard and urge you to field these aircraft to the 38th Division without delay.

Sincerely,



Mitch McConnell
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

CC: Lieutenant General Jon A. Jensen, Director, Army National Guard