



July 11, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the 1.5 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and its Auxiliary, I write to convey our sincere concern over the continued hold on military promotions. For the first time in more than 150 years, the U.S. Marine Corps Commandant position is vacant and demands Senate action. Gaps in critical military leadership positions not only create uncertainty and hardship for the members and families directly impacted, but also threaten force readiness and national security.

We are equally concerned about what is driving the stalled promotions. The VFW believes it is inappropriate for lawmakers to penalize those who wear the uniform for an Administration policy with which they disagree. Unfortunately, partisan social disputes like these now seem to regularly permeate military-related discussions in Congress, obfuscating the real challenges our military faces. The military needs confirmed uniformed leadership. Anything less emboldens our enemies and harms those currently serving around the world protecting American interests.

Today, major threats to our all-volunteer force include private sector competition for talent, waning eligibility for and propensity to serve, and quality of life issues, among others. Stalling hundreds of uniformed military promotions compounds these threats.

The persistent projection of partisan politics onto the fighting force, and the willful disruption of an institution whose sole purpose is to protect our nation, endangers the nonpartisan nature of the military. We call on you to work together to resolve political and ideological disagreements outside the military space, expedite blocked and imminent promotions, and mitigate the true challenges facing the military that are grounded in data, research, and the pragmatic, on-the-ground realities as communicated by our senior military leaders.

Sincerely,

RYAN M. GALLUCCI  
Executive Director  
VFW Washington Office

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