



Tim Pawlenty
Governor of Minnesota
Chair

Edward G. Rendell
Governor of Pennsylvania
Vice Chair

Raymond C. Scheppach
Executive Director

April 2, 2008

Admiral Michael G. Mullen
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
9999 Joint Staff Pentagon
Washington, DC 20318-9999

Dear Admiral Mullen:

On behalf of the nation's Governors, we wish to thank you for joining us during our recent White House visit with the President. Your updates regarding military issues and intelligence were very insightful.

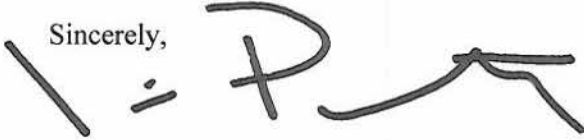
As you recall, several of us raised concern about the issue of increasing the grade of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau (CNGB) pursuant to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008. Section 1811 of the NDAA would increase the CNGB grade to General, and designates this individual as a principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense through the Chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on matters pertaining to non-federalized National Guard forces and other matters as determined by the Secretary. We urge you to propose this appointment expeditiously so the designated individual can work with Governors and Adjutant Generals on urgent domestic issues, such as developing emergency response plans to deal with annual incidents threatening our nation, including hurricanes, wildfires and severe storms.

Furthermore, we would like to take this opportunity to fully support current Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Lt. General H. Steven Blum, remaining CNGB and receiving the promotion to General. General Blum has worked with Governors for several years through many different crises. He has assisted us in implementing the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), which is an agreement between states to assist each other using the National Guard and other resources during emergencies. His ability to bring together more than 50,000 National Guard men and women from every state to assist during hurricane Katrina is testament to his ability and leadership.

While General Blum is uniquely qualified for this newly elevated position, Governors recognize the need to develop a merit-based, non-political system by which General Blum's successor can be selected. This process should consider the needs of states and the views of the nation's Governors. We will support a process for promotion that allows the CNGB to continue respected and effective leadership well beyond General Blum's appointment.

Thank you once again for joining us at the White House, and we look forward to working with you on matters of concern to our nation's men and women serving in the National Guard, Reserves and active military forces and their families.

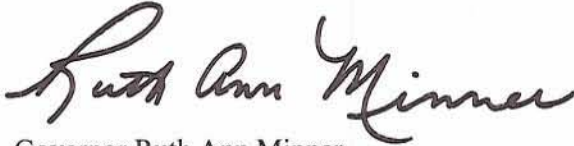
Sincerely,



Governor Tim Pawlenty
Chair



Governor Edward G. Rendell
Vice Chair



Governor Ruth Ann Minner
Co-Lead Governor on Homeland Security



Governor Jim Gibbons
Co-Lead Governor on Homeland Security



Governor Michael F. Easley
Co-Lead Governor on the National Guard



Governor Mark Sanford
Co-Lead Governor on the National Guard