

# STOP SEQUESTRATION NOW.

## DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER, SENATOR REID, SENATOR MCCONNELL, AND REPRESENTATIVE PELOSI:

As the March 1st deadline nears for unprecedented, across-the-board cuts to our military, we write to urge you to work together to avoid this unnecessary and dangerous blow to American power and global leadership. You have each expressed your opposition to allowing these cuts to go into effect. They will go into effect without congressional action. You are the leaders of Congress. We ask that you act as leaders to stop sequestration now.

In recent days, the Defense Department leadership has developed its plans for operating under sequestration. The details that have been released thus far are chilling:

- The Navy has indefinitely delayed the deployment of a carrier strike group to the Persian Gulf—a decision that significantly weakens America’s ability to provide regional security and protection to allies at a time when the Iranian regime continues its work to acquire a nuclear weapons capability.
- The Air Force plans to cut the flying hours of its pilots by 18 percent, and more broadly will have to curtail the service’s ability to conduct air-to-air refueling, support Army logistical requirements and, by September of this year, train new pilots—reductions that cumulatively will erode America’s vitally important airpower capabilities.
- The Army will delay training for almost 80 percent of its Brigade Combat Teams, cancel critical maintenance, and stop training new aviators and military intelligence specialists—delays that, according to the service’s leaders, will result in the “rapid atrophy of unit combat skills with a failure to meet demands of the National Military Strategy by the end of the year.”

These cuts are only the tip of the iceberg. As outgoing Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has warned, sequestration will yield the “smallest ground forces since 1940,” “a fleet of fewer than 230 ships, the smallest level since 1915,” and the “smallest tactical fighter force in the history of the Air Force.”

Sequestration will result in unacceptable risk for U.S. national security. It will degrade our ability to defend our allies, deter aggression, and promote and protect American economic interests. It will erode the credibility of our treaty commitments abroad. It will be a self-inflicted wound to American strength and leadership in the world.

History will not look kindly on this abdication of responsibility, but will hold accountable the President and the Congress who together chose such a dangerous course.

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