

JERRY McNERNEY
9TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0509

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1210 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-1947

STOCKTON DISTRICT OFFICE:
2222 GRAND CANAL BOULEVARD, #7
STOCKTON, CA 95207
(209) 476-8552

ANTIOCH DISTRICT OFFICE:
4703 LONE TREE WAY
ANTIOCH, CA 94531
(925) 754-0716

April 17, 2013

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young, Chair
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
H-405, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pete Visclosky, Ranking
Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Young and Ranking Member Visclosky:

As you develop the fiscal year 2014 Department of Defense Appropriations bill, I ask that you consider funding the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program. This program improves the education, life skills, and employment potential of U.S. high school dropouts by providing education, supervised work experience, and other important assistance in a quasi-military model of structure and discipline. Specifically, I respectfully request \$10 million in additional funding above the President's FY 2014 Budget Request be added to the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program, Subactivity 1 of the Civil Military Program line in the Operations and Maintenance Defense-Wide Account.

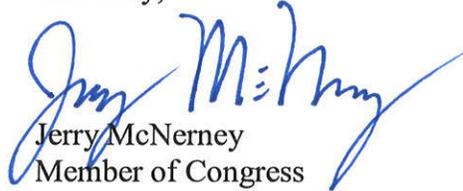
Nearly 25 percent of our nation's youth fail to attain a high school diploma and in Stockton, CA, which I represent, more than 30 percent of students do not graduate high school. More than 1.2 million youths drop out of high school each year. I've seen firsthand the need to address unacceptably high dropout rates. For instance, dropouts are much more likely to become unemployed, live in poverty, receive public assistance, have poorer health, and serve time in prison. The Youth ChalleNGe Program addresses this solvable problem by providing an accelerated path to a high school diploma or GED.

The Youth ChalleNGe Program has been statistically proven to be one of the Nation's most effective for prevention of delinquency and involvement in criminal activities. A cost-benefit analysis conducted by the RAND Corporation determined it to be cost effective, with a return on investment of \$2.66 for every dollar spent. The program currently operates at 34 program sites in 27 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. It is funded through a Federal/State partnership with the Federal government contributing 75 percent and each state contributing 25 percent.

Since its inception in 1993, approximately 113,000 young people have graduated from the Youth ChalleNGe Program nationwide. Many have gone to college, while almost nine percent have served in the military.

In order to continue and expand upon this success, the Youth ChalleNGe Program requires additional resources. The current Fiscal Year 2013 Department of Defense funding request is adequate to fund the existing programs; however, increased funding will allow the program expand its outreach to underserved and underrepresented youth. I urge you fund the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program at \$130 million for Fiscal Year 2014, \$10 million above the President's Budget Request. I appreciate the support you have provided this program in the past and thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress