



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

November 14, 2019

VIA REGULAR MAIL

Major General Donald P. Dunbar
Adjutant General, Wisconsin National Guard
2400 Wright Street
Madison, WI 53704

VIA REGULAR MAIL

General Joseph L. Lengyel
Chief, National Guard Bureau
1636 Defense Pentagon
Suite 1E169
Washington DC, 20301-0001

Major General Dunbar and General Lengyel:

As Wisconsin state legislators, we write to express our grave concerns about the recent discharge of Wisconsin Air National Guard Master Sgt. Jay Ellis. As you know, Sgt. Ellis filed a whistleblower complaint in November, 2018, disclosing at least six cases of alleged sexual assault or sexual harassment against women serving in the 115th Fighter Wing's security squadron. This led Senator Tammy Baldwin to request a federal investigation into sexual misconduct within the Wisconsin National Guard, as well as a comprehensive review of how the Wisconsin National Guard investigates allegations of sexual misconduct. Sgt. Ellis also has a pending retaliation complaint before the Wisconsin National Guard regarding his treatment after exposing such abuse.

While neither of these two reviews have been completed, it is clear that we have a problem within our Wisconsin National Guard when any case of sexual misconduct exists. I am moved by the bravery displayed by Sgt. Ellis and those who have experienced sexual abuse within the Wisconsin National Guard, but no one should have to endure this type of abuse to serve in our armed forces.

We have seen a disturbing trend of sexual assault and sexual harassment perpetuated throughout the U.S. military for years. All four branches of the U.S. military received a total of 5,684 reports in 2017 alone from members who said they had been sexually assaulted during their service, up 10 percent from 2016. And between 2013 and 2017, the Wisconsin National Guard received 52 reports of sexual assault, with a majority of the reports related to military service.

In light of this crisis, we urge you both to proceed with whatever actions are necessary to reverse the decision to discharge Sgt. Ellis and take actions to address the allegations of retaliatory behavior against him. Speaking out and exposing sexual misconduct and abuse is the only way to address and reduce these pernicious actions, but there are still too many obstacles in a victim's path in doing so, including retaliation. The decision to remove Sgt. Ellis from his unit and then discharge him will not only further discourage survivors of sexual assault from coming forward,

but discourage anyone who has knowledge of sexual misconduct, or other dishonorable actions, from speaking out in the future.

Sgt. Ellis should be recognized as a hero for exposing alleged acts of sexual misconduct happening in our own government rather than being discharged and denied retirement benefits after many years of military service. These disturbing actions are unacceptable, counterproductive, and will only perpetuate sexual abuse and mistreatment in the Wisconsin National Guard.

Thank you for all your service to the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Representative Chris Taylor
76th Assembly District



Senator Lena C. Taylor
4th Senate District



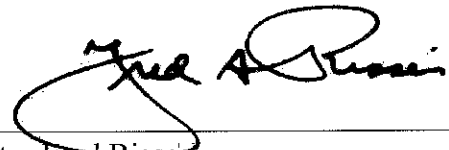
Representative Lisa Subeck
78th Assembly District



Representative Jodi Emerson
91st Assembly District



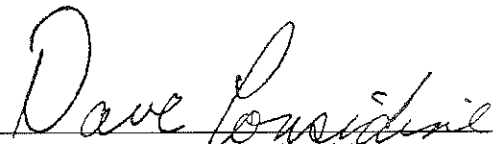
Representative David Crowley
17th Assembly District



Senator Fred Rissel
26th Senate District



Representative Sondy Pope
80th Assembly District



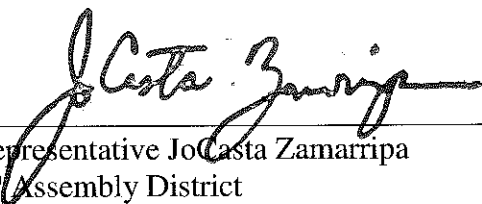
Representative Dave Considine
81st Assembly District



Representative Nick Milroy
73rd Assembly District



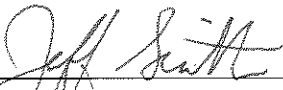
Representative Debra Kolste
44th Assembly District



Representative JoCasta Zamarripa
8th Assembly District



Representative Katrina Shankland
71st Assembly District



Senator Jeff Smith
31st Senate District



Representative Shelia Stubbs
77th Assembly District