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U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

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ROBERT L. SIMMONS, II, STAFF DIRECTOR

May 3, 2012

The Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Mabus,

With a reduction of \$18 million for Fire and Emergency Services included in the FY2012 budget, a further reduction of \$5 million proposed in the FY2013 budget request, and additional reductions projected for FY2014, I am concerned about the impact these reductions may have on the quality and effectiveness of emergency response operations.

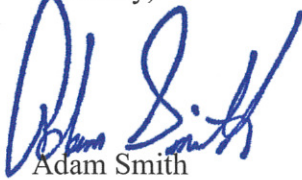
I understand the realities of the fiscal environment and believe that the budgets of each military department should be carefully examined in an effort to find savings and efficiencies. However, when it comes to Fire and Emergency Services I believe that budget decisions should be made in a manner that limits the degradation of fire and emergency service and we cannot compromise the training, equipment, or manpower that is necessary for the safe and successful execution of fire and emergency operations.

The men and women who provide Fire and Emergency Services for the Navy are prepared to be the first responders to a range of contingencies, including structural, shipboard, and airfield fires, EMS, HAZMAT, CBRNE response, as well as technical rescues. While efficiencies can certainly be found, budget decisions should not impede first responders from being able to safely perform their duties.

As you consider future budget decisions, I ask that you please consider their impact on fire and emergency services and ensure that such decisions do not put the life and safety of our Sailors, civilians, and their families at risk. With that in mind, I request that you provide a briefing for my staff on the analysis behind the budget proposal and the plan for how the Navy will maintain the same level of safety and service with fewer resources. Please contact Vickie Plunkett, of the House Armed Services Committee staff, to arrange this briefing.

I appreciate your time and attention to this issue and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Adam Smith
Ranking Member