

Dear Election Official,

We represent a nonpartisan coalition of military family and veteran support organizations, united by our mission to protect our constituency's access to the ballot box. We are writing to advise you to ensure that uniformed and overseas voters are sent their ballots by **September 19<sup>th</sup>** – the legally required 45-days before this November's Presidential Election.

According to the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), as amended by the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act, states must send absentee ballots to absent military and overseas voters **at least 45 days before a federal election**, in order to give these voters sufficient time to return their ballots.

In 2018, **more than 87,000<sup>1</sup> military personnel indicated their ballots arrived too late to vote.**<sup>2</sup> One contributing factor was election officials not sending ballots out on time. We need to do everything in our power to make sure that doesn't happen again.

Complying with this legal requirement will be especially crucial this year. Due to COVID-19, postal mail delivery across the world has faced delays, and almost 80 countries have suspended their international postal delivery services altogether. For UOCAVA voters, any delay in receiving their ballots risks disenfranchising them from participating in the very democratic process they have sworn to defend. That is why it so crucial for your office to abide by this rule.

To assist with sending ballots to UOCAVA voters, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) has provided **mailing guidelines** that election officials can use. Please find these resources at this web address: <https://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/sending-ballots>.

Because military service members are restricted from various forms of political activity, it is all the more vital that they remain connected to this essential form of civic engagement. Our coalition plans to closely monitor this process. You can expect to hear from us if any of our voters face trouble.

Thank you for your contributions toward our country's elections.

Sincerely,

**The Military Vote Coalition (MVC)**

Blue Star Families	National Defense Committee (NDC)
Homefront Rising	National Military Family Association (NMFA)
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)	National Military Spouse Network (NMSN)
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)	Partners in Promise (PiP)
Military Spouse JD Network (MSJDN)	Secure Families Initiative (SFI)
Modern Military Association of America (MMAA)	Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors (TAPS)

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<sup>1</sup> Answers to Question Q33c of the FVAP Active Duty Military Survey Technical Report, page 192, [https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Surveys/FVAP\\_ADM-Technical-Report-2018.pdf](https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Surveys/FVAP_ADM-Technical-Report-2018.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Total number of AD military personnel, September 2018, 1,345,164. Multiply that by 6.5% of the respondents to the FVAP survey to get 87,000 Active Duty military received their ballots late. Defense Manpower Data Center, [https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/rest/download?fileName=DMDC\\_Website\\_Location\\_Report\\_1809.xlsx&groupName=milRegionCountry](https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/rest/download?fileName=DMDC_Website_Location_Report_1809.xlsx&groupName=milRegionCountry)