



# MARK DESAULNIER

Serving the People of California's 11th Congressional District

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October 28, 2016

Mr. Yaroslav Kostal

Dear Mr. Kostal:

Thank you for contacting me regarding the repayment of California National Guard reenlistment bonuses. I appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts with me on this important matter.

Recent reports uncovered that the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has required thousands of current and former California National Guard members to repay reenlistment bonuses that may have been made in error, but not at the fault of many of the servicemembers. It is outrageous that California's veterans who have served our country are expected to endure financial hardship to repay signing bonuses they believed were rightfully earned. The responsibility for the overpayment of these bonuses should not fall on the backs of our men and women in uniform or our nation's veterans.

The State of California did the right thing in auditing the program for any inconsistencies, and now the American people deserve a full accounting of DOD's finances. Action must be taken to do right by our veterans and determine how this occurred. No veteran should be penalized for answering the call for duty.

You may be interested to know that on October 26, 2016, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter ordered DOD to halt collection of reenlistment bonuses. Furthermore, I have cosigned multiple letters requesting that all money that has already been repaid be returned in full to our servicemembers. Please be assured that I will continue to monitor this situation closely, and should legislation regarding the recoupment of these bonuses be considered on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, I will keep your views in mind.

Again, thank you for contacting me. If I may be of assistance to you in the future, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



**Walnut Creek Office**  
101 Ygnacio Valley Road  
Suite #210  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
p: (925) 933-2660  
f: (925) 933-2677

**Richmond Office**  
440 Civic Center Plaza  
2nd Floor  
Richmond, CA 94804  
p: (510) 620-1000  
f: (510) 620-1005

**Washington D.C. Office**  
327 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
p: (202) 225-2095  
f: (202) 225-5609