To Whom This Concerns:

Under the Army’s Aviation Restructure Plan, the Active Component (AC) Army plans to take ALL Apache helicopters from the Reserve Component (RC – which includes Guard & Reserves), claiming they can operate more effectively and for less cost. Things are looking grim… in early January 2014, General Odinero confirmed the Active Duty Army Course of Action (COA) and gave it his blessing. Days later, Defense Secretary Hagel announced his approval as well. A Congressional / Senatorial Study is in order to gather all the facts and allow our State and Nation to make an informed decision.

It’s not just the AH-64 Apaches that are at risk, but several of the UH-72 Lakotas and all of the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters. Rather than take from the Guard & Reserves, why not give them more? RC does just as well as AC, at home and abroad, and costs two-thirds less.**This could save BILLIONS annually, would maintain a balance of power between RC and AC, and would protect the force structure of the Nation, but at a significantly reduced savings.** To add to this, the RC provides a home to many of the AC aviators and mechanics who eventually leave Active Duty. If the Guard loses these aircraft, your State is at risk – lost jobs, lost revenue, and lost assets that provide a ready and viable resource to your State. As you know, these units come with more than just helicopters – they come with hundreds of soldiers and ground equipment that can be used in response to any number of local emergencies.  
  
Another point worth making – in the last 5 years, Active Duty has crashed 12 Apaches due to pilot error. One Apache helicopter costs about $30 Million. This multiplied by 12 destroyed aircraft equals a $360 million loss by Active Duty. In contrast, the Guard& Reserves have lost 0 Apaches due to pilot error in the last 5 years. *Put another way, the National Guard & Reserves constitute 40% of the Apache force, and have ZERO accidents in the last 5 years due to pilot error.*There is a direct correlation between lower accident rates and the more experienced aviators and aircraft maintainers found in the Guard.

Is the nation willing to dismantle all Guard & Reserve Apache Battalions and throw away over third of the AH-64 Apache aviators and maintainers who are the most experienced (and least costly) in the Army? The Army would actually INCREASE its vulnerability by doing so. If qualified personnel in the RC are reduced by 40%, it will take YEARS (as in 15 to 20+) to train a replacement force for this loss of senior aviators and maintainers. What is not tangible here, but has a price value that is significantly higher, is the cost accrued over years of flight training to mature a new pilot into a seasoned combat pilot. It takes time to develop aviators, mechanics, and leaders – andthis time is money... *and increased accident rates.*  
  
There is rumor circulating among the force that the AC may also retire several Guard Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), the basic deployable ground maneuver units which includes infantry, artillery, armor, & reconnaissance units. It only cost 0.8 billion dollars a year to maintain a Guard BCT versus 3.8 billion dollars a year for an Active Duty BCT. A viable strategy: move one Active Duty BCT to the Guard, which would provide funding for 3 additional Guard BCTs. And if the Guard acquired three BCTs from Active Duty, this could save $9 BILLION ANNUALLY!

This is a grassroots effort to stop this from happening - but in order to be successful, it needs to go viral.  Please put the word out in any and every medium - Facebook, Twitter, etc.  **Know the facts! To learn more, check out:** <http://www.savetheguard.weebly.com/>

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Petition2Congress: <http://www.petition2congress.com/13714/>

White House Petition: <http://wh.gov/lIIIw>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/saveapachehelicopters>

<http://youtu.be/VbU_HOS7n9E>