



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, VETERANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, MAINE NATIONAL GUARD
33 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333-0033

March 18th, 2022

Major General Walker:

I am writing to you today to request your assistance in determining a way forward for Maine to receive an independent review of our programing and adherence to regulation with regards to sexual assault prevention and response.

In March of last year, the Maine Legislature passed LD 625, directing a local review of our program. I recently appeared before the State Legislature's Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee to discuss the resulting report and engage with lawmakers on how state measures could be enhanced to complement our Federal programs. Of note, the Committee was particularly interested in having an independent review take place, a desire echoed by former service members and survivors of sexual assault and harassment.

I have profound respect for the survivors who have asked for this approach, and I want to honor their request, which is why I would welcome a third party review to further examine our programs and ensure that the Maine National Guard is doing all it can to not only prevent sexual assault and harassment, but to ensure that we are responding to and supporting survivors appropriately.

My understanding, however, is that there is currently a stay on assessments by the Office of Complex Investigations, per the Vice Chief's September 2020 organizational design memorandum, as assessment processes are being reviewed and potentially restructured in conjunction with streamlining the Inspector General's efforts.

Regardless of this stay, I hope that you may be able to recommend a way forward for the Maine National Guard to receive an independent review of our sexual assault prevention and response programing and regulatory adherence. I want our Soldiers and Airmen, and their families, to be confident that we are doing everything we can to support and protect them as we continue the critical work of eliminating sexual assault and harassment from our ranks.

I appreciate your help in making sure that we are truly doing all that we can for our men and women in uniform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug A. Farnham".

Douglas A. Farnham
Major General
The Adjutant General
Maine National Guard