THE AMERICAN LEGION
Veterans Strengthening America
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
PO BOX 1055, INDIANAPOLIS, IN, 46206-1055 • WWW.LEGION.ORG • P: (317) 630-1350 • F: (317) 630-1223

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: John Raughter, Media Relations
jraughter@legion.org or 317-630-1350

The American Legion to Congress: 'Pay the Guard'

(INDIANAPOLIS—July 19, 2021) –The head of the nation's largest veterans organization warned Congress that the American people will "be furious," if partisan gridlock causes a shutdown of the National Guard and delayed paychecks for its soldiers.

"Congress and the White House need to act immediately to ensure that our National Guard is fully funded and its members compensated for all of their drills, missions and deployments. Have they already forgotten the thousands of National Guard members who protected the Capitol during civil unrest just a few months ago? Or the crucial role of our National Guard members in America's response to COVID-19?" American Legion National Commander James W. "Bill" Oxford asked. "The American Legion spoke loudly two years ago when partisan bickering led to an in interruption of the Coast Guard being paid. We stepped up and provided more than $1 million of grants to help hundreds of Coast Guard families, but Congress still has failed to pass the Pay Our Coast Guard Act. Moreover, it isn't the job of private nonprofit organizations to pay the military. As Americans, we should all demand that Congress never repeats that mistake.

"We are not simply talking about bureaucracies," Oxford continued. "We are talking about families. The men and women of the National Guard have living expenses, bills due and other financial obligations that cannot be put on hold while politicians argue. The volunteers who defend America deserve better."

About The American Legion

The American Legion , the nation's largest veterans organization, is dedicated to the motto of "Veterans Strengthening America." Chartered by Congress in 1919, The American Legion is committed to mentoring youth and sponsoring wholesome community programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security and continued devotion to servicemembers and veterans. Nearly 2 million members in more than 12,600 posts across the nation and regions overseas serve their communities with a devotion to mutual helpfulness.

-30-