

# Don't Abandon Military Families

For decades, predatory lenders have targeted service members with 300% interest rates and other abuses. A nearly unanimous Congress acted to pass the Military Lending Act, which stops any bank or nonbank lender from charging American troops more than 36% interest rate. Those protections are now being threatened. Military and veteran leaders are voicing their opposition and they need your help. Add your name to the petition by visiting [KeepMilitaryProtections.org](http://KeepMilitaryProtections.org).

Secretary James N. Mattis  
US Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Director Mick Mulvaney  
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau  
1700 G St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20552

Dear Secretary Mattis and Director Mulvaney:

The undersigned military and veterans service organizations, representing millions of current and former service members and their families and survivors, write to urge continued strong enforcement and supervision of the Military Lending Act and to stand against any attempts to undermine or weaken it.

Broad bipartisan support led to the enactment of the Military Lending Act. Recognizing the risk to military readiness when service members are targeted for high interest rates, Congress chose to cap the interest rate to service members at 36%.

Service members and their families suffer harm when predatory lenders target them with financial fraud and extremely high interest rates. As you know, maps of the location of payday lenders have shown they surround military bases and target our military.

But the harm is not only to service members. The harm also extends to the Pentagon's costs and military readiness. The Defense Department has explained:

"[T]he anticipated benefit of [ensuring the Military Lending Act's 36% interest rate cap] are the savings attributable to lower recruiting and training expenses associated with the reduction in involuntary separation of Service members where financial distress is a contributing factor. Each separation of a Service member is estimated to cost the Department \$58,250, and the Department estimates that each year approximately 4,640 to 7,580 Service members are involuntarily separated where financial distress is a contributing factor. If the Department's proposed regulation could reduce the annual number of involuntary separations where financial distress is a contributing factor from between 5 to 30 percent, the savings to the Department could be in the range of approximately \$13.51 million to \$132.52 million each year."<sup>1</sup>

We urge you to stand with our military and against any attempt to weaken the Military Lending Act, including the Bureau's supervisory and enforcement authority and the Department's rules against predatory lending by all businesses, including car dealerships.

Sincerely,



**Keith A. Reed**  
Air Force Sergeants Association



**Nichole King-Campbell**  
Air Force Women Officers Associated



**Joseph Chenelly**  
AMVETS National Headquarters



**Ted Painter**  
Armed Forces Retirees Association



**Christopher Cole**  
Association of the United States Navy



**Kathy Roth-Douquet**  
Blue Star Families



**Randy Reid**  
Chief Petty Officers Association



**Kristina Kaufmann**  
Code of Support Foundation



**Tom Snee**  
Fleet Reserve Association



**Kristofer Goldsmith**  
High Ground Veterans Advocacy



**Paul Rieckhoff**  
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America



**Adam Behrendt**  
Ivy League Veterans Council



**Paul D. Warner, Ph.D.**  
Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.



**Lyman Smith**  
Military Chaplains Association



**John L. Ballantyne**  
Military Child Education Coalition



**Dana T. Atkins**  
Military Officers Association of America



**Douglas Greenlaw**  
Military Order of the Purple Heart



**Phil Gore**  
National Association of Veterans' Program Administrators



**Joyce Wessel Raezer**  
National Military Family Association



**Jon Ostrowski**  
Non-Commissioned Officers Association



**Lydia Watts**  
Service Women's Action Network



**Larry Madison**  
The Retired Enlisted Association



**Bonnie Carroll**  
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors



**Jack Du Teil**  
United States Army Warrant Officers Association



**Carrie Wofford**  
Veterans Education Success



**Bob Wallace**  
Veterans of Foreign Wars



**John Rowan**  
Vietnam Veterans of America

<sup>1</sup>80 FR 43559 (July 22, 2015)

# KeepMilitaryProtections.org