UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6050

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Ben Nelson
Chairman, Subcommittee on Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6050

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–6035

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6025

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6028

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Ted Stevens
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–6015

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6050

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Ben Nelson
Chairman, Subcommittee on Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6050

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–6035

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6025

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510–6028

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Ted Stevens
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–6015

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable John P. Murtha
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–6018

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

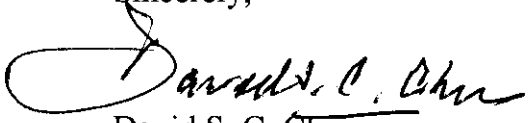
	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,



David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable C. W. Bill Young
Ranking Member

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

APR 30 2008

The Honorable Susan Davis
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Military Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–6035

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

Please excuse my delay in responding to the reporting requirement in Section 742 of Public Law 109-364, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007. This law requires the Department to report on military medical and dental positions scheduled to be converted to civilian medical and dental positions in FY 2008. We have taken some additional time to reassess our conversion strategy to ensure our planned approach makes good business sense and, more importantly, good medical sense.

The Department has worked closely with the Military Departments to assess and project manpower needs. As a result of these efforts, leadership jointly developed plans to convert 2,428 military positions to civilians in FY 2008. This includes 438 positions in the Army, 1,036 positions in the Navy, and 954 positions in the Air Force.

Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 required that these conversions be certified by the Military Department Secretaries as not increasing health care costs, adversely impacting quality or access to care, or reducing readiness capabilities. The law acted to ensure only viable conversions were pursued. After a careful review, the Military Departments were allowed to certify fewer than planned if additional analysis suggested a lower number was appropriate. This step ensured safeguards were in place to preserve the integrity of our health care mission. Pursuant to the law, the Secretary of the Air Force certified that the Air Force's 954 FY 2008 conversions would not increase the cost or decrease access to care or quality of care. The Secretary of the Navy certified that 1,016 of the Department of the Navy's 1,036 FY 2008 conversions are achievable. The remaining 20 conversions will continue to be evaluated for potential conversion. Finally, the Secretary of the Army certified 438 conversions in FY 2008. The Secretary of the Army determined that the remaining 300 planned conversions, although programmatically residing within the Defense Health Program, are not positions that are for the performance of health care functions and thus are not subject to the certification requirement.

In the aggregate, planned medical and dental position conversions for FY 2008 are as follows:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
Officers	43	164	192	399
Physicians	0	31	33	64
Registered Nurses	11	28	122	161
Dentists	0	43	0	43
Other Officers	32	62	37	131
Enlisted Members	395	872	762	2,029
Total	438	1,036	954	2,428

Subsequently, Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 forced all planned FY 2008 conversions to cease and prohibits any future conversions through FY 2012. This prohibition has created significant challenges in planned personnel actions in FY 2008. In some cases, these are billets that have been difficult to fill with uniformed personnel and now our ability to fill them with a suitable civilian or contractor has been eliminated. Consequently, the Department recommends repealing Section 721 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, and restoring the provisions of Section 742 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The certification requirements of the latter provision have proven an effective tool to ensure that only positions that may be effectively converted without detrimental cost, access or quality impacts are selected for conversion.

I have enclosed specific details for these conversions that include a position-by-position description of the location, estimated cost, and availability of civilian candidates. I trust you will agree that this is an important, positive initiative and that sufficient safeguards are in place to protect the interests of our beneficiaries.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable John M. McHugh
Ranking Member