

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 20, 2026

The Honorable Daniel D. Driscoll
Secretary of the Army
U.S. Department of the Army
1600 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-1600

Dear Secretary Driscoll,

We write with concerns about workforce reassignments at Rock Island Arsenal (RIA), as part of an Army-wide personnel action that started in March. Based on our understanding, as many as 150 employees at RIA were identified as “surplus” employees, were offered reassignments out of the area and may be ultimately asked to leave federal service if they do not take those offers. We acknowledge that the Army is taking steps to mitigate uncertainty to impacted employees and recognize that RIA is not the only installation affected by this rebalancing initiative. That said, we continue to receive reports from worried constituents who have been asked to make life-altering career decisions on a compressed timeline with little clarity on the process, their recourses and what it might mean for their families and future.

We understand that these personnel changes are a component of a planned merger of two major subordinate commands of U.S. Army Materiel Command that are headquartered on RIA, Joint Munitions Command and Army Sustainment Command. Given our bipartisan, bicameral requests last year that the Army ensure such a merger was implemented responsibly for the mission and for the workforce, we were dismayed to learn that such significant personnel changes began without advance Congressional notification or consultation on or around 19 March. On 18 March, the Army provided Senator Duckworth the report with the Army’s proposed plan for combining the commands, as required under Section 917 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026 (Public Law 119-60). We later found out that within a day, the Army launched the second phase of a process aiming to “rebalance the Army’s civilian workforce” that our offices were made aware of by local concerns, instead of Army engagement or notification.

We appreciate the Army’s responses to multiple inquiries from our offices, but we still have significant questions on behalf of our constituents about the justification for and execution of these changes as well as their local and mission impacts. We have requested a bipartisan Member-level meeting with you to gain more clarity for our constituents. However, we have been disappointed at the lack of responsiveness to our bipartisan request. Therefore, we are writing to formally urge you to meet with the elected representatives of the people of Illinois and Iowa to discuss the impacts that these accelerated workforce changes and potential forced separations will have on our country’s readiness, local communities and our organic industrial base (OIB).

First, we want to understand why the Army decided to execute a consequential workforce shift so quickly. The two or five business day response required for career changing decisions is an added burden that could have otherwise been avoided with sufficient notice.

Second, we have questions about the Army’s decision-making processes about employee status or reassignments, including the reliance on possibly outdated Army Authorization Documents to justify identifying employees as “surplus” and the possible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. We have heard concerning reports about possible immature and glitchy AI tools resulting in mistaken notification of employee status as surplus and reassignment offers, and possible mismatches to vacant billets. As such, we have a series of questions regarding the Army’s procedures for matching individuals to meaningful vacancies.

Last, we are concerned about how RIA will be impacted by the Department’s April 9, 2026, memorandum, regarding collective bargaining agreements.

We have appreciated our long, bipartisan collaboration with the Army to ensure the success of RIA, a key locus of innovative activity within the OIB. We all share the same goals of modernizing our OIB to meet the needs of our Joint Force and ensuring efficient use of taxpayer resources in meeting those needs. However, we also have an obligation to respect our patriotic civil servants at RIA—forty-four percent of whom are Veterans—and ensure RIA’s critical missions are not disrupted or put at risk.

We look forward to a meeting with you to better understand how the Army plans to balance all of these aims and gain clarity for our constituents.

Sincerely,



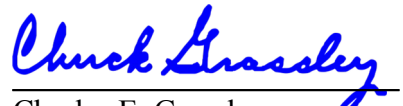
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator