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COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION &  
INFRASTRUCTURE

## Congress of the United States House of Representatives

July 14, 2023

Colonel Megan B. Stallings  
Commander  
United States Military Entrance Processing Command  
2834 Green Bay Road  
North Chicago, IL 60064-3091

Dear Commander Stallings,

I recently spoke to a South Dakota constituent who is being denied the opportunity to witness her son raise his right hand and take the Oath of Enlistment to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic” for the South Dakota National Guard due to the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command (MEPS) guest policy related to COVID-19.

During COVID-19, families were prohibited from attending swearing-in ceremonies for military personnel. Despite the Department of Defense rescinding this policy in January 2023, MEPS is now operating under a visitor pilot program that currently excludes U.S. National Guard enlistees’ guests from attending enlistment ceremonies.

This restrictive policy did not exist prior to the pandemic, and since the Commander in Chief fully ended the national emergency in April 2023, the MEPS previous policy to accommodate all guests should be restored.

As the Armed Services face an unprecedented recruiting problem, I’d advise you welcome families to this sacred service, not keep them out.

I strongly urge you to immediately return to the pre-COVID guest attendance policy at all processing stations in the name of our national defense and common sense.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dusty Johnson".

DUSTY JOHNSON  
Member of Congress  
South Dakota, At-Large