

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

ARMED SERVICES
OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE
ENERGY AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMITTEE (S. 100) (S. 101)
INTELLIGENCE
VETERANS AFFAIRS

October 8, 2024

Eugene Louis Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

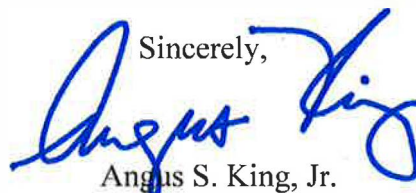
I am writing to bring to your attention my interest regarding a requirement for you to conduct a review of suicide prevention matters for the Department of Defense. Senate Report 118-188 accompanying the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (S. 4368) requires you to review suicide prevention and response for the reserve component of the United States military. I worked closely with Chairman Reed and Ranking Member Wicker to include this requirement. I request to be updated regarding your work and appreciate you treating it with the utmost urgency.

It has been nearly a year since Sergeant First Class (SFC) Robert Card II committed the deadliest mass shooting in Maine's history, killing 18 and wounding 13 on October 25, 2023, in Lewiston, Maine. Since the tragedy, multiple press reports, investigations by the Army, and the Governor of Maine's special commission have revealed troubling matters. I urge you to consider these investigations and to meet with all stakeholders as you conduct your review. I applaud Governor Mills' leadership in establishing the "Independent Commission to Investigate the Facts of the Tragedy in Lewiston". I request you review the findings from the Commission and Army investigations as you formulate recommendations. I further request that, if there are additional authorities or resources needed, you identify those in your report and consider including legislative proposals to address those gaps.

Service members in reserve status are critical to our Armed Forces and represent nearly one-third of the total force. I am concerned that they experience limited access to military-supported suicide prevention resources. Authorities can be confusing and blurred for service members including commanders at all echelons. Effective coordination between unit commanders and local authorities is misunderstood, yet it is critical to ensuring public safety and that service members receive the care that is needed.

Thank you for the significant work you and your team conduct, and for your continued efforts to inform Congress and assist me in oversight and legislative changes. Please let me know how my staff and I may be of assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator