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494618

**THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET**

ID# 494618
PAGE 1

FG 013

DATE RECEIVED: 10/03/2001

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE BOB HOLDEN

SUBJECT: CONCERNS REGARDING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM PROPOSED TRANSFER TO ANOTHER FEDERAL AGENCY, OPPOSES TRANSFER AND URGES PRESIDENT TO REJECT TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATION

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION		
		ACTION CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C D	COMPLETED YY/MM/DD
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	RUBEN BARRALES	ORG	2001/10/03	RB	A	01/12/3

ACTION COMMENTS: _____

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COMMENTS

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: 0

MEDIA: LETTER

INDIVIDUAL CODES:

REPORT CODES:

USER CODE:

OCT 9

ACTION CODES:
A - APPROPRIATE ACTION
C - COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION
D - DRAFT RESPONSE
F - FURNISH FACT SHEET
I - INFO COPY/NO ACT NECESSARY
R - DIRECT REPLY W/ COPY
S - FOR SIGNATURE
X - INTERIM REPLY

DISPOSITION CODES:
A - ANSWERED
B - NON-SEPC-REFERRAL
C - COMPLETED
S - SUSPENDED

OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:
TYPE RESP = INITIALS OF SIGNER
CODE = A
COMPLETED = DATE OF OUTGOING

**SCANNED
BY
ORM**

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT (ROOM 72, OEOB) EXT-62590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT.

December 3, 2001

Dear Governor Holden:

On behalf of the President, I would like to thank you for your recent letter regarding the National Guard Youth Challenge Program. The President appreciates your insight regarding this important program.

The President's Fiscal Year 2002 budget maintains the program's current status under the National Guard at the Department of Defense. We will ensure that your thoughts on this matter are shared with the appropriate officials at the Department of Defense for their consideration.

If you have any more questions or concerns, please contact Debbie Spagnoli in my office at 202-456-2896. Thank you for taking the time to write on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ruben Barrales
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of Intergovernmental Affairs

The Honorable Bob Holden
Governor
State of Missouri
State Capitol
Room 216
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

RB:wtc

Handwritten scribble

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494618



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MISSOURI
JEFFERSON CITY
65101

www.gov.state.mo.us

BOB HOLDEN
GOVERNOR

STATE CAPITOL
ROOM 216
(573) 751-3222

September 11, 2001

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I appreciate the opportunity to inform you about my concerns regarding the Department of Defense (DoD) National Guard Youth Challenge program. I understand that a DoD task force has proposed that the National Guard Youth Challenge program be transferred to another federal agency. I oppose this transfer, and I urge you to reject the task force's recommendation.

As you know, the National Guard Youth Challenge program's mission is to intervene in the life of an at-risk youth between 16 to 18 years of age and produce a graduate program with the values, skills, education and self-discipline to succeed as an adult. The goal is to increase the individual's grade level in reading and mathematics, attain a General Equivalency Degree (GED) or high school diploma, and pursue higher education. As a result of the National Guard Youth Challenge program: 31,966 youth have graduated from the program, at a 96 percent success rate; 72 percent of the youth have earned their GED or returned to high school; 24 percent of the graduates have gone on to college or a university; and 98 percent of graduates who are eligible, registered to vote.

The National Guard Youth Challenge program is operated under a quasi-military format. The program is routinely located on military/National Guard facilities, and is typically run by current and former National Guard men and women. In addition, thousands of National Guard men and women volunteer to serve as mentors to the cadets each year, and 30 percent of the program's graduates have entered the military, providing a successful recruiting tool for our armed services. Relocating the National Guard Youth Challenge program would remove the foundation of the program's success.

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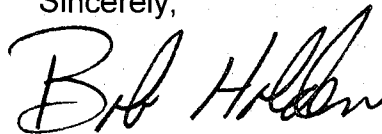
The Honorable George W. Bush
September 11, 2001
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On April 27, 2001, 14 Southern governors joined me in a letter addressed to you requesting your support to increase funding for the program to \$250 million annually. The funding increase would allow all states to have at least two Youth Challenge programs, and it would raise the federal match from 60 to 75 percent. Again, I would like to request your support for this funding increase. At present, the 31 operating programs are only able to accept 30 percent of the youth that apply. Additionally, only 26 states are currently able to offer a program.

Our youth are dropping out of high school at record numbers. Over 33 million Americans between the ages of 16 and 24 years do not have high school diplomas. We must address this crisis. These people are in their prime working years. However, if they do not have an education, they are less likely to be active participants in the workforce and will restrict our nation's economic growth. Additionally, 30 percent of this population is on federal assistance and are unemployed or underemployed. In fact, governors throughout the South are using the Youth Challenge program to address the needs of this population. However, without additional funding, we cannot come close to addressing the program's need. Please work with me to expand this highly effective program and make it the national program for addressing the needs of our high school dropouts.

I hope that you will look favorably upon my request, and I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Holden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bob Holden
Governor

BH:CB:st