



**National Association
for Music Education**

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NAfME Statement Opposing McSally Amendment on Military Band Cuts

On behalf of the more than 68,000 members of the National Association *for* Music Education, we strongly oppose Congresswoman McSally’s amendment to the Department of Defense appropriations bill that would significantly cut funding for United States military bands.

With dedication and integrity, U.S. military bands continue to serve our nation today by connecting American citizens of all generations with our nation’s Soldiers, Airman, Marines, and Sailors through our country’s musical heritage. These servicemen and women set one of the highest examples of musical achievement, pride in nation, and further the aspirations of all citizens, including young American music students across the nation.

United States military bands serve our nation with dedication and integrity. They provide music throughout the entire spectrum of operations, to instill in our forces the will, to fight and win, foster the support of our citizens, and promote America’s interests at home and abroad. United States military bands have as their duty to “inspire patriotism and encourage young men and women to serve in the Air Force or other branches of the military.” In other words, their work is to support the Defense Department’s goal of increasing recruits for the Air Force and other armed forces of the United States.

In a way that is especially important to our members, U.S. military bands serve to support music education by any number of demonstrations, clinics, other educational interactions with students, and jobs. Members of military bands have given countless hours of service sharing their expertise to thousands of music teachers and students through professional development programs and special student outreach programs. The bandsmen set an example of the highest musical achievement and instill valuable skills like leadership, loyalty and selfless service in all of us.

While we are disappointed that the House adopted the McSally amendment, it is our sincerest hope that conferees of the defense spending bill listen to their constituents and oppose this or any measures that call for cutting funds for an institution that offers so much for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Blakelee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Mike Blakelee
Executive Director and CEO, NAFME