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United States Senate

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Heather L. Pringle
Brigadier General, USAF
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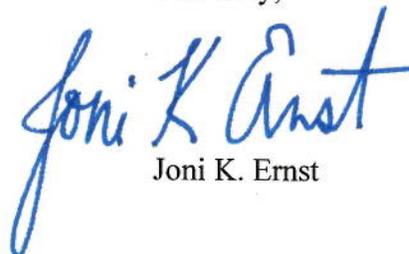
Brigadier General Pringle:

I write to you today as a follow-up to my November 18, 2016, visit to Fort Sam Houston, which was focused on investigating military sexual assault. My discussions with servicemembers were both informative and productive, and I believe we identified a number of ways to better address these heinous crimes.

One of those ways involves instituting a mandatory buddy pair system. I was surprised to hear that the Air Force was the only service that did not require such a system for all of its students in training status. Specifically, the Air Force does not require students in training status on JBSA-Ft. Sam Houston or JBSA-Randolph to travel in a buddy pair. This is disappointing, as the buddy pair system not only can reduce vulnerabilities for sexual assault, but also helps young servicemembers make better decisions. When I deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a captain, all servicemembers on our base were required to travel in pairs, including myself.

As we continue to see sexual assault plague institutions around the country, it is my hope that the military will continue to take concrete steps to improve and become a leading example for how to effectively curb this problem. Therefore, I request that you consider making a buddy pair system mandatory for all Air Force personnel in a training status on Joint Base Sam Antonio. I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to hearing your thoughts on your decision.

Sincerely,



Joni K. Ernst

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