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Strengthening America's Military Families: White House Report on Administration Commitments to Support the Families of Service Members and Veterans, their Caregivers and Survivors

By Rory Brosius, Executive Director of *Joining Forces*

In April 2021, First Lady Jill Biden announced the priorities of *Joining Forces*, a White House initiative to support military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors. Informed by Dr. Biden's visits and listening sessions with the military community, advocates, and stakeholders, *Joining Forces* is focused on driving progress in the following areas:

- Military Family Employment and Entrepreneurship
- Military Child Education
- Health and Well-Being

Guided by these priorities, the Office of the First Lady and the National Security Council (NSC) launched a *Joining Forces* Interagency Policy Committee (IPC) in May 2021 to establish a forum for collaboration and advancement of cross-agency priorities related to the families of service members and veterans, caregivers, and survivors. This effort recognizes that supporting their overall physical, social, and emotional health is a national security imperative and demonstrates the Administration's whole of government approach to supporting these communities. The IPC also serves as a mechanism to foster data-sharing and innovative solutions amongst agencies.

Report: *Strengthening America's Military Families*

Joining Forces is proud to share the initial *Strengthening America's Military Families* report. Prepared by representatives from the White House with contributions from federal agencies, the report is signed by the President with a foreword by Dr. Biden, and outlines the first round of administration-wide key commitments to better understand and meet the needs of the families of service members and veterans, caregivers, and survivors.

[Click here to read the report](#)

The report is a critical first step in demonstrating the Biden-Harris Administration's enduring commitment to these communities, but is just the beginning. Going forward, *Joining Forces* and the NSC will continue to work collaboratively through the IPC and cross-agency working groups with federal agencies on topics including data sharing, food insecurity, children in caregiving homes, military child education, and federal employment for military spouses. The *Joining Forces* IPC will report results and update plans annually.

"The commitments contained in today's report represent critical first steps to solving some of the most complex and pressing issues facing the families of our service members and veterans, their caregivers and survivors," said Rory Brosius, Executive Director of *Joining Forces*. "From increasing economic opportunities for military spouses, to supporting military children in the classroom, to addressing food insecurity, we are working together as a team across the government to share data, create innovative solutions, and implement evidence-based programs and policies. Through *Joining Forces*, we are bringing a whole-of-government approach to supporting military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors. These initial commitments from federal agencies, as well as our commander-in-chief, show the dedication of this Administration to those who also serve."

Relevant proposals from the Build Back Better Agenda are included in the *Strengthening America's Military Families* report. The *Joining Forces* IPC will continue to work closely with agencies implementing the American Rescue Plan, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal, and the entire Build Back Better Agenda because military and veteran families are American working families. Policies like paid leave, free community college, and the increased

child tax credit that support the well-being of American working families have the added benefit of supporting military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors.

Through two decades of sustained warfare, military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors have sacrificed much for our country. They have answered the call to service over and over again. We owe them nothing less than a coordinated and enduring effort to reduce unnecessarily burdensome barriers and increase access to support across the government.

The *Strengthening America's Military Families* report signifies that commitment from the Biden-Harris Administration.