



Massachusetts National Guard

Public Affairs

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HANSCOM AFB, MA 01731

News Release

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Massachusetts National Guard Support of the 59th Presidential Inauguration

HANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE, Mass. – It has come to our attention that Congressman William Keating has been accused of banishing National Guardsmen to a parking garage after he reminded a Soldier of the requirement to wear a mask in all Federal buildings, to include the US Capitol. "It makes no sense and quite frankly could not be farther from the truth." said Maj Gen Gary W. Keefe. According to the Massachusetts National Guard Commander in the National Capitol Region, Capitol building officials directed those National Guard Soldiers, assigned to the Senate portion of the Capitol building, to move their break area to a parking garage due to the Senate being in session. Keefe said "It's that simple."

General Keefe, The Adjutant General for the Massachusetts National Guard, states that the 500 Massachusetts Guardsmen deployed to the National Capitol Region were treated very well while there. Keefe added, "The photos circulating on social media and through news reports showed National Guardsmen resting on the ground." Keefe said, "What the stories failed to mention was that they were on a break, resting between shifts." He said, "At the end of the duty day, Soldiers returned to their hotel rooms where they were housed during their time in the NCR." Massachusetts National Guardsmen were assigned to the House portion of the US Capitol building. Keefe said, "The relocation of National Guardsmen within the US Capitol building grounds has nothing to do with Congressman Keating reminding a Soldier of the requirement to wear their mask."

Congressman Keating is one of our biggest supporters and a dedicated advocate for the men and women in uniform. "I speak on behalf of the more than 8,000 Soldiers and Airmen in Massachusetts when I say we could not ask for a better friend of the Guard than Congressman Keating," Keefe said. "It's not fair that he has been put in this position, and I felt it necessary to return the support he has shown the National Guard all these years."



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The Massachusetts National Guard provided security support to district and federal agencies prior to and during the 59th Presidential Inauguration. Enduring partnerships with local, state and federal agencies, built on trust and performance, directly contributed to the Massachusetts National Guard's success with this mission. Massachusetts National Guard personnel felt a tremendous sense of pride to support the peaceful transition of power and ensure the safety of this historic event. All returning members 500 members of the Massachusetts National Guard are expected to arrive home tomorrow and will receive COVID-19 tests upon their arrival.

Military involvement in the Presidential Inauguration dates back to April 30, 1789, when members of the U.S. Army, local militias (the modern-day National Guard), and Revolutionary War veterans escorted George Washington to New York City -- the seat of government for his inauguration ceremony. The Massachusetts National Guard continued this tradition of support and is prepared to answer the call for future inauguration ceremonies.

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