

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
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SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

June 20, 2021

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to you, as our Commander in Chief, on an issue of great unfairness. A talented and patriotic young man, Cameron Kinley, recently graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, serving as president of his class. Mr. Kinley was also a captain of the Naval Academy's football team, where he excelled, and ultimately signed as a free-agent by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. In years past, the U.S. Department of Defense has issued many waivers to allow athletes to temporarily delay their service to our nation to pursue their professional sports dreams. Unfortunately, Mr. Kinley seems to be the exception, and without reason.

Previous administrations have enacted policies that would allow athletes from the Navy, Air Force and Army academies to delay their commissions to live out their dreams of playing a professional sport. In fact, just this year, it has been reported that four other academy graduates did receive a waiver to play in the National Football League (NFL). These athletes serve as incredible role models for our youth- service members who share a love of country on and off the field.

Mr. Kinley was permitted to train and participate in a Pro Day, which was hosted at the Naval Academy. He was also allowed to attend a Rookie Minicamp with the Buccaneers. Yet, Acting Secretary Harker denied his request for deferment without cause, and will not allow for an appeal.

Mr. Kinley is not seeking to terminate his commitment to the Navy. Far from it. He wishes to promote service to our great nation from one of the country's largest stages. I implore you to right this wrong. Grant Mr. Kinley's waiver to play in the NFL, and send a message to future academy graduates that the United States is a country where Americans can follow their dreams and be true to their commitment.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator