



March 13, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

I write to you today on behalf of the Greater Augusta Arts Council. I am the Executive Director of this organization, which supports and advances the arts in the Augusta, Georgia, area. We would like to address an issue that will affect our city and region - the discontinuation of the Signal Corps Band at the Fort Gordon Army Base - and request your assistance in making a difference.

As is happening in all branches of the military, Army budgets are being cut in order to make the most of taxpayer dollars. In 2015, the Army announced that the Signal Corps Band at Fort Gordon would be discontinued to aid in these cost-saving efforts. While we understand the need for fiscal responsibility, we do not believe that the decision to do away with the Band at Fort Gordon is the right one for our community. We ask for your help to give your support to the Signal Corps Band, in order to retain this talented group of professionals in Augusta.

There are many reasons we wish to see them continue performing in the Augusta area. One is that the group offers a chance for the public to their see world-class performances for free. This allows local families to enjoy music concerts and shows such as their annual holiday concert, which has been a community tradition for decades. They can also be seen performing in community parades, as well as honoring the lives of fallen soldiers at military funerals.

Another reason we have for supporting the continued existence of this band is for the Army itself - The members of the Signal Corps Band at Fort Gordon have become a public face for the Fort. As Fort Gordon grows due to the incoming Cyber Command Center of Excellence, it will require soldiers of their talent and caliber to share a human, artistic side of the military with the rest of the community. All of these efforts by the band are a minimal percentage of overall budgets, but make a large difference in the community.

The Greater Augusta Arts Council supports the continued existence of the Signal Corps Band at Fort Gordon, both for the health of the Fort and the growth of the arts community in Augusta. We urge you to choose to retain the Band at Fort Gordon, and continue the tradition of military bands in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brenda Durant".

Brenda Durant,  
Executive Director,  
Greater Augusta Arts Council