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COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607

COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS

February 15, 2019

COMMITTEE ON
THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan
Acting Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Shanahan:

I am very concerned that the President plans to take \$3.5 billion from the Department of Defense's Military Construction Budget to build a border wall. I request that you provide me:

- A list of all projects affected by the President's decision
- An assessment of the risk to servicemembers if these projects are terminated
- The potential for legal action due to breach of contract

Last April, your Department provided testimony to the House Armed Services Committee that it had a maintenance backlog of over \$116 billion and that "23 percent of the department's facilities are in poor condition, [and] another 9 percent are in failing condition." Recognizing this real threat to the health and safety of our military members and their families, Congress authorized and appropriated over \$11 billion towards military construction projects, to include family housing and overseas contingency operations.

President Trump's unilateral action would divert nearly one-third of the military construction funds provided to you this past year. Just this week, the Senate Armed Services Committee held hearings on abysmal conditions that military families face on bases across the country including lead contamination, black mold exposure and rodent infestations. It will require funding to address these challenges, in addition to the \$8 billion price tag to re-build the facilities destroyed by Hurricanes at the Marine Corps' Camp Lejeune in North Carolina and the Air Force's Tyndall AFB in Florida. The President does not appear to be addressing either of these real crises.

I am concerned that a project that the President stated would be paid for by Mexico will now be borne by military servicemembers and their families, as they will be forced to remain in "poor" or "failing" conditions.

The safety and well-being of our forces and their families is the supreme responsibility of every commander in the military; it should be no different for the Commander-in-Chief.

I look forward to your response.



Tim Kaine