

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 9, 2019

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member
Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Inhofe and Smith, and Ranking Members Reed and Thornberry,

We are writing out of a deep concern for the notification received this week that the President is using the authority in 10 U.S.C §2808 to move unobligated military construction funds for construction of a permanent wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Constructing a wall at the Southern border is an ineffective waste of taxpayer money and will do nothing to advance our national security. President Trump is taking money from West Point and 126 other military installation projects across the country in order to work around Congress and build this needless project. Diverting this defense funding eliminates mission-critical facilities, placing our national security at risk and limiting the military's ability to compete with our country's most powerful adversaries.

The targeted military construction projects, including the Engineering Center at West Point, have undergone a thorough review process by the military and by Congress and were determined necessary for military operations, unlike the border wall. As the Committees charged with overseeing the nation's defense readiness, we must call on President Trump and Defense Secretary Esper to immediately reverse this decision and put the wellbeing of the brave men and women who serve our country first.

To that end, we urge you to retain House Sections 1046 and 2801 in the final conferenced National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 in order to ensure that this does not happen in future years, as well as to send a strong message to the President that taking this year's military funding away from where they are most needed has no support in Congress.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senate



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



Charles Schumer
U.S. Senate