

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

March 27, 2019

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

Dear Acting Secretary Shanahan,

We are deeply alarmed by the president's attempt to cut military construction funds in order to construct an unnecessary wall on the southern border. These funds—designated by Congress to support our armed forces—are critical to maintaining military readiness, honoring our armed forces, and making crucial infrastructure repairs. In New York alone, more than \$300 million of military construction funding is at risk of being redirected to fulfill the president's campaign promise of building a wall. These New York projects provide necessary capabilities to the U.S. military, and the president agrees: many of these projects were requested and approved by the current administration. Below, we have provided additional details on the New York military construction projects listed as "at-risk" in the document you released earlier this week. The justifications included for each project stem from the Department's own budget justification documents to Congress in recent years. We ask that you protect these vital projects and request your written response to our concerns. We cannot degrade our military at the expense of servicemembers and their families to fund a wall that is neither an effective nor necessary response to our national security.

## **Air Force Research Laboratory Rome – Rome, New York**

### **Anti-Terrorism Perimeter Security/Entry Control Point: \$14,200,000**

- Rome, NY is home to the Air Force Research Laboratory's Information Directorate—the Air Force's and nation's premier research organization for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence (C4I) and Cyber technologies. The directorate explores, prototypes, and demonstrates high-impact, affordable and game-changing technologies. These technologies transform data into information and subsequently knowledge for decision makers to command and control forces. This knowledge gives our air, space and cyberspace forces the competitive advantage needed to protect and defend the nations. Ensuring the security of Rome Lab and its personnel is critical to this important mission. This request will directly enhance the anti-terrorism, perimeter security, and entry control point at Rome, NY.

## **The United States Military Academy at West Point**

### **Cemetery: \$22,000,000**

- The Cemetery expansion at West Point is required to support the Army's commitment to provide in-ground burial to authorized service members and their families. The placement of pre-placed crypts, similar to those used at VA Cemeteries is required to maximize use of the available land. Each crypt will allow for the burial of 2-3 related decedents. When complete, this project will provide approximately 1,800 additional in-ground burial gravesites and extend the life of the Cemetery for an estimated 40 years.

### **Waste Water Treatment Plant: \$70,000,000**

- The current plant is failing. The plant was built in 1956 and upgraded in 1972. Various tanks are leaking which compromises plant operation. The tanks are beyond repair. The plant has problems consistently meeting discharge requirements. Nineteen violations to the state pollution discharge elimination system permit were reported to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation between January 2011 and February 2013. If this project is not provided then the plant will continue operations that do not meet environmental standards. West Point will be at risk for continued and increased citations for environmental violations caused by insufficient treatment and direct discharges. Each violation exposes the Army to additional compliance agreements, fines or penalties. Maintenance costs on the existing plant will continue to climb as the plant degrades with age.

### **Engineering Center: \$95,000,000**

- This project is required to provide the U.S. Military Academy with flexible multi-disciplinary project based educational space for STEM that achieves compliance with academic standards. The facility is required to compete with peer institutions for recruitment of STEM students and, in particular, highly recruited under-represented candidates. This project will provide open, unstructured project areas, high-bay space, collaborative workspaces and laboratories essential for project-based learning. Currently, there are no adequate existing permanent facilities available at the West Point Military Reservation to support compliance with engineering academic standards. Adequate facilities for the support of project-based learning and Cyber Security Studies do not exist.

### **Parking Structure: \$65,000,000**

- The proposed parking structure for faculty and staff will support the academic program within the central Cadet Zone area of West Point. The parking structure will provide 450 parking stalls, access elevators, exterior paved walkways, lighting, electronic security system, and guard booth. Parking within the academic campus area is critically short, and does not meet the requirement of numerous faculty and staff that work within this area. Additionally, much of the parking is in violation of

anti-terrorism force protection standards, and needs to be relocated. Due to the steep terrain and limited developable land and the dense arrangement of campus buildings, the parking structure will be multi-story. This will enable the required 450 parking spaces to fit within the dense campus, minimize the amount of land needed, and account for the steep slopes.

**Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base – Westhampton, New York**

**Security Forces/Communication Training Facility: \$20,000,000**

- The installation requires a properly sited, adequately sized, and appropriately configured security forces, communication, and fitness facility to support 4 PAA HC-130 and 5 PAA HH-60 aircraft supporting rescue and rescue training missions. The base communication and security forces functions are housed in building 250, which is over 60 years old and was originally constructed as a warehouse facility. Because of non-compliance the facility cannot be upgraded and must be replaced. Additionally, the building is in disrepair with most the utilities and other building systems have surpassed their economic life.

**Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station – Niagara Falls, New York**

**Physical Fitness Center: \$14,000,000**

- The mission readiness of the 914th Air Refueling Wing is largely dependent on the health, fitness, and morale of assigned Reserve and civilian employees. A properly sized and configured Physical Fitness Center is essential to improve all of these attributes. The existing Physical Fitness Center was constructed in 1955, is undersized and has significant deficiencies to include the facility envelope. The gymnasium does not provide adequate space for Reservists to accomplish fitness training for the number of Reservists assigned to Niagara Falls ARS. The electrical system, boilers and chillers are old and require frequent adjustment. The parking lot is inadequate for the size of the structure. Without a new facility, fitness requirements may not be met since there is inadequate safe space for all required equipment.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator