

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 3, 2019

Patrick M. Shanahan
Acting Secretary of Defense
1100 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dr. Heather Wilson
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan and Secretary Wilson,

We write to express our significant concerns about potential plans to divert funds away from critical military construction projects in Utah as a result of the February 15, 2019 emergency declaration, which we believe would undermine military capabilities that are essential to our national security strategy. We urge you not to move forward with proposed Utah delays.

One such facility that we understand is under consideration for deferral is the Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR) Consolidated Mission Control Center (CMCC), which provides real-time air and ground monitoring and test functions for 5th generation aircraft.

Located at Hill Air Force Base, the CMCC is in urgent need of important upgrades to maintain fighter pilot combat readiness. The center will provide increased monitoring capabilities that strengthen range safety, increased capacity to support additional security requirements of 5th generation fighter aircraft, and help ensure accurate test results of weapons systems deployed for more effective post exercise evaluation.

The CMCC is housed in two decaying 74-year-old converted warehouses, and its air traffic control and monitoring equipment is nearly obsolete, which is why it was selected to receive military construction funds in the first place. The CMCC's current shortcomings have already resulted in shutdowns during routine maintenance and software upgrades. Exercises at UTTR, including weapons systems testing and fighter pilot training, are often delayed or even cancelled due to system workarounds. Without the new control center, the UTTR will be unable to support modern weapons system testing that ensures pilot proficiency.


The CMCC is critical to maintaining fighter pilot combat readiness, sustaining 5th generation aircraft, and preparing our Air Force to face any threat against the United States. Diverting funds from this necessary upgrade will have a severe and unacceptable impact on our military readiness, at a time when the U.S. faces increased threats around the world. We respectfully urge

you to reject any diversion of funds away from this critical project and would like an assurance that no reprioritization will be made that could impact readiness at Hill Air Force Base. If any decision is made that leads to the diversion of funds, we request an immediate briefing.

Sincerely,



Mitt Romney
United States Senator



Mike Lee
United States Senator