

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
ARMED SERVICES  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
INTELLIGENCE  
JOINT ECONOMIC

March 17, 2016

The Honorable Patrick Murphy  
Undersecretary of the Army  
101 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0101

The General Mark A. Milley  
Chief of Staff for the Army  
200 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0200

Dear Secretary Murphy and General Milley:

I write to request your consideration of adding a critical Military Construction (MILCON) project to Army's list of Unfunded Requirements for fiscal year 2017.

In the last five years, only seven MILCON projects have been requested by the Department of Defense in direct support of test and evaluation missions at Major Range and Test Facility Bases (MRTFB) nationwide. In some cases, like White Sands Missile Range, MRTFBs have not received a MILCON project in support of test and evaluation missions in over a decade.

This alarming trend was noted in the Strategic Plan for Department of Defense Test & Evaluation (T&E) Resources from March 2013, which stated: "Due to age and outmoded technology, many test facilities are increasingly difficult to sustain and/or maintain. Obsolescence and deterioration contribute significantly to increased levels of maintenance, reductions in reliability, and an overall increase in operating costs. Services are under pressure to keep existing ground test facilities viable and relevant to meet immediate and forecasted needs. Across all services, there has been a downward trend in T&E MILCON appropriations to address ongoing maintenance, sustainment, and modernization needs of our T&E facilities."

WSMR is a national treasure for our military with its 2.2 million acres of terrain, zero-to-infinity airspace, and expertise that cannot be replicated anywhere else in the country. Yet, the underlying infrastructure that enables this testing and evaluation is outdated and in need of repair or replacement. WSMR recently received funding in support of the 2nd Engineering Battalion, but those facilities do not support the actual testing of the missile range. The facilities that do support the wide range of testing are generally over forty-years-old and lack modern capabilities.

Specifically, a forty-seven year-old, communications center was built in 1962 and caught fire last year. This facility is still relied upon to provide critical support for modern missile testing ranging from the Standard Missile-2 (SM2) and Patriot Missile system-3 (PAC3), to JASSM and CALCM, and others. The near meltdown and fire on July 2, 2015 that nearly cascaded into a full

electrical fire is symptomatic of the stress on the aging facility and its shortfalls in meeting today's needs and basic building codes. While emergency repairs, work arounds, portable electrical generators and other mitigations have sufficed for almost a year now, there is no doubt that replacement needs to be the course of action to provide a long term fix. Despite the urgency, a MILCON project to replace this facility was not in this year's budget request nor planned to be requested until fiscal year 2019.

A new Network Enterprise Center would centralize WSMR's communication support staff by allowing people spread out across four inadequate buildings to move into one building. By building the new Network Enterprise Center, the Army will achieve cost savings in man power, building maintenance, and utility cost.

I respectfully request that you consider adding WSMR's future Network Enterprise Center to Army's list of Unfunded Requirements for fiscal year 2017 so that Congress can pursue funding for this important requirement that will enable Army to manage the nation's premier testing range with modern capabilities.

Sincerely,



MARTIN HEINRICH  
U.S. Senator

Cc: Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy & Environment Katherine Hammack