

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 17, 2024

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

When our Sailors and Marines make the great personal sacrifice to join the finest maritime force in the history of the world, their oath comes with the tacit understanding that our nation recognizes their service and ensures their wellbeing in the performance of their duties. As Members of Congress representing various Department of the Navy installations, we continue to have a vested interest in the health and welfare of our Sailors and Marines.

We have tracked with great concern the ongoing state of disrepair of Unaccompanied Housing (UH) units on Camp Pendleton and Camp Lejeune. Our constituents have continued to diligently inform of us of a litany of problems plaguing the very places that our Sailors and Marines live, including weekly plumbing malfunctions, extensive black mold, and defective security infrastructure.

This is not a new development. In September 2023, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a report on the poor state of barracks habitability across 10 DOD installations. Of these 10 installations, six fell under your purview: Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Maryland; Naval Base Coronado, California; Naval Base San Diego, California, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia; Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, California; and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California.

Last year, Camp Pendleton's barracks were found in significant disrepair, presenting major health and safety concerns for our service members. Issues include deteriorating infrastructure, such as malfunctioning plumbing, broken windows, and non-operational smoke detectors. General hygiene conditions have also worsened, with reports of black mold and vermin infestations. Many of these problems stem from a shortage of maintenance personnel and an overwhelming backlog of work orders, exacerbated by the aging facilities. We urge immediate action to fully fund the repairs and modernization of Camp Pendleton barracks in the upcoming fiscal year.

As you may recall, last October General Smith took you, and Representatives Murphy and Pence to see the horrible conditions of the barracks at Camp Lejeune. Our understanding is that the Marine Corps has a plan to refurbish all of the barracks at Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Stations New River and Cherry Point. We implore you to fully fund the Marine Corps' Barracks 2030 Initiative in your Fiscal Year 2026 request to the Congress.

Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton are not alone in their struggles among Navy-Marine Corps installations. Navy and Marine Corps unaccompanied housing units across several districts have reported identical issues that threaten the health and safety of our Navy and Marine Corps team.

We urge you to prioritize unaccompanied housing in the Department of the Navy's FY26 funding request that ensures enough funding to refurbish existing barracks units and fully modernize and rebuild these structures in a way that our service members deserve. We also ask that you support your installation commanders in this endeavor who remain hard at work in advocating for the wellbeing of our Sailors and Marines.

The health, safety, and morale of our service members are paramount, and we must take swift action to address these critical issues. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
Member of Congress