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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

February 25, 2020

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PAUL ARCANGELI, STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable Elaine McCusker
Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller
and Chief Financial Officer
U.S. Department of Defense
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Ms. McCusker:

The House Committee on Armed Services has completed its review of the proposed reprogramming request FY20-01 RA. This reprogramming action would transfer approximately \$3.83 billion between fiscal year 2020 appropriations for the purposes of constructing a barrier on the southern border of the United States.

The committee denies this request. The committee notes that the Department's request would redirect funds from items authorized and appropriated by Congress to support military readiness and modernize military capabilities in support of the National Defense Strategy. These items are properly flagged by the Department as items of Congressional interest, as identified in the fiscal year 2020 DD 1414, Base for Reprogramming Actions, and the proposed reprogramming action therefore runs counter to the Department's own Financial Management Regulations (DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 3, Chapter 6, 060401-B) as well as the guidance promulgated by the Comptroller for fiscal year 2020 reprogramming actions.

The Congress alone has the constitutional authority to determine how the nation spends its defense dollars. This committee takes seriously the Department's recommendations and holds many hearings and briefings with Department personnel to determine the best way to meet defense needs with taxpayer funding. When Congress acts, the Department of Defense cannot ignore congressional will in pursuit of their own priorities. The steps taken in this reprogramming put the Department at risk to lose the flexibility Congress has historically granted to effectively manage the resources provided.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adam Smith'.

Adam Smith
Chairman

AS/WMT:msh

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mac Thornberry'.

William "Mac" Thornberry
Ranking Member