

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 10, 2020

The Honorable Jim Inhofe  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
2120 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2120 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Reed, and Ranking Member Thornberry:

We write to request that the conference report of the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) *National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA) include a provision to require the Department of Defense (DoD, or the Department) rename all property and other assets owned by the Department named in honor of Confederate officers.

As you know, both the Senate and House versions of the FY21 NDAA contain provisions requiring the Secretary of Defense to rename all military property, including the ten Army installations,<sup>1</sup> named in honor of Confederate officers. Section 2829 of the House bill<sup>2</sup> requires the renaming process to be complete within one year, while Section 377 of the Senate bill<sup>3</sup> authorizes a three-year period for completing renaming. Both provisions mandate that the Secretary establish a formal process for cataloging all assets to be renamed and for determining new names.

The Senate and House strongly supported the inclusion of this requirement by passing their bills with overwhelming, veto-proof, bipartisan majorities.<sup>4</sup> The requirement also received bipartisan support in committee markups. Despite the widespread support for this proposal,

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<sup>1</sup> New York Times, "These Are the 10 U.S. Army Installations Named for Confederates," Michael Levenson, June 11, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/11/us/military-bases-confederates.html>

<sup>2</sup> FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act, H.R. 6395, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6395>

<sup>3</sup> FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act, S. 4049, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/4049>

<sup>4</sup> Senate Roll Call Vote No. 140, [https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll\\_call\\_lists/roll\\_call\\_vote\\_cfm.cfm?congress=116&session=2&vote=00140](https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=116&session=2&vote=00140) and House of Representatives Roll Call Vote No. 152, <https://clerk.house.gov/Votes/2020152>.

Chairman Inhofe has declared his intention to strip it out behind closed doors in conference, saying “We’re going to see to it that provision doesn’t survive the bill... I’m not going to say how at this point.”<sup>5</sup>

We strongly oppose removing this provision and respectfully request the conferees to retain in the conference report the provision endorsed by both chambers: a requirement for the Department to rename all military assets named for the Confederacy no later than three years after the date of enactment.

Millions of servicemembers of color have lived on, trained at, and deployed from installations named to honor traitors that killed Americans in defense of chattel slavery. Renaming these bases does not disrespect our military – it honors the sacrifices and contributions of our servicemembers in a way that better reflects our nation’s diversity and values. We know who these bases were named for and why they were named. It is long past the time to correct this longstanding, historic injustice. We must not shrink from our solemn duty in his moment.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Chris Murphy  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator

<sup>5</sup> Politico, “Top senator says Congress shouldn’t remove Confederate names from bases,” Connor O’Brien, July 24, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/24/inhofe-congress-confederate-names-bases-381192>.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Tina Smith  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Patty Murray  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Tom Udall  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Patrick Leahy  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Doug Jones  
United States Senator

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Brian Schatz  
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader  
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, House Minority Leader  
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Senate Minority Leader