



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4323

January 10, 2023

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Mike McCord
Undersecretary of Defense Comptroller
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To whom this letter is addressed:

I write to you today with concern regarding a recent Department of Defense (DOD) report revealing over a quarter billion dollars in damages incurred by eight U.S. military bases used for housing Afghan evacuees as part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW). The DOD Inspector General disclosed that these bases sustained \$260 million in severe damages; described by some military officials as “unrepairable,” leaving facilities “completely depleted” and resources unavailable for other real world missions.

Further, I am alarmed by how these bases will be required to cover the costs of these damages because of their efforts to support Afghan evacuees. The Inspector General’s report states these entities are responsible for paying \$103.1 million from their own budgets to cover damages caused by OAW, such as replenishing depleted stocks of medical equipment, repairing defective infrastructure, refilling the supply of consumable goods, and restoring basic facility items.

I am equally troubled by the report’s negative assessment of OAW’s impact on military readiness, which details ongoing disruptions to training exercises. What’s more, the report highlights reimbursement requests for repair costs that have been denied due to their designation as occurring before official directives for reimbursement standards were established. The efforts of these military bases to sustain their full operational capacity by making immediate repairs to damages caused by OAW should not be cause for punishment because of the Department’s procrastination in issuing restoration directives. While our military continues to feel the strains caused by the withdrawal from Afghanistan, it is essential that all affected entities are returned to their full operational capacity as soon as possible.

As the United States faces a global environment steeped in rising instability, it is critical that our military forces have the resources necessary to maintain a constant state of readiness. I request your agency provide a timeline for when repairs to these bases will be completed, in addition to an explanation of how the costs to repair the damages to these facilities will shortchange the activities for other military readiness priorities by January 31, 2023. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tony G', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tony Gonzales
Member of Congress
23rd Congressional District of Texas