

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2020

The Honorable Ryan D. McCarthy
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0101

General McConville
Army Chief of Staff
200 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0200

Chief of Army Reserve
LTG Charles Luckey
2400 Army Pentagon, 3E562
Washington, D.C. 20310-2400

General Perna
U.S. Army Materiel Command
4400 Martin Road
Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898

Dear Secretary McCarthy, General McConville, General Luckey and General Perna:

I am writing today regarding military housing on Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, the nation's Total Force Training Center.

In August 2018, a Reuters report highlighted dangerous living conditions experienced by military families in privatized housing. While the Department of Defense, and the Army in particular, has made significant efforts to respond to this housing crisis, the services and private housing contractors have not fully regained the trust of military families and the safety and quality of housing still cannot be guaranteed. Further, unlike under government owned and operated housing, military families in privatized housing lack sufficient options for legal recourse against privatized housing contractors. As such, I am concerned by reports that the Army may be considering privatizing the high quality Army family housing on Fort McCoy.

Currently, on Fort McCoy there are 113 homes built between 1998 and 2017, which have recently received a Q1 quality rating. These homes were built without lead paint or asbestos and show no signs of mold. They have been maintained at the highest quality because of Fort McCoy's and U.S. Army Installation Management Command's careful ownership and oversight. Should a private contractor be allowed to take over Fort McCoy's housing, the same issues that affected so many military families throughout the country in recent years could come to impact families on Fort McCoy. I am supportive of the military finding ways to save money and become more efficient with tax payer dollars, but in no way should that come at the expense of the health and safety of service members or their families.

In a February 2019 poll conducted by the Military Family Advisory Network, 56 percent of families who either currently lived in privately managed military housing or have resided in such homes in the last three years said they had "negative or very negative experiences." The same private companies responsible for these negative experiences would likely be bidding on military housing contracts on Fort McCoy—an unacceptable scenario given that the military is still implementing protections for military families required by Congress in the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. As such, I specifically request that the Army stop any consideration to privatize Army-owned housing on Fort McCoy.

Should the Army decide to continue consideration, I am specifically requesting the Army provide my office with the following:

- The current quality rating of the 113 homes on Fort McCoy.
- Any documentation leading to the Army's decision to review the Army-Owned housing on Fort McCoy for potential divestiture.
- Any review or analysis the Army has done on the current and historic quality rating of privatized housing, Army-wide, for the past 10 years.
- Any information related to the Army's development of the Request for Qualifications the Army plans to use to screen and select "development partners" to undertake the privatization work at Fort McCoy, including the Army's review of Military Housing Privatization Initiative contractor performance data.
- The Army's Analysis of Alternatives that shows cost savings to be realized from the use of a private contractor instead keeping the Fort McCoy housing government owned and operated.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Ron Kind
Member of Congress

cc: Sergeant Major Michael A. Grinston
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Washington, DC 20310-0101

Command Sergeant Major, Army Reserve
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