

SEAN PATRICK MALONEY
18TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE

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

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June 18, 2020

Mark T. Esper
Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Ryan D. McCarthy
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Esper and Secretary McCarthy:

As members of Congress we are proud of the history and reputation of the United States Military Academy (“USMA” or “West Point”). It is because of that deep respect for the school and its mission, we believe we must correct the hurtful and outdated practice of honoring at West Point certain Americans who engaged in armed rebellion against the United States in support of racism and slavery. Today, there are a variety of USMA buildings and facilities named after Confederate generals and others who betrayed their Country during the Civil War. This should not be.

In recent days, Marine Corps Commandant General David Berger and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Gilday have both announced bans on the public display of the Confederate battle flag on Marine installations. Additionally, elected officials in Florida, Alabama, Indiana, and Kentucky have removed confederate monuments, including Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, who ordered the removal of a Robert E. Lee statue from the capitol in Richmond.

It goes without saying that we have the utmost respect for the work that you do, developing leaders of character, with a passion for service to our country. Included in these outstanding cadets are Black men and women ready to serve and we owe it to them to ensure that their learning and training environment is as welcoming and inclusive as possible. It is past time we make these changes that will move our country in the direction towards healing and reconciliation.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter and we look forward to assisting you in whatever fashion possible to remove these negative symbols from this revered institution.

Sincerely,



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

CC: Lieutenant General Darryl A. Williams
Superintendent
United States Military Academy
606 Thayer Road,
West Point, NY 10996

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

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