

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 24, 2015

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET
HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS
HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Carter:

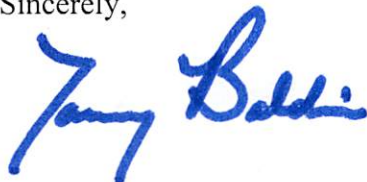
As you continue to review force protection measures at U.S. military facilities, I write to encourage your consideration of the security enhancements included in the Military Facilities Force Protection Act of 2105 (S.1835), legislation that I have authored to improve the safety of American servicemembers and civilians at military recruiting and reserve component facilities. This legislation provides a strong, yet measured approach, protecting military and civilian personnel while avoiding unintended consequences, and I would urge you to consider incorporating these reforms in future force protection upgrades.

In the wake of last week's tragic attack in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in which five U.S. servicemembers were murdered, including a Wisconsin native, it is imperative that we take immediate action to significantly improve the security of community-based sites, like recruiting centers and reserve component facilities. These facilities do not have the types of force protection measures—like armed military police and protective physical barriers—that major military bases do. Accordingly, the Military Facilities Force Protection Act would require the stationing of military police or other qualified, armed military personnel, as you determine appropriate, at recruiting and reserve component facilities for the exclusive purpose of force protection. Alternatively, if military personnel are not available, the bill authorizes DOD to enter into memoranda of understanding with state and local law enforcement agencies or State National Guards for force protection personnel. Regarding physical site security, the bill requires protective enhancements at recruiting and reserve component facilities, including, at a minimum, the installation of bullet-proof glass and improved video surveillance.

As DOD, the military services and Congress review various changes to force protection policies, I believe it is critical that any action avoids overreach and limits the risk of unintended consequences. To that end, I encourage you to consider steps, like those in S.1835, which would limit new force protection roles at public, community-based facilities to qualified personnel who receive training on civilian law enforcement rules and procedures, state and local gun laws, and gun safety measures. Finally, any reforms should fully comply with legal and administrative prohibitions against the participation of members of the Armed Forces in domestic law enforcement activities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your efforts on behalf of the dedicated men and women who serve our country. I look forward to working with you on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "T" and "B".

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Enclosure: S.1835, the Military Facilities Force Protection Act of 2015