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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

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May 25, 2023

The Honorable Frank Kendall
Secretary, United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

General James H. Dickinson
Commander, USSPACECOM
The Pentagon, SPACECOM Leg. Office
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Secretary Kendall and General Dickinson:

I was alarmed by several facts presented during Secretary Kendall's recent meeting with the bipartisan membership of the Alabama delegation regarding the location of U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM) headquarters. Secretary Kendall has uncovered "fundamental changes" being made to SPACECOM's mission requirements, headquarters requirements, and related expenditures at temporary SPACECOM facilities which are apparently divorced from DOD's stated policy.

During our meeting, Secretary Kendall said that he did not direct SPACECOM to make "fundamental" changes to SPACECOM's mission and headquarters requirements and was unaware of anyone else in the Department of Defense having done so. Yet such changes have occurred.

These apparently sweeping unilateral changes to policies and posture seem to have been made with zero civilian oversight at the Department of Defense. Secretary Kendall also stated that he was unaware who, if anyone, at the Department of Defense approved expenditures of taxpayer funds to unilaterally change the mission or headquarters requirements of SPACECOM.

Secretary Kendall informed the delegation that he launched his own investigation into these irregularities. The Committee on Armed Services will also undertake its own investigation into this matter.

It is advisable for SPACECOM to cease and desist from any action that implicates taxpayer funds in a scheme to alter the mission or headquarters requirements of SPACECOM without civilian order or oversight. Continued changes will certainly impede this on-going investigation.

Secretary Kendall and General Dickinson, please provide to the Committee, in their complete and unredacted form, the following documents no later than June 8, 2023:

1. All documents and communications related to any change in mission or headquarters requirements for SPACECOM created or modified since January 20, 2021.
2. All documents and communications related to any contract, agreement, or expenditure related to acquisition, construction, installation, or leasing of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, real property, or to otherwise update, modernize, or repair current public works, military installations, and facilities, including leased structures for use by SPACECOM for temporary headquarters operations since January 20, 2021.
3. All documents and communications related to any tasking, order, or directive of any kind to or from SPACECOM, any official of the Department of Defense, or any official in the Biden Administration related to changing the mission or headquarters requirements of SPACECOM created or modified since January 20, 2021.

Secretary Kendall, please provide to the Committee, in their complete and unredacted form, no later than June 16, 2023:

1. All documents and communications related to the review you directed into the changes in posture, policies, and expenditures for any purchase, lease, or modification of any property at SPACECOM.
2. All documents, communications, interviews, notes, transcripts, or other records relied upon in the course of said review.

Please deliver your responses to room 2116 or room 2337 of the Rayburn House Office Building, as appropriate. The Committee prefers to receive all documents, including classified documents, in electronic format. As necessary, transmission may be made via classified computer system available to the Committee in Committee spaces. Access restrictions governing these documents will not be recognized without specific prior written agreement from the Committee. To arrange delivery of documents or ask any follow-up questions, please contact Forrest McConnell of the Committee on Armed Services Staff.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request. The Committee on Armed Services, under Rule X, clause 1 of the Rules of the House of Representatives (“House Rules”), maintains oversight jurisdiction over the Department of Defense generally. Moreover, under the House Rules, the Committee on Armed Services derives its authority to conduct oversight from, among other things, clause 2(b)(1) of Rule X (relating to general oversight responsibilities), clause 3(b) of Rule X (relating to special oversight functions), and clause 1(b) of rule XI (relating to investigations and studies).

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mike Rogers
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee