

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 22, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable Scott de la Vega
Acting Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Austin and Acting Secretary de la Vega:

We write to you today to request an update on interagency efforts to implement Section 2844 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (P.L. 116–283). As enacted on January 1, 2021, this Section directs your departments to establish joint committees at the Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon in Northern Nevada and the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) in Southern Nevada.

Specifically, Section 2844 directs the creation and co-management of Intergovernmental Executive Committees (IEC) at both military bases, in order to facilitate the exchange of views, information, and advice relating to the management of natural and cultural resources with local, state, and tribal stakeholders. In addition, this law directs the creation of an Interagency Committee between the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to facilitate coordination, manage public access needs and requirements, and minimize potential management conflicts with respect to the joint operating areas within the NTTR and Desert National Wildlife Refuge.

These public forums will play a pivotal role in ensuring the proper management of shared public resources and for finding innovative solutions to land management issues. For these reasons, we respectfully request your answers to the following questions:

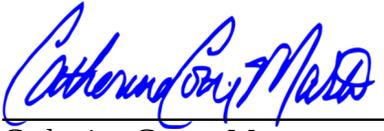
- What is the status of creating the IECs and Interagency Committee?
- How have your departments engaged with Nevada stakeholders regarding the establishment and membership of these committees?
- When can we expect these committees to formally meet?
- What are your plans to ensure opportunities for public collaboration during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic?

We kindly request regular updates with our offices on the status and operation of these committees, and respectfully request a response to this letter by Tuesday, March 9, 2021.

We look forward to receiving your responses in a timely manner. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or have your staff reach out to Kyle Chapman (Kyle.Chapman@cortezmasto.senate.gov), Kelly Riddle (Kelly.Riddle@rosen.senate.gov), and

Daniel Bleiberg (Daniel_Bleiberg@rosen.senate.gov) in our offices. Thank you for your attention to our requests.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator