

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 22, 2015

General Mark A. Milley  
Army Chief of Staff  
200 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0200

General Milley:

We remain concerned that some within the Pentagon continue to confuse the responsibilities of a *supported* service and a *supporting* service. The Air Force's efforts to reduce support to America's Global Response Force exemplifies this confusion by placing the desires of the supporting service ahead of the needs of the supported service.

The Air Force's proposal to support paratrooper proficiency for the XVIII Airborne Corps solely from remote airbases utterly fails as a logical business model. In no successful enterprise would a supplier or provider of support dictate to the customer how and when such support is delivered. More specifically, the Army would never offer an opinion as to how the Air Force runs a bomber base, nor should the Air Force prescribe to the Army Airborne how and when it can train its paratroopers.

In the last few months we have engaged all levels of leadership in the XVIII Airborne Corps from commanding generals to first sergeants. To a man, we have received the same message—the Corps' airborne qualifications are degraded, units are not getting the support they require. As you are aware, Air Mobility Command's own plan shows they cannot meet Fort Bragg's daily training requirements, if the indigenous Air Force lift presence disappears.

This is not an adversarial protest. We appreciate that the supporting and supported dynamic has been inverted and believe routine service comity is no longer acceptable when the readiness of America's airborne forcible entry capability is affected.

We respectfully ask that you take a detailed look at the facts and figures regarding Air Force support to airborne training at Fort Bragg and, if they demonstrate the threat to readiness we have seen, engage the Department of the Air Force as to the reasons why they are not living up to their commitments. We are not seeking confrontation; our goal remains, from day one, that United States' airborne forces are primed and ready and impediments to their readiness are vigorously opposed.

Sincerely,



Richard Burr  
United States Senator



Thom Tillis  
United States Senator