



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR
2600 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2600

HOMELAND DEFENSE AND
AMERICAS SECURITY AFFAIRS

The Honorable Elissa Slotkin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

SEP 30 2026

Dear Senator Slotkin:

Thank you for your letter dated August 18, 2026, regarding the upcoming November 2026 midterm elections and the role of the Department of War. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify the Department's position, our legal obligations, and our steadfast commitment to the Constitution and the rule of law.

The Department of War's role in election security is limited, lawful, and strictly supportive of civil authorities. Election administration and security remain the fundamental responsibility of state and local officials.

In response to your specific inquiries regarding the deployment of military personnel and resources: the Department has no plan to deploy active-duty troops or Federalized National Guard to polling sites, nor does it have any plan to interfere with ballots, voting machines, or other election-related materials. We operate in strict compliance with Federal law, including 18 U.S.C. § 592 and 18 U.S.C. § 593, which expressly restrict the presence of military personnel at election sites and criminalize interference with election officials or materials.

The Department remains fully committed to ensuring that any support we provide to an Executive Branch Department or Agency will be in strict compliance with the law and will not interfere with the voting process or create the perception of military involvement in the administration of elections.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M. Rowlett Smith", is located below the word "Sincerely,".