



Insight

Regional Implications of Redirecting Military Funds to Build the Wall

GORDON GRAY, ARIANE MARTIN | JANUARY 10, 2019

President Trump appears to be increasingly—which is to say, “[maybe, definitely](#)”—inclined to invoke a national emergency to build a \$5.7 billion wall along the southern U.S. border. The president is reportedly considering funding the wall by reprogramming funds appropriated for the purpose of military construction projects. \$5.7 billion, no trivial sum in general, is more than half the [\\$10.3 billion](#) that was appropriated to fund the military’s construction (MilCon) projects.

These projects run the gamut from overseas hangars for the new F-35A and special operations training facilities to middle schools for children of military families and parking lots. Some of these funds have certainly already been obligated since the MilCon appropriation was enacted, further diminishing the magnitude of available resources for reprogramming to fund the wall. How contracts for these projects would be affected by having the funding reassigned is unclear, as is the stability of future funding for those projects for which funding would be rescinded to fund the wall.

Separate from the disruption from reprogramming half of the Milcon budget on the fly are regional and political considerations. Military facilities are distributed throughout the nation and are hubs of economic activity that are zealously protected by the states’ representatives in Congress. When it comes to federal defense dollars spent in home districts and states, there are no hawks and doves, only competing advocates. Carving out half of the MilCon budget would likely meet strong resistance from the members of Congress whose states are slated to receive the \$10.3 billion in FY209 MilCon funding.

The Table below presents the FY2019 MilCon appropriation by state. The amounts below only reflect about \$5 billion of the overall funding, as the rest of the funding is devoted to projects for which the location was not specified or is overseas.

State	MilCon Funding (\$ Millions)
Alabama	5.2
Alaska	286.8
Arizona	40.0
Arkansas	14.0
California	790.5
Colorado	182.3
DC	40.0
Florida	177.4
Georgia	112.6
Hawaii	311.4
Illinois	14.0
Indiana	28.1
Kentucky	131.2
Louisiana	15.0
Maine	161.3
Maryland	513.1
Massachusetts	90.0
Missouri	295.6
Montana	15.0
Nebraska	9.5
Nevada	96.9
New Hampshir	12.0
New Jersey	51.2
New Mexico	125.0
New York	194.0
North Carolina	189.9
North Dakota	98.0
Ohio	68.4
Oklahoma	185.0
Pennsylvania	79.1
South Carolina	149.7
South Dakota	15.0
Texas	130.7
Utah	55.0
Virginia	131.7
Washington	142.5
Wisconsin	29.2

An Excel spreadsheet detailing all funding is available [here](#).