

United States Senate

December 11, 2024

Lieutenant General Steven W. Gilland, USA
Superintendent, United States Military Academy
606 Thayer Rd.
West Point, NY 10996

Dear Lieutenant General Gilland,

I'm concerned about reports that a U.S. Military Academy official has provided false information to a left-wing reporter writing a derogatory hit piece about Pete Hegseth, the nominee for Secretary of Defense.

I understand that a civilian public-affairs officer, Theresa Brinkerhoff, informed a reporter that Mr. Hegseth didn't apply to West Point, as he has said publicly in the past. This statement is incorrect; not only did Mr. Hegseth apply, but he was also accepted to the West Point Class of 2003. Worse, the statement may violate Mr. Hegseth's rights under the Privacy Act of 1974 by revealing protected personal information. If true, it also demonstrates egregiously bad judgment to share such information about the nominee to be Secretary of Defense with a known liberal outlet like *ProPublica*.

Could you please promptly look into this matter? Perhaps there's an honest mistake here, though I can't imagine what it might be. But I also can't imagine this action was authorized or known to the West Point leadership.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator