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June 30, 2016

General Robert B. Neller  
Commandant  
U.S. Marine Corps  
3000 Marine Corps, Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20350-3000

Dear General Neller:

This letter is concerning recent allegations against personnel at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island and my continuing concern about the death of my constituent, U.S. Marine Corps recruit Private Raheel Siddiqui. I understand there are multiple ongoing investigations into this incident and deeply respect the importance of the objectivity of those findings and am supportive of your efforts to have an unbiased investigation. We have a responsibility to our nation to support a strong military and I also have a moral responsibility to a family who lost a son and a brother. This young man was a class valedictorian who believed this country represented freedom and opportunity and wanted to defend those ideals.

The press reports in the last news cycle about misconduct at Parris Island are deeply troubling. It is my understanding that 15 drill instructors of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Recruit Training Battalion are alleged to have violated Marine Corps orders related to hazing, physical abuse, failure of supervision, and assault. These allegations deserve to be fully investigated with appropriate discipline if necessary. While I understand these investigations may be ongoing, I respectfully request answers to the following questions:

1. Have specific charges been brought against these 15 drill instructors? If so, please provide a detailed accounting of each charge. If not, please explain why the allegations against these 15 individuals have not resulted in formal charges.
2. It is my understanding that a drill instructor had access Marine Corps recruits while he was the subject of an investigation. What are the allegations against the drill instructor and how was he permitted to continue working with recruits while under investigation?
3. What new policies or corrective actions has the Marine Corps implemented following this incident to ensure that people who are under investigation do not maintain contact with recruits?

4. It is important that we recruit a military that reflects the diversity of our nation, and we also must ensure that recruits receive effective training so they are prepared to serve our country in combat. But reports in the Wall Street Journal of a drill instructor putting a Muslim recruit inside a clothes dryer is deeply disturbing. How do we ensure that all recruits are treated equally and receive the proper training to be effective at their jobs as soldiers without resorting to tough and discriminatory tactics that could put someone's life at risk?
5. Do Marine Corps drill instructors receive sensitivity training for how to deal with recruits from minority communities? Please provide a detailed explanation of existing training policies for drill instructors.
6. Following this incident, does the Marine Corps plan to change policies and procedures related to training of drill instructors to ensure that hazing and physical abuse does not occur in the future?
7. What is the maximum penalty for a drill instructor who violates Marine Corps policies related to hazing or physical abuse?
8. Did any of the 15 drill instructors who are currently under investigation have any contact with Raheel Siddiqui?

Thank you for your continued attention to this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any questions or need any more information.

Sincerely,  
  
Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress