

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 15, 2009

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Gates,

We write to respectfully request that the Department of Defense (DoD) reconsider an administrative policy regarding the definition of "combat-related" for the purpose of qualifying separating personnel for the concurrent receipt of both DoD disability severance and disability benefits administered through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

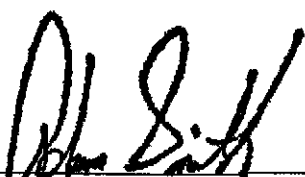
As you may know, section 1646 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 (PL110-181) helped to enhance the disability severance pay provided to members of the armed forces. Specifically, this section included a provision that exempted military personnel, who receive disability severance pay for a disability incurred in a combat zone or during performance of duty in combat-related operations, from being required to repay any portion of their severance pay prior to receiving disability benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

On March 13, 2008, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness issued a memorandum that restricted the definition that the Department of Defense uses to define "combat-related" injuries. Prior to this memorandum, an injury was deemed "combat-related" if it was attributed to an injury that was awarded the purple heart, incurred as a direct result of armed conflict, while engaged in hazardous service, in the performance of duty under conditions simulating war, or through an instrumentality of war. However, the March 13th memorandum scaled the definition of "combat-related" back to include only those injuries that were sustained directly through armed conflict.

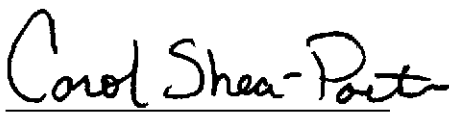
This change in policy has cost numerous veterans thousands of dollars in lost benefits as they have had their injuries discounted as not being "combat-related." While legislation has been introduced in the 111th Congress to revert to the prior, broader definition, we would respectfully ask that you review this policy internally and initiate the necessary changes administratively so our combat-disabled veterans will get relief as quickly as possible.

We greatly appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you on this issue.

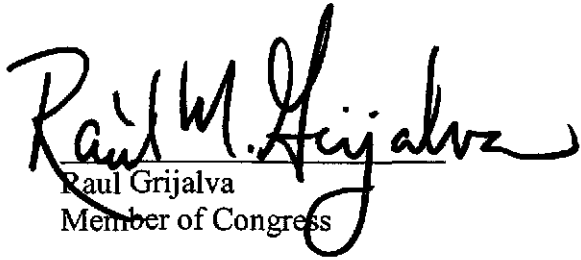
Sincerely,

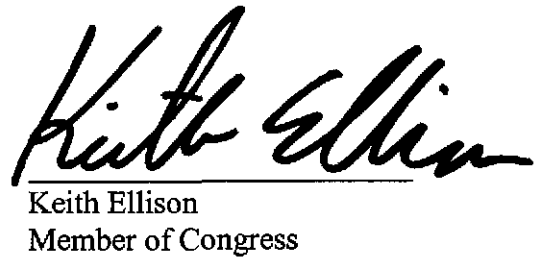


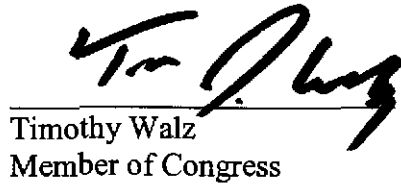
Adam Smith
Member of Congress

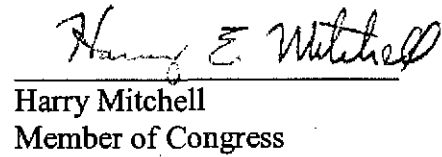


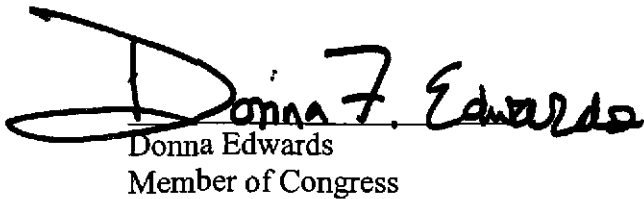
Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress


Paul Grijalva
Member of Congress

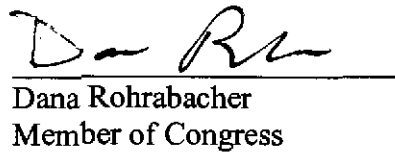

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

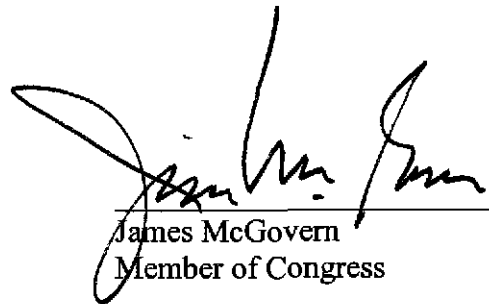

Timothy Walz
Member of Congress


Harry Mitchell
Member of Congress


Donna Edwards
Member of Congress

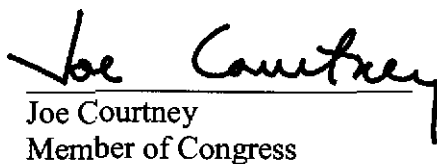

Collin Peterson
Member of Congress


Dana Rohrabacher
Member of Congress


James McGovern
Member of Congress


Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

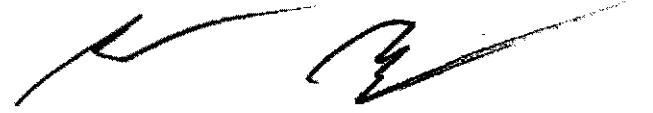

Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress


Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

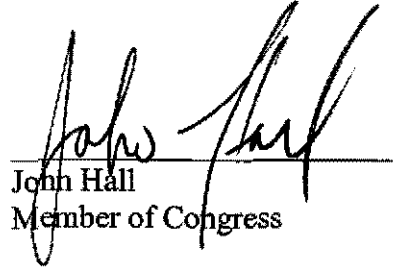

Bart Gordon
Member of Congress



Mike Ross
Member of Congress



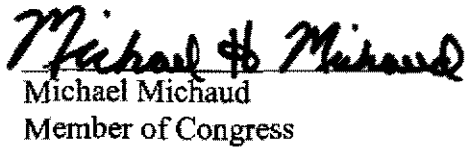
Glenn Nye
Member of Congress



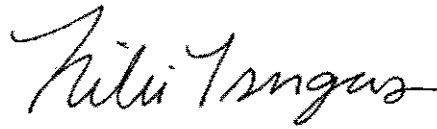
John Hall
Member of Congress



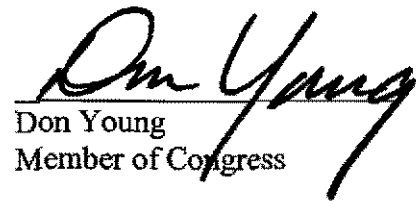
Steve Kagen
Member of Congress



Michael Michaud
Member of Congress



Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress



Don Young
Member of Congress



Michael Arcuri
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 6, 2009

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Gates,

As Congress awaits the submission of the President's Fiscal Year 2010 budget request for the Department of Defense, we write to share our strong and unwavering support for the Air National Guard (ANG) units in our states that lost their flying missions through BRAC 2005.

As you know, the last BRAC round made significant changes to the lay down of aircraft within the ANG. In our six states, many units lost their flying missions – ranging from A-10s, C-130Js, and F-16s – with some losing the only flying mission stationed permanently in their state. The loss of a flying mission is a direct threat to the manpower, readiness and relevance of our ANG units and their continued ability to meet their state and federal duties.

The ANG not only serves our nation as we ask them to support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and around the world, but they also serve the local state missions. Without a permanent flying mission within the state, the ANG may lose the valuable expertise and experience our airmen provide. With the immense capability the ANG provides to our nation, we must not jeopardize the investment we've made in the ANG personnel forces.

According to the 2008 Air Force Weapon Systems Roadmap, as well as subsequent planning by the Air Force and National Guard Bureau, our six states are each expected to receive the C-27J Joint Cargo Aircraft (JCA). While we welcome the assignment of a permanent flying mission to our states, we are concerned that continued debate about the organization and control of the JCA program could place the future of our ANG units at risk. We believe it is important to firmly resolve the "roles and missions" debate with regards to intra-theater lift, and move forward with a program that meets the needs of ANG states impacted in BRAC while also addressing the capability gap faced by our warfighters.

This is a pivotal year for our Air National Guard. To this end, we look forward to the Department's strong support for the allocation of permanent flying missions to our states as part of the upcoming submission of the 2010 defense budget.

As always, we thank you for your service to our nation and look forward to continuing to work with you to support our men and women in uniform.

OSD 05298-09



Sincerely,

Christopher Dodd
United States Senator

Joseph Lieberman
United States Senator

John Larson
United States Representative

Joseph Courtney
United States Representative

Barbara Mikulski
United States Senator

Benjamin Cardin
United States Senator

Steny Hoyer
United States Representative

Roscoe Bartlett
United States Representative

Elijah Cummings
United States Representative

Dutch Ruppersberger
United States Representative

Donna Edwards
United States Representative

Frank Kratovil
United States Representative

Carl Levin
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Mark Schauer
United States Representative

Roger Wicker
United States Senator

Gregg Harper
United States Representative

Kent Conrad
United States Senator

Byron Dorgan
United States Senator

Earl Pomeroy
United States Representative

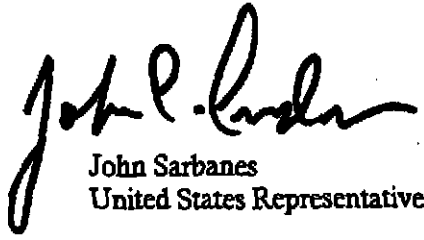
George Voinovich
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Marcy Kaptur
United States Representative

Tim Ryan
United States Representative

Jim Jordan
United States Representative



John Sarbanes
United States Representative

GIVEN MOORE
4TH DISTRICT, WISCONSIN
COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES

CAPITAL MARKETS, INSURANCE, AND GSEs
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY POLICY AND TRADE
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATION

COMMITTEE ON BUDGET



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

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FAX: (202) 225-8135

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SUITE 3A
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202-5818
(414) 297-1140
FAX: (414) 297-1086

February 3, 2011

The Honorable Robert Gates
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1300 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-2033

Dear Secretary Gates,

We write to thank you for your strong support and leadership in helping to secure passage of long-overdue legislation to repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT). As you move forward with implementing repeal, we want to express our concerns about discharge characterizations. If not addressed, we worry the U.S. military will continue to deny servicemembers benefits they rightfully earned.

We know that you are working to implement repeal and address obstacles, including those raised in the DoD's implementation report: (Support Plan for Implementation: Report of the Comprehensive Review of the Issues Associated with a Repeal of "Don't Ask Don't Tell") on November 30, 2010.

One implementation issue to bring to your attention is the situation facing those who have been discharged solely because of this law or its predecessors. As you know, eligibility for VA benefits in general requires that the claimant or the person on whose service the claim is based has been discharged from service under honorable conditions. A discharge characterization can also have negative impacts on the ability of individuals to re-enter the military after repeal.

Some discharged under DADT received an honorable characterization and thus were by and large not hindered in their ability to receive VA or certain other benefits. This was not the case for all. Some discharged under DADT received "general" or "other than honorable" discharge characterizations. And others discharged under the prior regulatory ban even received "dishonorable" discharge characterizations. Again, these discharge characterizations have implications on the ability of these men and women to access benefits they have earned and will continue to do so without action.

A commander considers many factors when deciding to characterize a particular discharge. We understand that you must consider conduct that would otherwise merit a "general" or "other than honorable discharge" regardless of sexual orientation.

However, we urge you to ensure that there is in place a timely and fair mechanism for providing consistent resolutions to post-repeal claims by those who believe their discharge characterization under DADT and its predecessors were undeserved. Many may request changes to allow them



access to a range of earned benefits or services through the VA or DoD and your Department needs to be thoroughly and appropriately prepared.


Those seeking to change their discharge record can petition Service Boards for the Correction of Military Records or Service Discharge Review Boards for redress. However, we understand that getting relief through these venues can be lengthy. We are concerned that the adhoc nature of board decisions may lead to disparate outcomes for similarly situated individuals without strong guidance and leadership.

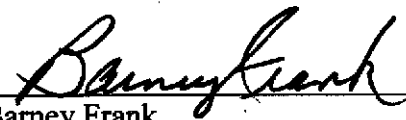
The DoD implementation plan discusses your Department's responsibility to ensure veterans discharged under DADT are provided fair review of their service record and should the facts merit it, correction of that record. That report also recognized the need for DoD leadership, in coordination with the Department of Veterans Affairs, to "determine if any veteran benefits for Service members separated under 10.U.S.C. §.654 need to be reinstated."

The passage of DADT repeal legislation is a victory that would not have been possible without your strong leadership and support. We know the issue raised above is one of many that your department will wrestle with in the coming months. However, we believe that how you implement repeal is as important as the work to pass the repeal legislation. Your efforts will go a long way to ensure that all Americans who simply want to serve their country are able to do so.


We look forward to your timely response.

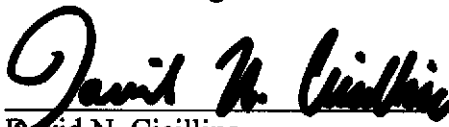
Sincerely,



Owen Moore
Member of Congress



Barney Frank
Member of Congress

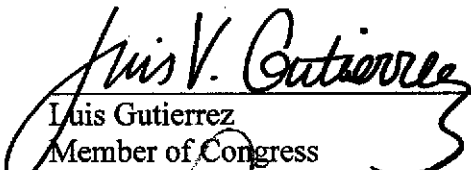

Jared Polis
Member of Congress


Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

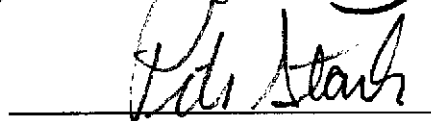

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress


John Yarmuth
Member of Congress


Henry Waxman
Member of Congress


Luis Gutierrez
Member of Congress


Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress


Fortney Pete Stark
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush
Bobby Rush
Member of Congress

Anthony Weiner
Anthony Weiner
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle
Michael Doyle
Member of Congress

Betty Sutton
Betty Sutton
Member of Congress

Edolphus Towns
Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress

Maxine Waters
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

Russ Carnahan
Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress

Al Green
Al Green
Member of Congress

Bob Filner
Bob Filner
Member of Congress

Janice Schakowsky
Janice Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Edward J. Markey
Edward Markey
Member of Congress

Lois Capps
Lois Capps
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Danny Davis
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Gregory Meeks
Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress

Keith Ellison
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

Jim Moran

Donna F. Edwards

John Lewis

Ken Boss

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 31, 2012

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Panetta:

We are writing regarding the Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group (APSG), which is aimed at providing a forward-looking, independent assessment of the current situation in the two countries, similar to the Iraq Study Group. As you know, \$1 million was appropriated in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 for this purpose. We believe this assessment is both timely and necessary.

Last month, the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) of the war in Afghanistan delivered a grim assessment of the security gains made in Taliban strongholds as the United States prepares to withdraw its troops. News coverage of the most recent NIE report detail that rampant corruption, incompetence at every level of government, and cooperation by neighboring countries like Pakistan in harboring terrorists have made hard-fought security gains in Afghanistan appear transient.

The time has come for the American public to obtain an independent assessment of the situation on the ground in both countries. The public also should know the metrics being used to measure success in both countries and the best way to move forward. A nonpartisan, nongovernmental analysis of conditions in both countries will be indispensable in helping the American public to understand the complexities in both countries.

We also would like to request information on the selection process for the organization that will conduct the APSG. It is not yet clear which organizations will be authorized to bid or how they will be selected after they bid. These details should be forthcoming and bidding should begin as soon as possible.

In President Obama's State of the Union speech, he noted that "we will stand for the rights and dignity of all human beings – men and women; Christians, Muslims, and Jews" and that the United States will support policies that lead to "strong and stable democracies." The time is now for a clear-eyed assessment on how we are meeting those goals in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

We look forward to your response.

1 of 3



Sincerely,

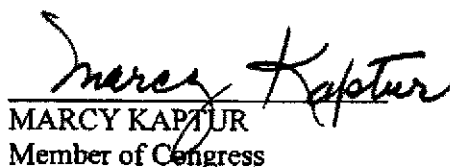

JIM McDERMOTT
Member of Congress

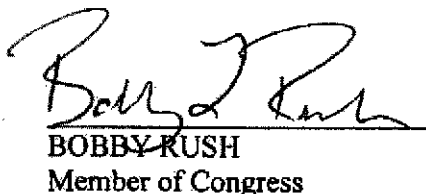

JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress



MICHAEL HONDA
Member of Congress

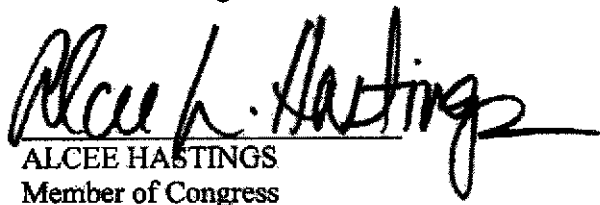

PAUL TONKO
Member of Congress


BOB FILNER
Member of Congress

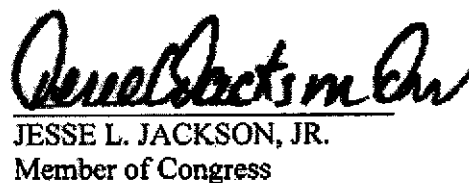

MARCY KAPTUR
Member of Congress

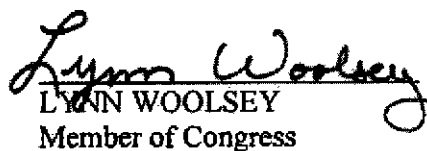

BOBBY RUSH
Member of Congress


JOHN CONYERS, JR.
Member of Congress

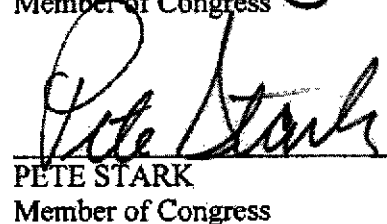

ALCEE HASTINGS
Member of Congress


BARBARA LEE
Member of Congress


JESSE L. JACKSON, JR.
Member of Congress


LYNN WOOLSEY
Member of Congress


WALTER B. JONES
Member of Congress


PETE STARK
Member of Congress



PETER WELCH
Member of Congress



DONNA F. EDWARDS
Member of Congress



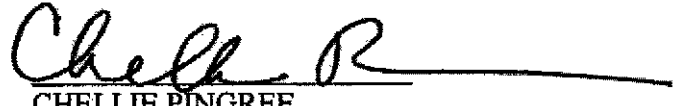
DONALD PAYNE
Member of Congress



MICHAEL H. MICHAUD
Member of Congress



SHEILA JACKSON LEE
Member of Congress



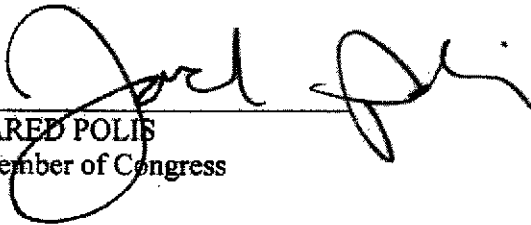
CHELLIE PINGREE
Member of Congress



RAUL GRIJALVA
Member of Congress



KEITH ELLISON
Member of Congress



JARED POLIS
Member of Congress

Cc: General Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Thomas E. Donilon, National Security Advisor, White House

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2012

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Panetta:

Thank you for your leadership of the Department of Defense (DoD) during these difficult times. We are proud to support DoD installations that employ military, civilian, and contractor personnel who make invaluable contributions towards ensuring our national security.

We understand that the defense budget must be adjusted to take into account geopolitical changes and budgetary realities. However, under your predecessor, the "Efficiency Initiative" had a disproportionately adverse impact on civilian personnel. Under this plan, the size of the civilian workforce would be cut back to FY 2010 levels, while no comparable constraints were imposed on the contractor workforce.

The unique constraints that DoD has placed on the civilian workforce have raised concerns that managers could be prevented from using civilian employees even when they cost less or the work is sufficiently sensitive or important that it should be performed by civilian employees. Surely, we can all agree that DoD's sourcing decisions should be made on the basis of the law, cost, policy, and risk, and that it makes no sense to prevent DoD managers from using civilian employees simply because they are civilian employees.

That is why we strongly urge you to ensure that DoD complies with all sourcing and workforce management laws, both those that are longstanding as well as those that were included in the FY 2012 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Public Law 112-81. Specifically, we recommend:



1. **Eliminate the arbitrary cap on the civilian workforce.** If there is work to be done and funding to pay for that work, managers should not be arbitrarily prevented from using civilian employees (10 USC 129). Commercial functions should be shifted back and forth on the basis of costs (10 USC 129a). The FY 2010 cap on the civilian workforce should be lifted so that sourcing decisions can be based on the merits, rather than arbitrary constraints. We urge you to provide the Defense Human Resources Board with the support and leadership necessary to eliminate the cap.
2. **Embrace Total Force Management.** Instead of managing civilian personnel by arbitrary constraints, we urge the Department to embrace the new Total Force Management authorities provided in the FY12 NDAA to ensure that the Department looks at its military, civilian, and contractor workforces more holistically.

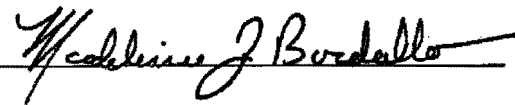



3. **Cap spending on service contracts.** Until the cap on the civilian workforce is lifted, we strongly urge the Department, particularly the Comptroller's office, to comply with the FY 2012 NDAA that caps spending on service contracts at FY 2010 levels. If the Department insists on capping the civilian workforce at FY 2010 levels, a similar cap should be applied to the service contract spending levels.
4. **Conduct cost comparisons when making outsourcing decisions.** DoD cannot convert a function last performed by civilian employees to contractor performance without conducting a formal cost comparison (10 USC 2461). We are pleased that the Department issued guidance in December in order to enhance compliance with this prohibition. We urge you to place a high priority on implementing these reforms.
5. **Implement inventory of contract services.** We appreciate that DoD has come to an agreement on implementing an inventory of contract services. We urge the Department to be aggressive in overcoming any procedural concerns related to the Paperwork Reduction Act and that the inventory be implemented in such a way that it allows for the identification and control of costs, including identifying and preventing over-execution of spending, as well as distinguishing base spending from Overseas Contingency Operations spending. Finally, we urge the Department to respect the conclusion reached by conferees to the FY 2012 NDAA that "the appropriate use of public-private competition is predicated on a sound planning process and the availability of accurate information, including the information that would be supplied by a compliant inventory."
6. **Prohibit outsourcing of inherently governmental work.** We urge the Department to comply with the FY 2012 NDAA that no inherently governmental work be privatized and that reliance on contractors for the performance of work closely associated with inherently governmental functions should be incrementally reduced. Finally, we urge the Department to adhere to the insourcing laws that were reaffirmed in the FY 2012 NDAA and make insourcing decisions on the basis of the usual criteria of the law, cost, policy, and risk, instead of arbitrary targets or constraints.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. As the Department ensures our nation's security, while adjusting to budgetary realities, it is imperative that we value and appreciate the remarkable work done by our civilian personnel. The best way we can do that is by ensuring that the Department is fully compliant with sourcing and workforce management laws.

Sincerely,

Phil Van Hollen

Bob Carlin

Paul Zilk

Bruce Braly

Doug C. Bettes

Betty Sutton

Ernie Lee

Frank Johnson

Ti Gr

Mazie K. Hirose

Peter Welch

Alyson J. Schmitt

Michael McHonda

Betty M. Colman

Michael H. Mendenhall

Tiki Tomago

Raul M. Hijarwa

Juan A. Davis

Dave Luback

John C. Carney

Michael C. Caputo

Ron Kind

Chris Pridemore

Janet Perry

Jim Sangeri

John H. Lin

John Sp

John Hammond

Frank Pallant

Jason Altman

Kent Schwader

Jim W. Jones

Mike Dingle

Samuel D. Bishop Jr

Bob Filice

Quelbertson

Rick Larson

Bob A. Brady

Joe Courtney

~~_____~~

~~_____~~ Lewis

Donna F. Edwards

~~_____~~

Bill Owen

Paul D. Conko

Elly Kallij

John Milroy

Wm. Jay Clay

James Shaw

Joe Bana

Art M. Lee

Bill Bassell Jr

George B. Nulty

Ann DeLette

John Russell

Corinne Brown

Eugene Brannin

John DeLato

Hubert Fash

Melvin L. Watt

Stan Hall

Charles B. Rangel

Alfred Hastings

John S. Lynd

John F. Tamm

Joe M. Noy

L. M. G.

William R. Keating

Paul Miller

W. B. Smith

Colli C. P.

Leiberhof - Allard

T. Hild

Wm. Hild

Bennie J. Thompson

Steve Isaac

Carlson

Dennis J. Kessink

Rosa L. DeLaur

Eliot L. Engel

Bob J. Ruch

Shawhan

Tommy

Liz Capps

James Hahn

Louise M. Slaughter

Brian Hays

C.A. Dutch Pupperberger

J.P. Sh

Sammy Baldwin

Shirley Jackson

Ken O. Weyman

Robert E. And

Bill E. Canning

Joe E. Stewart

George Miller

Billy Burt

Louella Sanchez

Art Deitch

Samuel L. Bussell

Yvette D. Clarke

Steve Cohen

Larry Kincaid

Cher Pea

Mike McIntyre

Elaine H. Hunt

Daryl L. Ackerman

Danny K. Davis

Rush Holt

Sam Farr

M S S

Keith Zini

Jim Mc Dermott

Marcia L. O'Keefe

Judy Allen

Harold Cohen

Pats O'Keefe

Oak E. Childs

Nancy Kaptur

Art R.

Grace S. Napolitano

Elizabeth Meade

Joseph [unclear]
David Price

Edward J. Mackey

Lynne Woolsey
Garry [unclear]

Signed by the following 131 Members of Congress:

Gary Ackerman (NY-05)
Jason Altmire (PA-04)
Robert Andrews (NJ-01)
Joe Baca (CA-43)
Tammy Baldwin (WI-02)
Xavier Becerra (CA-31)
Sanford Bishop (GA-02)
Susanne Bonamici (OR-01)
Madeleine Bordallo (GU-AL)
Dan Boren (OK-02)
Leonard Boswell (IA-03)
Robert Brady (PA-01)
Bruce Braley (IA-01)
Corrine Brown (FL-03)
Lois Capps (CA-23)
Michael Capuano (MA-08)
Russ Carnahan (MO-03)
John Carney (DE-AL)
Judy Chu (CA-32)
David Cicilline (RI-01)
Hansen Clarke (MI-13)
Yvette Clarke (NY-11)
William Lacy Clay (MO-01)
Emanuel Cleaver (MO-05)
Steve Cohen (TN-09)
John Conyers (MI-14)
Joe Courtney (CT-02)
Mark Critz (PA-12)
Joseph Crowley (NY-07)
Elijah Cummings (MD-07)
Susan Davis (CA-53)
Danny Davis (IL-07)
Peter DeFazio (OR-04)
Diana DeGette (CO-01)
Rosa DeLauro (CT-03)
Theodore Deutch (FL-19)
Norman Dicks (WA-06)
John Dingell (MI-15)
Michael Doyle (PA-14)
Donna Edwards (MD-04)
Keith Ellison (MN-05)
Eliot Engel (NY-17)
Sam Farr (CA-17)
Chaka Fattah (PA-02)

Bob Filner (CA-51)
Marcia Fudge (OH-11)
John Garamendi (CA-10)
Gene Green (TX-29)
Raul Grijalva (AZ-07)
Janice Hahn (CA-36)
Colleen Hanabusa (HI-01)
Alcee Hastings (FL-23)
Martin Heinrich (NM-01)
Brian Higgins (NY-27)
Maurice Hinchey (NY-22)
Mazie Hirono (HI-02)
Tim Holden (PA-17)
Rush Holt (NJ-12)
Michael Honda (CA-15)
Steve Israel (NY-02)
Jesse Jackson (IL-02)
Sheila Jackson Lee (TX-18)
Henry Johnson (GA-04)
Marcy Kaptur (OH-09)
William Keating (MA-10)
Dale Kildee (MI-05)
Ron Kind (WI-03)
Larry Kissell (NC-08)
Dennis Kucinich (OH-10)
James Langevin (RI-02)
Rick Larsen (WA-02)
Sander Levin (MI-12)
John Lewis (GA-05)
Daniel Lipinski (IL-03)
David Loebsack (IA-02)
Nita Lowey (NY-18)
Stephen Lynch (MA-09)
Carolyn Maloney (NY-14)
Edward Markey (MA-07)
Betty McCollum (MN-04)
Jim McDermott (WA-07)
James McGovern (MA-03)
Mike McIntyre (NC-07)
Jerry McNerney (CA-11)
Gregory Meeks (NY-06)
Michael Michaud (ME-02)
Brad Miller (NC-13)
George Miller (CA-07)
Gwen Moore (WI-4)
Chris Murphy (CT-05)

Grace Napolitano (CA-38)
Richard Neal (MA-02)
Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC-AL)
Bill Owens (NY-23)
Frank Pallone (NJ-06)
Bill Pascrell (NJ-08)
Gary Peters (MI-09)
Collin Peterson (MN-07)
Chellie Pingree (ME-01)
David Price (NC-04)
Charles Rangel (NY-15)
Silvestre Reyes (TX-16)
Laura Richardson (CA-37)
Steven Rothman (NJ-09)
Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34)
Dutch Ruppersberger (MD-02)
Bobby Rush (IL-01)
Tim Ryan (OH-17)
Loretta Sanchez (CA-39)
John Sarbanes (MD-03)
Jan Schakowsky (IL-09)
Kurt Schrader (OR-05)
Allyson Schwartz (PA-13)
Robert Scott (VA-03)
Jose Serrano (NY-16)
Adam Schiff (CA-29)
Bobby Schilling (IL-17)
Louise Slaughter (NY-28)
Adam Smith (WA-09)
Jackie Speier (CA-12)
Betty Sutton (OH-13)
Bennie Thompson (MS-02)
John Tierney (MA-6)
Paul Tonko (NY-21)
Edolphus Towns (NY-10)
Niki Tsongas (MA-5)
Chris Van Hollen (MD-8)
Mel Watt (NC-12)
Henry Waxman (CA-30)
Peter Welch (VT-AL)
Lynn Woolsey (CA-06)

United States Congress

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 4, 2013

Defense Secretary Charles Hagel
U.S. Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel:

As members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation, we would like to thank the Department of Defense for its continued support of Maryland installations. As you may know, Section 331 of the FY 2013 Defense Authorization Act provides military installations with the authority to enter into support agreements with local jurisdictions. Fort Meade, like other installations experiencing growth across Maryland, is waiting for written guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) on how to implement Section 331. We ask that you provide appropriate guidance as soon as possible so that this important tool can be utilized to manage growth and enhance support services.

Under Section 331, installations may develop Memorandums of Agreement or Understanding with state and local government to provide support services if the Secretary determines that the agreement will serve the best interests of the department by enhancing mission effectiveness, creating efficiencies, or reducing costs. In the case of Fort Meade, there are several examples of how this authority could be utilized effectively:

- Because it began before the implementation of Section 331, the recycled water action between Fort Meade and Howard County had to go through the complete DOD contracting process. The complexity of maneuvering through this contracting environment was one of the significant causes of project implementation delays.
- Fort Meade is currently working with Anne Arundel County on "in kind" exchange of services involving athletic fields and maintenance. Section 331 would give the installation more flexibility to negotiate.
- Future negotiations and agreements between local jurisdictions and the installation of the subjects of water, waste water, transportation, safety, and facilities would become much simpler and therefore encourage innovation and related actions.

We respectfully request that OSD provide the status of implementation guidelines and policies for Section 331. During a time of diminished federal resources, this authority will provide Fort Meade and other military installations with another tool to enhance support services and manage growth.

Sincerely,



BARBARA A. MIKULSKI
U.S. Senate




BEN CARDIN
U.S. Senate





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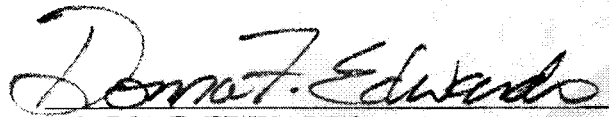
United States Congress

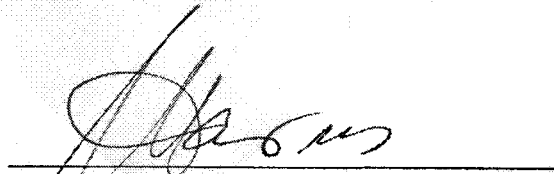
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ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS
Member of Congress


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