

**JOHN B. LARSON**

FIRST DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

**WASHINGTON OFFICE:**

1005 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20543  
202 225 2765  
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27 MAIN STREET, SECOND FLOOR  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106  
860 278 8888  
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**INTERNET ADDRESS:**

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**TOLL-FREE NUMBER (IN STATE ONLY):**

888 716 4734



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-0701

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL, AIR AND LAND FORCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

**COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE AND AERONAUTICS

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**  
RANKING MEMBER

**DEMOCRATIC STEERING COMMITTEE**

**FORMER STATE LEGISLATIVE LEADERS**  
**WORKING GROUP**  
CO-CHAIR

January 9, 2004

Donald Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
Office of the Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to draw your attention to a matter that has arisen in connection with equipment shortages for U.S. troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. While I am aware of the great lengths that you and the Department of Defense have gone to ensure that all our troops have the equipment they require, previously there were numerous reports that some service members lacked the most up-to-date ceramic "Interceptor" body armor and instead had older, less effective protective armor.

In response to this situation, family members, or in some instances the troops themselves, used their own funds to purchase body armor for use while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. One of my constituents spent \$1,100 of her own money in order to purchase armor for her son serving in Iraq. Clearly this is a step that she and others should not have had to take, as providing our troops with the necessary equipment is inherently a governmental responsibility. I again applaud your efforts since that time to make certain that the needed equipment was given to our troops as quickly as possible.

I would like to make you aware of legislation that I have introduced, H.R. 3615, which would reimburse troops or family members for any protective body armor they purchased because they or their family member serving in connection with operations in Iraq and Afghanistan did not have most up-to-date protective equipment. The legislation would reimburse those who purchased body armor between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2003.

Secretary of Defense



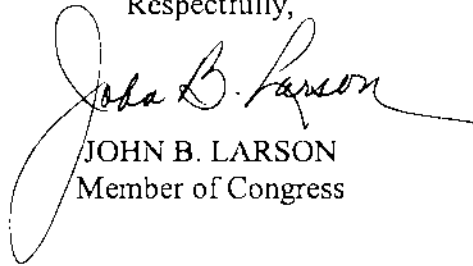
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OSD 01195-04

I wanted to bring this matter to your attention and am interested in working with you to determine if an administrative route through the DOD to bring reimbursements to these troops or their family members would be more appropriate or effective than a legislative route, and if so, to determine a process by which reimbursements would be applied for and distributed.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to working with you in the future.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John B. Larson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress

**JOHN B. LARSON**  
FIRST DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

**WASHINGTON OFFICE:**

1005 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
202-774-2265  
202-725-1031 (FAX)

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860-278-8888  
860-278-2111 (FAX)

**INTERNET ADDRESS:**

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**TOLL-FREE NUMBER (IN STATE ONLY):**  
866-716-4734



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0701**

May 5, 2004

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

**COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY  
RANKING MEMBER

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE AND AERONAUTICS

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**  
RANKING MEMBER

**DEMOCRATIC STEERING COMMITTEE**

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
Office of the Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary:

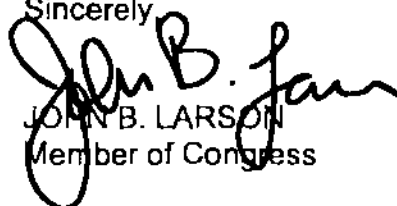
I am writing to you to follow-up on a letter that I sent to your office on January 9, 2004 about a proposal I had drafted to provide reimbursements to members of the Armed Forces for protective body armor purchased by themselves or others on their behalf between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2003 and asking to work with you to determine what was necessary to move this proposal forward, either administratively or legislatively.

I received a response from you on February 2, 2004, referring the matter to Army Secretary Brownlee for further review. I received a response from Secretary Brownlee's Legislative Liaison office on March 2, 2004 stating that "once all pertinent information has been considered, a response will be sent to your office." However, to date I have not received an additional response to my inquiry.

As you are aware, the House Armed Services Committee is scheduled to mark up the FY05 National Defense Authorization bill this week at the Subcommittee level, and in full committee next week. Having not received any feedback from the Department on this initiative, I wanted to let you know of my intention to proceed legislatively on this matter and propose an amendment before the Committee during the upcoming markup based on my legislation, HR 3615.

Should you have any information that you feel is relevant to our consideration of this matter, especially if you have an estimate as to how many individuals may have purchased protective body armor on their own and might qualify for reimbursement under this proposal, I would welcome your input.

Sincerely,

  
JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress

0 SD 06669-04

CAROL SHEA-PORTER  
FIRST DISTRICT, NEW HAMPSHIRE



COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
READINESS  
MILITARY PERSONNEL

1330 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-5456  
(202) 225-5877 (FAX)

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR  
WORKFORCE PROTECTION  
HEALTHY FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

33 LOWELL STREET  
MANCHESTER, NH 03101  
(603) 641-9536  
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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
INSULAR AFFAIRS, OCEANS AND WILDLIFE  
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND  
PUBLIC LANDS

104 WASHINGTON STREET  
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(603) 743-4813  
(603) 743-5956 (FAX)

Washington, DC 20515

February 17, 2009

[www.shea-porter.house.gov](http://www.shea-porter.house.gov)

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

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our concern about recent reports that the Department of Defense has awarded KBR a \$35.4 million contract that includes major electrical projects and request that you review the contract award and report to us explaining why the contract award was made to KBR, given its long record of deficient electrical work in Iraq.

As you are aware, KBR has held a contract for building maintenance for U.S. military facilities in Iraq since 2003. During this time, there have been numerous investigations into the dangers KBR's faulty electrical work is creating for our military personnel. The Department of Defense Inspector General is currently investigating the electrocution deaths of 18 Americans (16 soldiers and 2 contractors) in KBR-maintained facilities. KBR is under criminal investigation for the electrocution deaths of several U.S. soldiers in Iraq. The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted an in-depth investigation into the problem of electrocutions in U.S. facilities in Iraq and the death of Staff Sgt. Ryan Maseth, 24, a decorated Green Beret electrocuted in his shower on January 2, 2008. The Committee's investigation showed that KBR was alerted to the deficiencies in this and other cases, but failed to take corrective action. In 2008, the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) issued a "Level III Corrective Action Request" to KBR, indicating that the contractor was in "serious non-compliance." This action request, the final warning before a contract is terminated, points to KBR's continuing failure to ensure electrical safety for our troops. With this history, it is not surprising that Capt. David J. Graff, commander of the DCMA's International Division, was quoted in an Associated Press article, stating that "many within DOD have lost or are losing all remaining confidence in KBR's ability to successfully and repeatedly perform the required electrical support services mission in Iraq."

Despite these serious, ongoing concerns, the Department of Defense has awarded KBR a new contract that includes the type of work that KBR failed to perform adequately for years. Threats to the safety and lives of soldiers or others because of known hazards and negligent performance of work are not acceptable.

OSD 02173-09



We would therefore appreciate a thorough review of the recent contract award to KBR. At the very least, when our soldiers put their lives on the line for us in a war zone, we not only owe them the assurance that they will not be electrocuted in the shower on their return from a mission, but also that those who provide them with services put our soldiers' safety ahead of their profits.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Carol Shea-Porter

Ken A. Wapner

Mozie K. Herono

Sven Moore

Russ Holt

Chris

Jim Wapner

John My

John Smith

Roby V. Smith

Maura H. G.

Diane E. Watson

Geordie S. S.

Alan B. S.

Jan Schokman

Eric Jansen

Betty McCallan

Phyllis Wilson

John B Larsen

**JOHN B. LARSON**  
FIRST DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

**HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS**  
CHAIR

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT REVENUE MEASURES  
**DEMOCRATIC STEERING COMMITTEE**



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0701**

May 21, 2010

**WASHINGTON OFFICE:**  
109 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
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800-276-2111 (FAX)

**INTERNET ADDRESS:**  
<http://www.larson.house.gov>  
**TOLL-FREE NUMBER (IN STATE ONLY):**  
866-716-4734

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

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you know, the House of Representative will soon debate passage of the fiscal year 2011 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 5136). In advance of our consideration, I would like to obtain your position on a number of critical issues.

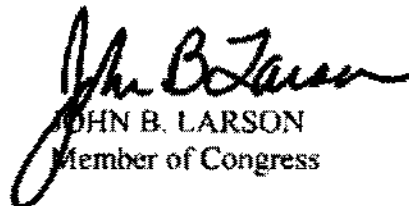
As currently written, the fiscal year 2011 National Defense Authorization Act would provide \$485 million for the Joint Strike Fighter's Alternate Engine program and limit funding for the Joint Strike Fighter program if development on the extra engine is discontinued. Prior to our consideration of this legislation, please provide my office with your position regarding:

1. The inclusion of additional funds for the Alternate Engine program;
2. The potential impact that continued development of an extra engine will have on the Joint Strike Fighter program and our warfighter;
3. The limitations established that could potentially prohibit the full funding of the Joint Strike Fighter program; and
4. Any identified military requirement for the continuation of the Alternate Engine program.

Furthermore, I am aware that General Electric recently submitted an unsolicited contract for the production of the F136 engine. Please provide my office with your position on this offer.

As always, thank you for the exemplary leadership you provide our nation's armed services. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

  
JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress

OSD 06411-10



**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 4, 2011

Secretary Robert M. Gates  
Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Gates:

As you may know, members of the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, as well as other supportive Members of Congress, have written in the past in support of TRICARE covering cognitive rehabilitation for service members with brain injuries. In 2008, then-Senator Obama and then-Senator Bayh led letters with eight members of the Senate and over 65 House members. Two years later, the Department is still studying the issue and does not expect to make a decision on the results of a study mandated by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 anytime soon.

We hope you share our concern that service members returning from the battlefield today cannot wait to receive treatment for their injuries. Yet without a specific waiver applicable only under very unusual and limited circumstances, TRICARE does not cover cognitive rehabilitation – therapy programs that aid in the management of specific problems in thinking and perception – when billed as a separate service. Considering that our service members have been deployed in two conflicts for nearly a decade, it is our hope that there exists some contingency plan to provide cognitive rehabilitation for service members who are returning home today, particularly those with mild traumatic brain injuries. While TRICARE clearly pays for rehabilitation for physical injuries, brain injuries—the invisible wounds of this war—are not given the same therapy if not treated as part of a comprehensive brain injury rehabilitation program. Recent stories by NPR and ProPublica give examples of providers at civilian clinics who have tried to help soldiers with their cognitive rehabilitation, only to be informed by TRICARE that they cannot receive payment for their services.

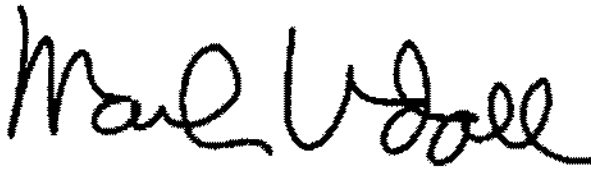
As this issue is studied, we ask that you share with us your plans to ensure that our service members with brain injuries are not only identified, but also able to receive treatment such as cognitive rehabilitation to restore their cognitive functions. Cognitive rehabilitation is widely recognized as a proven treatment for traumatic brain injury by experts and groups, including the National Institutes of Health, the Brain Injury Association of America, and the National Academy of Neuropsychology. Many states pay for cognitive rehabilitation under their Medicaid programs, and most private insurers cover this service. In light of this consensus from a wide variety of organizations, experts and government agencies, we hope that TRICARE will find some way to provide access to cognitive rehabilitation for our returning service members who would benefit from this therapy – both those with more severe and mild traumatic brain injuries – and to ensure that care decisions are made consistently. We also respectfully request a meeting with appropriate officials at the Department to discuss TRICARE's plans to ensure treatment coverage for our service members with brain injuries.





Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please let us know how you plan to expedite new treatments for traumatic brain injured soldiers as soon as possible. We look forward to working with you to provide the best care to our service members.

Sincerely,



Mark Udall  
United State Senator



James M. Inhofe  
United States Senator



Bill Pascrell  
Member of Congress



Todd Russell Platts  
Member of Congress



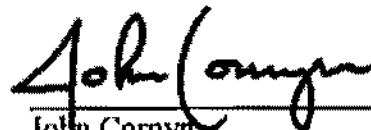
Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



Richard Burr  
United States Senator



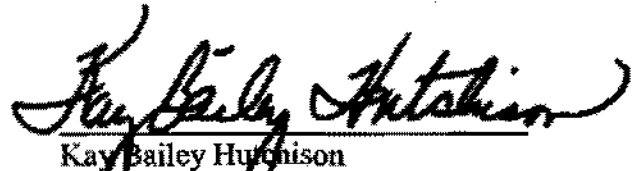
Herb Kohl  
United States Senator



John Cornyn  
United States Senator



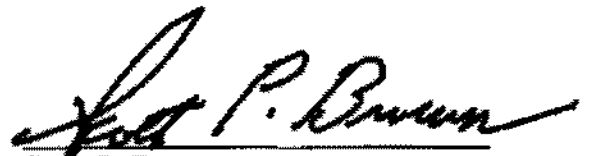
Frank R. Lautenberg  
United States Senator



Kay Bailey Hutchison  
United States Senator




Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

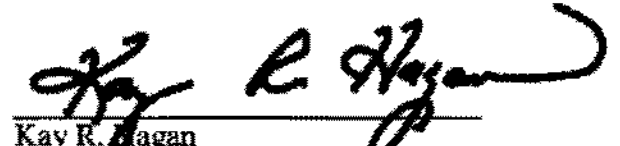


Scott P. Brown  
United States Senator

  
Tim Johnson  
United States Senator


  
Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator

  
Patrick J. Leahy  
United States Senator

  
Kay R. Hagan  
United States Senator


  
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator


  
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator


  
Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator


  
Ben Nelson  
United States Senator

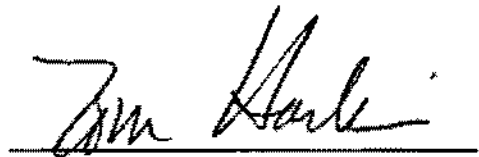
  
Claire McCaskill  
United States Senator

  
Max Baucus  
United States Senator

  
Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator

  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

  
Jon Tester  
United States Senator

  
Tom Harkin  
United States Senator

Tom Udall

Tom Udall  
United States Senator

Larry Kissel

Larry Kissel  
Member of Congress

Wally Herger

Wally Herger  
Member of Congress

David Wu

David Wu  
Member of Congress

Tammy Baldwin

Tammy Baldwin  
Member of Congress

Joseph Crowley

Joseph Crowley  
Member of Congress

Raul M. Grijalva

Raul M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

Laura Richardson

Laura Richardson  
Member of Congress

Jim McDermott

Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress

Mark S. Critz

Mark S. Critz  
Member of Congress

Pete Sessions

Pete Sessions  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly

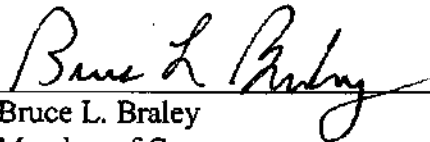
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.

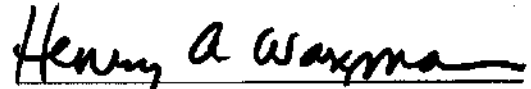
Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan

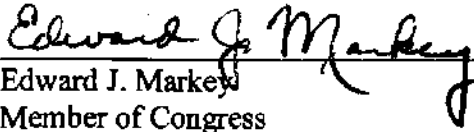
Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress



Bruce L. Braley  
Member of Congress



Henry A. Waxman  
Member of Congress



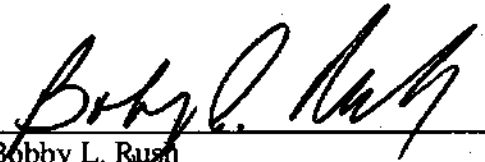
Edward J. Markey  
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Mazie K. Hirono  
Member of Congress



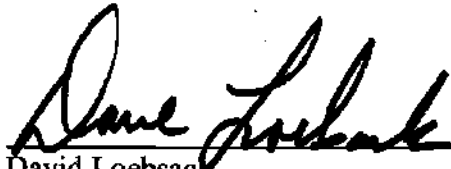
Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress



Joe Baca  
Member of Congress



Portney Pete Stark  
Member of Congress



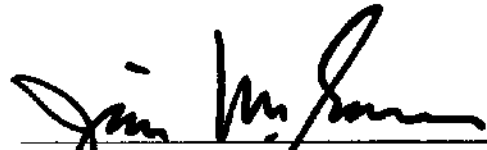
David Loebsack  
Member of Congress



Betty Sutton  
Member of Congress



Jason Altmire  
Member of Congress



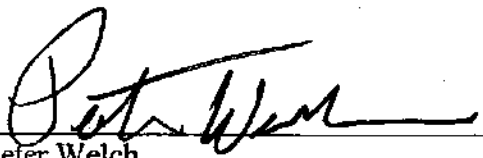
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



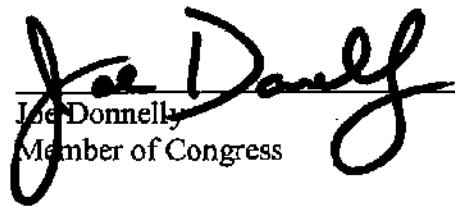
Bob Filner  
Member of Congress



Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress



Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



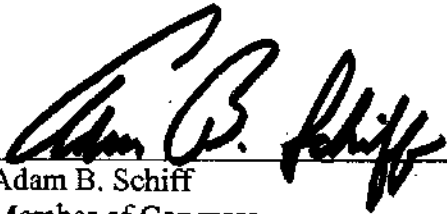
Joe Donnelly  
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



Brad Miller  
Member of Congress



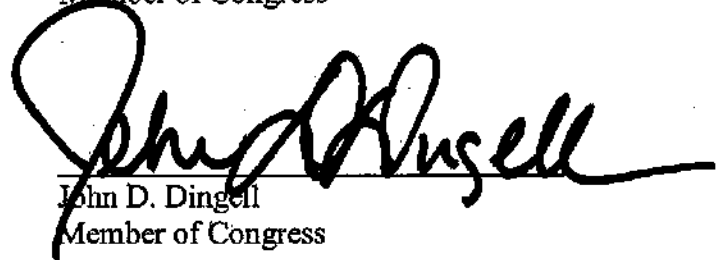
Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady  
Member of Congress



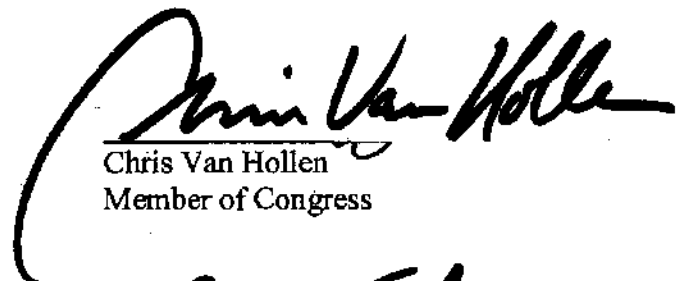
Louise McIntosh Slaughter  
Member of Congress



John D. Dingell  
Member of Congress



Howard L. Berman  
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress



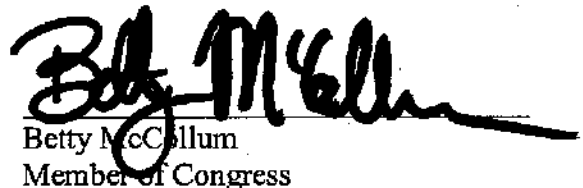
David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



Barney Frank  
Member of Congress



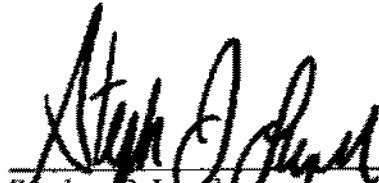
John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



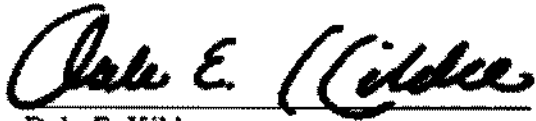
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



Dale E. Kildee  
Member of Congress



Rush D. Holt  
Member of Congress



Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



# DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

## U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

John B. Larson, Chairman  
Xavier Becerra, Vice Chair

April 4, 2011

The Honorable Robert M. Gates  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Mr. Secretary:

I want to thank you for speaking at last week's classified briefing on Libya. I know Members of both the Democratic Caucus and the Republican Conference were grateful for the chance to hear directly from Administration officials.

I have a great respect for the dynamic tension that exists between the Executive and Legislative branches of government, and I understand the Administration's need to act quickly when our national interests are threatened. I am fully cognizant that this crisis could well have become a catastrophe for the people of Benghazi, and I appreciate your clarification of the unique nature of this case.

The unilateral authorization of military action by the Executive branch remains a longstanding source of concern for Congress, and needs to be addressed. Yet a time of urgency is not always a time for lengthy debate, and we want to be able to work together during a crisis.

Thank you again for addressing the Congress, and please know that our thoughts and prayers are with our men and women in uniform and with the President at this difficult time. I especially want to thank you for your fervent commitment to the troops on the ground. Your description of how extended we are as a military should be sobering. I know I join with many in Congress who would like to see you stay on as Secretary of Defense. I understand the well-deserved desire to move on, but please know that if there was a draft, you would be the overwhelming choice.

With great respect and admiration,

*Your candor, credibility and integrity have earned you the respect of the nation. God Bless*

JOHN B. LARSON  
Chairman

202A Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: 202 225-1400 Fax: 202 226-4412 Internet: www.dems.gov

OSD 04389-11



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 24, 2012

The Honorable Leon Panetta  
Secretary of Defense  
United States Department of Defense  
1000 Defense, The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

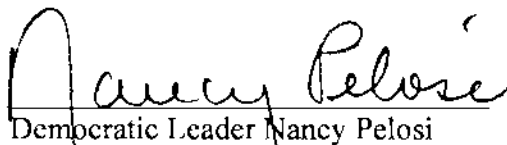
Dear Secretary Panetta:

We would like to extend a personal invitation to attend the 2012 *National Memorial Day Concert* held on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol on Sunday, May 27th at 8:00 p.m. As the memorial service for the entire nation with a concert audience of hundreds of thousands, this annual nationally televised event inspires millions of viewers to remember our men and women in uniform who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country, as well as those still serving today with distinction, and their families.

For over 30 years, the U.S. Capitol has hosted both the Memorial Day and *Capitol Fourth* concerts, America's National Independence Day Celebration, and we would be honored to have you attend. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff participate in the annual program along with a dozen prominent national stars. Special guests of the concert include Wounded Warriors from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

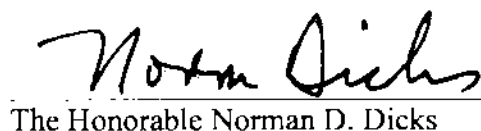
After the concert, a reception will be held in Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol for Members of Congress, members of the Armed Services, Wounded Warriors and star entertainers. We would like you to attend as our special guest. We hope you will consider joining us to share this evening of commemoration, and we look forward to your response.

With best wishes,

  
Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi

  
Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer

  
The Honorable John B. Larson

  
The Honorable Norman D. Dicks



OSD002490-12



**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 20, 2012

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-1000

Dear Secretary Panetta:

We write today to encourage the Department of Defense (DoD) and the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) to provide full access to behavioral health treatment, including Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) therapy to the over 23,000 military children with an autism spectrum disorder in TRICARE. Currently, the children of military retirees are excluded from receiving ABA therapy, and the children of active duty service members are severely limited by a cap on benefits. Our military families have shouldered enormous burdens and borne enormous costs on behalf of our country's national defense. However, because of current DoD restrictions, military families are being forced to choose between paying out of pocket and incurring significant debt or having their children go without critically needed treatment that is proven to help those who have an autism spectrum disorder. We urge you to follow the recent step taken by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and fully cover ABA therapy under the Department's TRICARE program.

Currently, ABA is only covered by DoD's TRICARE Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) program, which caps coverage at a level below what is recommended for some children and is only available to active duty military. Military retirees and medical retirees, including Wounded Warriors, are not eligible for coverage under TRICARE ECHO. Recently, the OPM announced that it will allow all health insurance plans to offer ABA therapy under the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) program. These benefits were not previously available to federal employees because OPM previously considered ABA therapy as an "educational intervention" and not "medical" therapy. However, OPM has changed its classification of ABA therapy and now considers it to be a medical therapy<sup>1</sup>.

Unfortunately, the DoD and TMA still maintain that ABA therapy is an "educational intervention" and not "medical," despite the preponderance of evidence that states otherwise. On March 6, 2012 during the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on military

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<sup>1</sup> See FEHB program carrier letter number 2012-2(c) dated April 19th, 2012, page 5 section II (a) states: "The OPM Benefit Review Panel recently evaluated the status of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) for children with autism. Previously, ABA was considered to be an educational intervention and not covered under the FEHB Program. The Panel concluded that there is now sufficient evidence to categorize ABA as medical therapy."

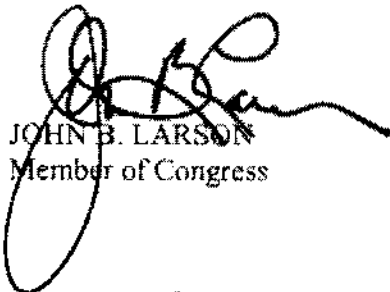


health affairs, Dr. Jonathan Woodson, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, was questioned about why military autism benefits could not be moved from the TRICARE ECHO program to the TRICARE Basic program. Dr. Woodson stated, "It is not an issue of policy, but a statute issue" and "ABA therapy is not considered a medical treatment, but is an educational intervention in the management of autism."

OPM's revised position on ABA as a medical therapy reinforces the point that it is long past time for the DoD to change its policy as well and classify ABA as a medical treatment so that children with autism of all service members, active and retired, will be able to take advantage of this critically needed health treatment.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your prompt response.

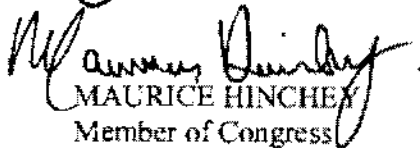
Sincerely,



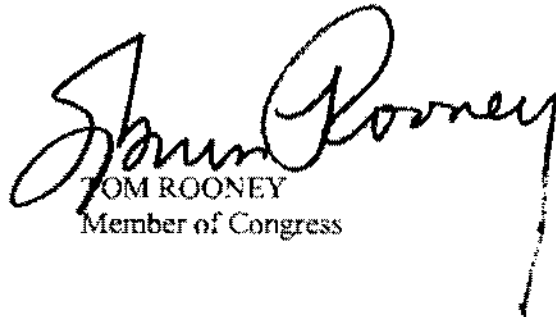
JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress



WALTER B. JONES  
Member of Congress



MAURICE HINCHEY  
Member of Congress



TOM ROONEY  
Member of Congress

cc: Dr. Jonathan Woodson, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs  
Director, TRICARE Management Activity