

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

October 14, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray  
United States Senate  
448 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling  
United States House of Representatives  
129 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus  
United States Senate  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dave Camp  
United States House of Representatives  
341 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Kerry  
United States Senate  
218 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Fred Upton  
United States House of Representatives  
2183 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James Clyburn  
United States House of Representatives  
2135 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jon Kyle  
United States Senate  
730 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
United States House of Representatives  
1226 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Pat Toomey  
United States Senate  
502 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
United States House of Representatives  
1707 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman  
United States Senate  
338 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Members of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction:

As you begin your work, we respectfully suggest reexamining our defense and security spending priorities as pathways to reducing our deficit and debt. You have been tasked with finding at

least \$1.5 trillion in deficit reductions over a ten-year period by November 23 of this year. You have a unique opportunity to bring our defense spending in line with our legitimate national defense needs while getting our nation on the path to a balanced budget free of deficit. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates noted last year, paraphrasing President Dwight D. Eisenhower, “The United States should spend as much as necessary on national defense, but not one penny more.”

In the ten years since the 9/11 attacks, spending on defense and security has increased 96% and totaled almost \$8 trillion. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have cost \$1.36 trillion, and taken the lives of over six thousand men and women while leaving over thirty thousand wounded. In the same time frame, the base budget for the Pentagon has mushroomed to \$5.6 trillion.

As the 9/11 attacks demonstrated, the kinds of threats we face today are very different than those of previous eras. We live in an age where a few determined individuals with minimal financing, good planning and training, and a willingness to die can inflict billions of dollars in damage and kill thousands in a matter of hours. None of the billions of dollars of Cold War-era weaponry in our arsenal on September 11, 2001 stopped Al-Qaeda.

The continued reliance on Cold War weaponry and conventional tactics two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union makes little strategic or fiscal sense. The June 2010 report of the Sustainable Defense Task Force detailed proposals to reduce our nuclear stockpile substantially, realizing savings of over \$100 billion without compromising our national security.<sup>1</sup> The report proposed over \$960 billion in defense department savings over the next decade.

Significant savings could also be realized by auditing the Pentagon and requiring that it produce financial documents like any private sector business. Waste, fraud and abuse are endemic at the Pentagon, with the recent report from the General Accountability Office detailing hundreds of billions of dollars in duplicative programs with little oversight.<sup>2</sup> The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been characterized by poor planning, no-bid contracts, and lack of oversight leading to massive cost overruns. In August, the Commission on Wartime Contracting released

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<sup>1</sup> See “Debt, Deficits, and Defense: A Way Forward” at <http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/1006SDTReport.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> See full March 1, 2011 GAO report “Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue” at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11318sp.pdf>

its final report finding that an estimated \$30 and \$60 billion has been wasted during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This level of mismanagement is simply unacceptable.<sup>3</sup>

There are multiple reforms proposed that would save hundreds of billions of dollars over the next decade. The Bowles-Simpson commission outlined \$750 billion in suggested defense cuts in the next decade. Former Assistant Secretary of Defense Lawrence Korb has proposed \$1 trillion in cuts to the Pentagon over the next 10-12 years. These reductions in defense spending would come out of \$6.5 trillion in proposed spending between 2011 and 2020.

We are not urging reductions that in any way would cut resources and supplies necessary to protect American troops in the field. Similarly, while we are not opposed to an honest look at efforts at reforming the way that the Department of Defense provides health care and other services to personnel, we are opposed to cuts in services and increased fees for our veterans and military retirees.

Our economic recovery is vital to our strategic interests. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, has warned that ongoing debt accumulation is undermining our economic strength and threatening our national security. Taking serious steps to resolve our fiscal imbalance must include the Pentagon's budget, which should be subject to the same scrutiny as the rest of our discretionary budget as you look for savings. As Members on the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, we urge you to think openly and act boldly to reduce our deficit and get our nation back on the right track. Bringing our defense spending in line with our legitimate security needs must be considered along with other measures to regain our economic footing.

Sincerely,



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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



John Campbell  
Member of Congress

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<sup>3</sup> See full August 2011 Commission report "Transforming Wartime Contracting: Controlling Costs, reducing risks" at: [http://www.wartimecontracting.gov/docs/CWC\\_FinalReport-lowres.pdf](http://www.wartimecontracting.gov/docs/CWC_FinalReport-lowres.pdf)



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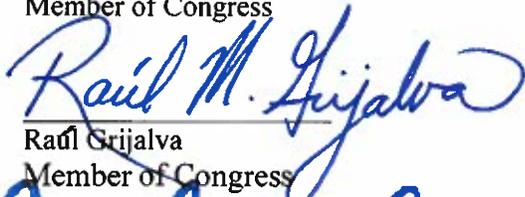
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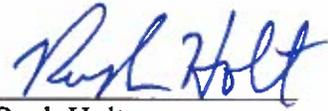
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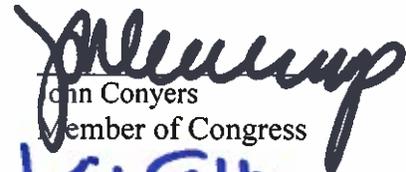
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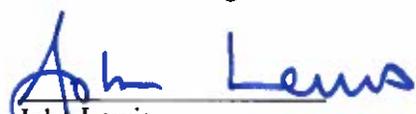
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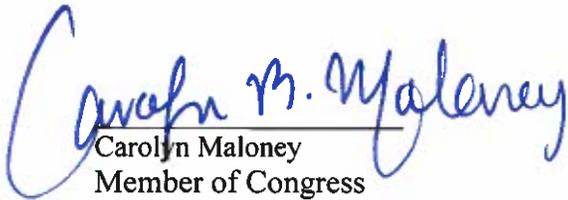
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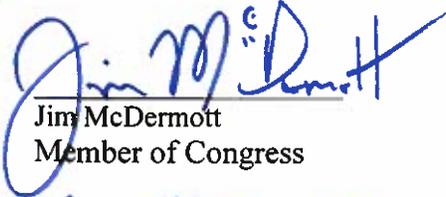


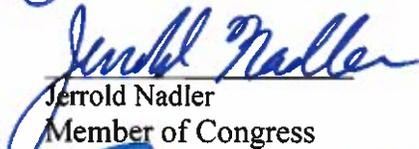
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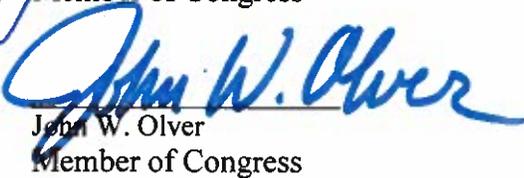


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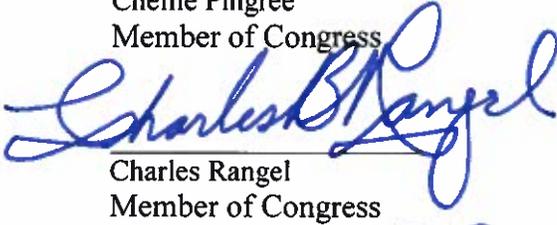
  
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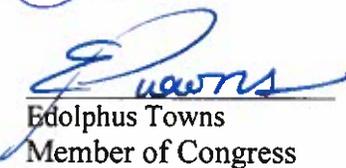
  
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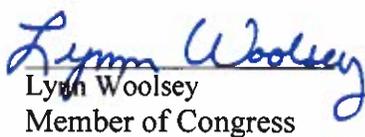
  
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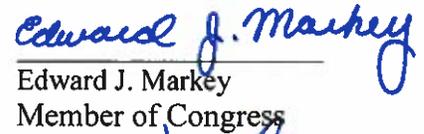
  
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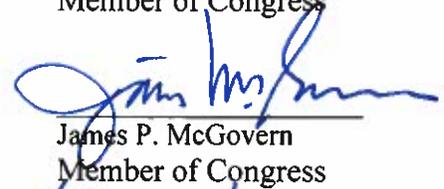
  
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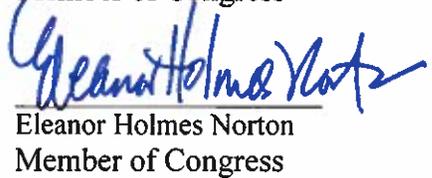
  
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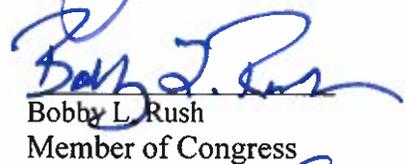
  
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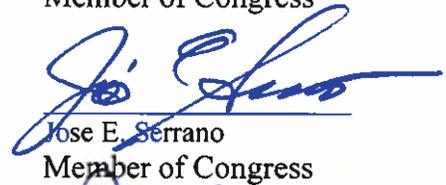
  
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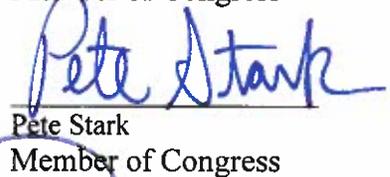
  
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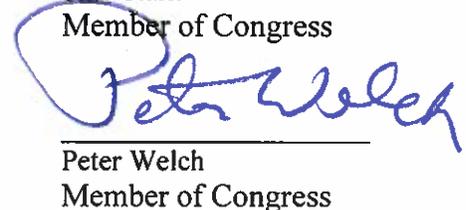
  
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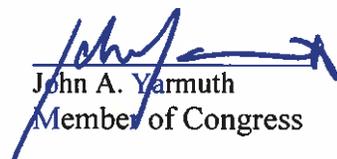
  
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