

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 22, 2015

The Honorable Ash Carter
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Carter:

The recent murder of four Marines, a sailor, and the injuring of others in Chattanooga, Tennessee is further, irrefutable evidence that domestic terrorism targeting our stateside troops is real and ongoing. This attack unfolded just four months after the March 26, 2015 arrests of Hasan Rasheed Edmonds, a member of the Illinois National Guard, and his cousin Jonas Marcel Edmonds, for plotting to join ISIS and attack soldiers on U.S. bases. In December 2010, Antonio Martinez was arrested for planning to bomb a military recruiting center in Maryland. In June 2009, Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad was arrested for firing on soldiers in front of a United States military recruiting office in Little Rock, Arkansas. He killed Private William Long and wounded Private Quinton Ezeagwula.

These examples are beyond the notorious attack by Major Nidal Malik Hasan on November 5, 2009, when the U.S. Army psychiatrist opened fire at a military processing center at Fort Hood, Texas, killing 13 people and wounding 32 others. There is no reason to believe the risk will mitigate; to the contrary, all facts lead us to believe that the risk of more attacks on our troops is increasing.

We must not delay in confronting this real and imminent threat. Current Department of Defense regulations, in place since at least 1992, prohibit base commanders from allowing service members to carry personal firearms on military installations. You have the authority to change this directive, and we implore you to do so. Specifically, we ask that you allow the Commanding Officer at each of our military bases and reserve centers to authorize certain personnel to carry personal firearms as a means of enhanced force protection.

Though legislation has been introduced via an amendment to the FY16 National Defense Authorization Act, which makes clear that the Secretary of Defense would empower commanders to enact this policy, you have the discretion and authority to make this important change now.

Our men and women in uniform should have the fundamental right to defend themselves, and their families deserve the peace of mind that all reasonable steps are being taken to ensure that their loved one returns home safely at the end of the day. We believe that the need for you to act on this request is painfully self-evident, and urgent.

We appreciate and thank you for your leadership and your strong advocacy for those who defend and keep our nation free.

Sincerely,



Scott Rigell
Member of Congress



Pat Roberts
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress



Tom Price, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Ryan Zinke
Member of Congress



Robert Hurt
Member of Congress



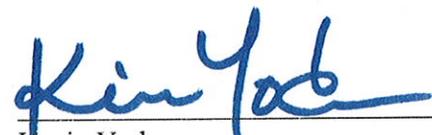
Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress



Gary Palmer
Member of Congress



Rod Blum
Member of Congress



Kevin Yoder
Member of Congress



Jim Bridenstine
Member of Congress



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



Robert Pittenger
Member of Congress



Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress



Curt Clawson
Member of Congress



Robert Aderholt
Member of Congress



Gregg Harper
Member of Congress



Ron DeSantis
Member of Congress



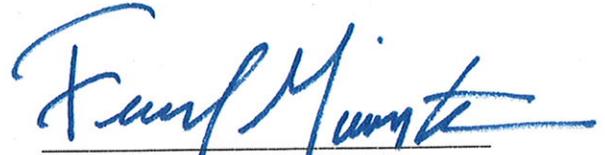
Brian Babin
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



John Ratcliffe
Member of Congress



Frank Guinta
Member of Congress



David Brat
Member of Congress



Steven Palazzo
Member of Congress



Jeff Miller
Member of Congress



Phil Roe, M.D.
Member of Congress

Ken Buck

Ken Buck
Member of Congress



Ralph Abraham
Member of Congress

Jackie Walorski

Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress

David Rouzer

David Rouzer
Member of Congress

Glenn Grothman

Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress

Paul Gosar

Paul Gosar
Member of Congress

Ted Yoho

Ted Yoho
Member of Congress

Dan Benishek

Dan Benishek
Member of Congress

Mark Meadows

Mark Meadows
Member of Congress

Bill Flores

Bill Flores
Member of Congress

Kevin Cramer

Kevin Cramer
Member of Congress

Daniel Webster

Daniel Webster
Member of Congress

Morgan Griffith

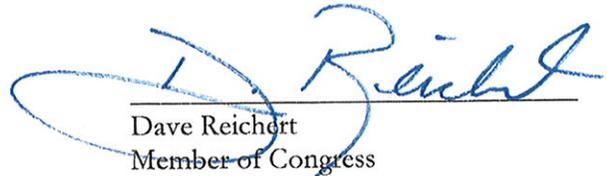
Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress

Tim Huelskamp

Tim Huelskamp
Member of Congress



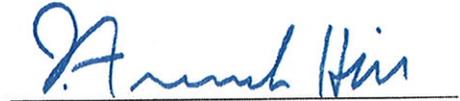
Jason Smith
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress



Scott Perry
Member of Congress



French Hill
Member of Congress



Mo Brooks
Member of Congress



Sam Graves
Member of Congress



Reid Ribble
Member of Congress



Raul Labrador
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



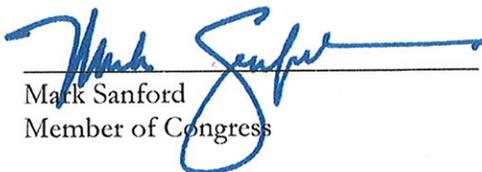
John Garter
Member of Congress



Pete Olson
Member of Congress



John Fleming
Member of Congress



Mark Sanford
Member of Congress



Ken Calvert
Member of Congress


Job Hensarling
Member of Congress


Pete Sessions
Member of Congress


Adrian Smith
Member of Congress

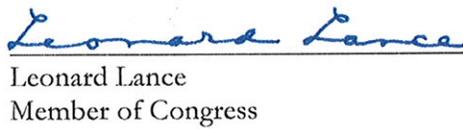

Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress


Bob Goodlatte
Member of Congress


Tom McClintock
Member of Congress


Walter Jones
Member of Congress

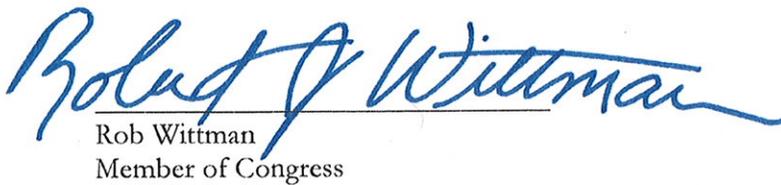

Michael Burgess
Member of Congress

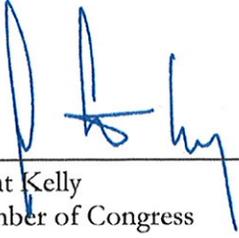

Leonard Lance
Member of Congress


Lamar Smith
Member of Congress


K. Michael Conaway
Member of Congress


Steve Pearce
Member of Congress


Rob Wittman
Member of Congress



Trent Kelly
Member of Congress

Lou Barletta

Lou Barletta
Member of Congress