

June 9, 2015

Dear Senator,

As retired generals and admirals who believe that American ideals are a national security asset, we urge you to support the amendment to the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act that solidifies the ban against torture and cruel treatment of detainees in U.S. custody.

While international and domestic law, including the 2005 Detainee Treatment Act, prohibit such cruelty, high-level officials in the Executive Branch still managed to evade congressional intent by using loophole lawyering to authorize torture and cruel treatment. We need to make sure this never happens again. The United States should have one standard for interrogating detainees that is effective, lawful, and humane.

The McCain-Feinstein amendment would ensure lawful, effective, and humane interrogations of individuals taken into custody by requiring all agencies and departments to comply with the time-tested requirements of the Army Field Manual (“Human Intelligence Collector Operations”). It would also codify existing Department of Defense (DOD) practice of guaranteeing timely notification and access to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for detainees taken into custody—an important bulwark against abuse.

We strongly urge you to support this legislation to help move our country towards decisively rejecting the use of torture or cruel treatment against detainees held in our custody.

Thank you for your commitment to upholding our national security and American values.

Sincerely,

General Joseph Hoar, USMC (Ret.)

General Charles Krulak, USMC (Ret.)

General David M. Maddox, USA (Ret.)

Lieutenant General John Castellaw, USMC (Ret.)

Lieutenant General Robert G. Gard, Jr., USA (Ret.)

Vice Admiral Lee F. Gunn, USN (Ret.)

Lieutenant General Claudia J. Kennedy, USA (Ret.)

Lieutenant General Charles Otstott, USA (Ret.)

Lieutenant General Norman R. Seip, USAF (Ret.)

Vice Admiral Joe Sestak, USN (Ret.)

Lieutenant General Harry E. Soyster, USA (Ret.)

Lieutenant General Keith J. Stalder, USMC (Ret.)

Rear Admiral Don Guter, JAGC, USN (Ret.)

Rear Admiral John D. Hutson, JAGC, USN (Ret.)

Major General J. Michael Myatt, USMC (Ret.)

Major General William L. Nash, USA (Ret.)

Major General Eric T. Olson, USA (Ret.)
Major General Thomas J. Romig, USA (Ret.)
Major General Walter L. Stewart, Jr., USA (Ret.)
Major General Antonio M. Taguba, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General John Adams, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Stephen A. Cheney, USMC (Ret.)
Brigadier General James P. Cullen, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Evelyn P. Foote, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Gerald E. Galloway, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Leif H. Hendrickson, USMC (Ret.)
Brigadier General David R. Irvine, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General John H. Johns, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Murray G. Sagsveen, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Stephen N. Xenakis, USA (Ret.)