

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

November 20, 2013

Dear Mr. President:

The war in Afghanistan has just entered its 13th year, and the need to bring our troops home could not be any more clear. President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan suggested in a recent interview that he would be willing to see the permanent exit of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. President Karzai has also repeatedly stated that he sees no potential security benefit from an enduring U.S. security mission. Indeed at times President Karzai has claimed U.S. and NATO troops are the cause of insecurity in Afghanistan.

We believe that President Karzai's comments raise serious doubts about the justification for a long-term military presence in Afghanistan. Lacking a supportive and viable political partner in Afghanistan, there simply is no military solution American troops can achieve, and extending U.S. troop presence will not serve vital U.S. security goals. Our men and women in uniform are immensely capable, but they cannot succeed with an openly hostile Afghan regime.

While many of us would support removing all U.S. troops and military contractors out of Afghanistan with no permanent bases left behind by the end of 2014, we want to underscore that if any long-term commitment of U.S. troops beyond 2014 is made, it must have congressional authorization. The U.S. simply no longer has compelling security interests in Afghanistan that justifies the maintenance of troops beyond December 2014. Furthermore, as coalition forces withdraw from Afghanistan, U.S.-funded reconstruction projects worth billions of dollars will soon be inaccessible for safe inspection, raising serious questions about our responsibility to conduct vigorous oversight of taxpayer supported efforts.

There is a growing bipartisan sentiment in Congress and across the country for an expedited end of military activities in Afghanistan. After twelve years of war, thousands of lives lost, and hundreds of billions of dollars spent, it is time to bring an end to the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan.

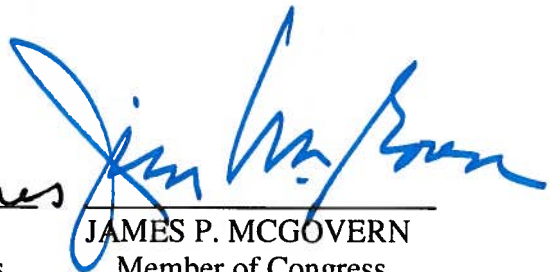
Sincerely,



BARBARA LEE
Member of Congress



WALTER B. JONES
Member of Congress



JAMES P. MCGOVERN
Member of Congress