

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 6, 2003

The Honorable Joseph E. Schmitz  
Inspector General of the Department of Defense  
400 Army Navy Drive  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Inspector General Schmitz:

We are writing in regard to media reports, as well as comments and concerns we have received from families of National Guardsmen and women, about a perceived lack of support for Guard units who are currently deployed internationally in our War on Terrorism and in ongoing operations in Iraq. We urge the Department of Defense Inspector General's office to fully investigate these reports, immediately correct any deficiencies facing the Guard units, and make the Congress aware of those findings so that we may take action to address any matter that requires a statutory change.

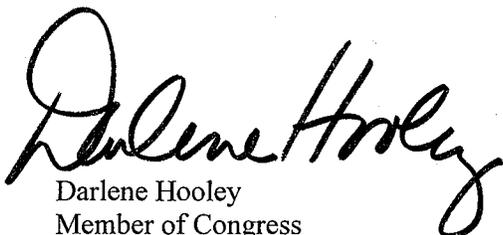
We are all extremely proud of the sacrifice being made by these men and women, and their families. Yet, we are increasingly concerned about reports from these Guard forces and their families about inadequate equipment, poor lines of communication with both their families back home and between the Pentagon and the respective State National Guard headquarters, treatment by regular military superiors abroad as "second-class citizens," and a lack of any timetable for their return home.

Specifically, there have been reports in both Iraq and Afghanistan that Guardsmen are not only facing the challenge of fighting a face-less enemy hiding in the shadows, but that they are facing added obstacles such as an inadequate supply of potable water, lack of proper clothing, poor food quality, inferior medical care, and difficult access to communication with their families.

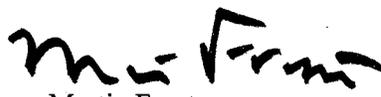
It is imperative for our operations in Iraq, and for our success in the larger War on Terror, that all of our troops, including our National Guard, have high morale. Any treatment, or perceived treatment, of Guard units as "second-class citizens" would have a devastating effect on this morale.

Thank you for addressing these concerns and we look forward to learning the results of your investigation as well as any actions the Department of Defense or Congress should take to resolve any inequities in Guard treatment.

Sincerely,



Darlene Hooley  
Member of Congress



Martin Frost  
Member of Congress



Vic Snyder  
Member of Congress



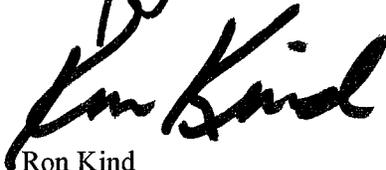
Anibal Acevedo-Vila  
Member of Congress



Max Sandlin  
Member of Congress



Bob Etheridge  
Member of Congress



Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



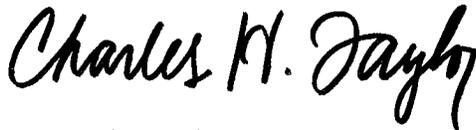
Charlie Stenholm  
Member of Congress



Julia Carson  
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress



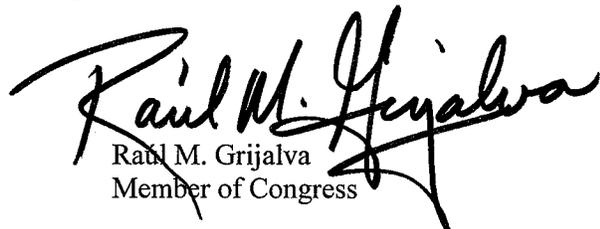
Charles Taylor  
Member of Congress



James McGovern  
Member of Congress



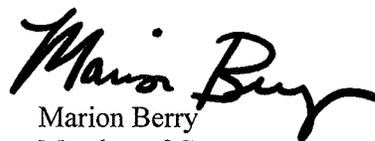
Sander Levin  
Member of Congress



Raul M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



Edolphus Towns  
Member of Congress



Marion Berry  
Member of Congress

*Allen Boyd*

Allen Boyd  
Member of Congress

*Tom Lantos*

Tom Lantos  
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

*Donna Christensen*

Donna Christensen  
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*Eni Faleomavaega*

Eni Faleomavaega  
Member of Congress

*Gene Taylor*

Gene Taylor  
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Bart Stupak  
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Sam Farr  
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Carolyn Kilpatrick  
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David Scott  
Member of Congress

*James Oberstar*

James Oberstar  
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*Louise M. Slaughter*

Louise Slaughter  
Member of Congress