

September 14, 2006

Dear Senator:

As members of families who lost loved ones in the 9/11 attacks, we are writing to express our deep concern over the provisions of the Administration's proposed Military Commissions Act of 2006.

There are those who would like to portray the legislation as a choice between supporting the rights of terrorists and keeping the United States safe. We reject this argument. We believe that adopting policies against terrorism which honor our values and our international commitments makes us safer and is the smarter strategy.

We do not believe that the United States should decriminalize cruel and inhuman interrogations. The Geneva Convention rules against brutal interrogations have long had the strong support of the U.S. because they protect our citizens. We should not be sending a message to the world that we now believe that torture and cruel treatment is sometimes acceptable. Moreover, the Administration's own representatives at the Pentagon have strongly affirmed in just the last few days that torture and abuse do not produce reliable information. No legislation should have your support if it is at all ambiguous on this issue.

Nor do we believe that it is in the interest of the United States to create a system of military courts that violate basic notions of due process and lack truly independent judicial oversight. Not only does this violate our most cherished values and send the wrong message to the world, it also runs the risk that the system will again be struck down resulting in even more delay.

We believe that we must have policies that reflect what is best in the United States rather than compromising our values out of fear. As John McCain has said, "This is not about who the terrorists are, this is about who we are." We urge you to reject the Administration's ill-conceived proposals which will make us both less safe and less proud as a nation.

Sincerely,

Marilynn Rosenthal

Nicholas H. Ruth

Adele Welty

Nissa Youngren

Terry Greene

John LeBlanc

Andrea LeBlanc

Ryan Amundson

Barry Amundson

Colleen Kelly

Terry Kay Rockefeller

John William Harris

David Potorti

Donna Marsh O'Connor

Kjell Youngren

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