

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 15, 2012

Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Levin and Ranking Member McCain:

We write to request inclusion of a legislative provision in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 establishing an objective and transparent process by which the Department of Defense (DOD) would evaluate and report on the impact of force structure reductions and restructuring on global force posture prior to initiation of such actions. This process would safeguard national security while ensuring the cost effectiveness and feasibility of proposed force structure adjustments.

Our interest in addressing this process was generated by the Air Force proposal for force reductions and restructuring which affect over 60 installations in Fiscal Year 2013. We have not been provided clear and objective metrics by which the reductions and restructuring proposed at specific installations have been selected. The lack of an objective and transparent process for implementing restructuring and reductions has illustrated a need for greater clarity and improved oversight in such significant proposals.

In addition to concerns about the proposal's impact on overall force posture and military effectiveness, the lack of analysis and comprehensive and detailed information raises serious concerns about the affordability and feasibility of implementing many of the proposals. In response, we have drafted a provision addressing the procedural shortfalls evident this year.

We recognize the DOD must reduce spending in accordance with the Budget Control Act, and as directed by DOD's Strategic Guidance "Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities For 21st Century Defense," the services will become leaner and more agile. As the services work towards a smaller and leaner force, we must ensure that reductions and restructuring are executed in an affordable and feasible manner resulting in an effective and efficient force strategically positioned to achieve our national security objectives. We have worked to craft a policy that balances the goals outlined above with the need to retain flexibility for the Department and the Services.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to ensure that proposed force reductions and restructuring efforts receive proper congressional oversight and achieve their stated objectives for cost savings and strategic enhancement.

Sincerely,



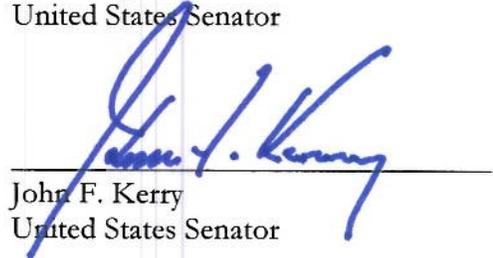
Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



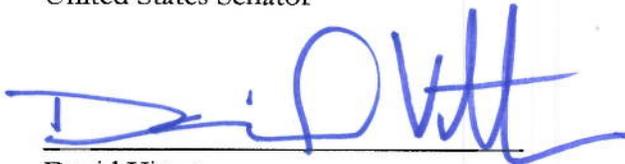
Mark Begich
United States Senator



Mark Udall
United States Senator



John F. Kerry
United States Senator



David Vitter
United States Senator



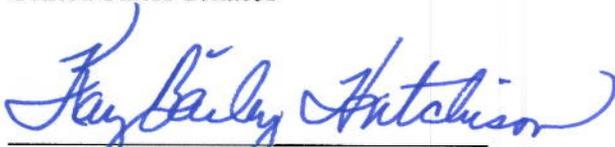
Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator



Scott Brown
United States Senator



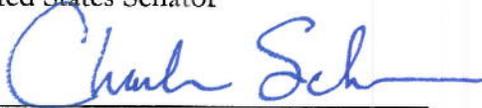
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Kay Bailey Hutchison
United States Senator



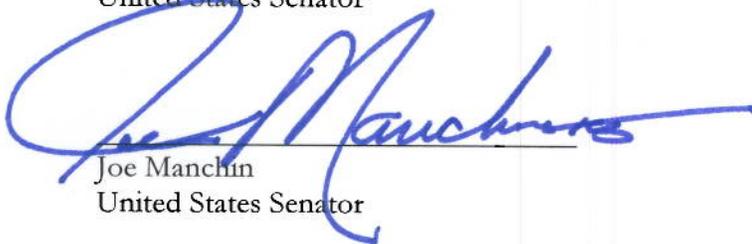
Roger Wicker
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator



Joe Manchin
United States Senator