February 17, 2012

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

We write you to request the attention of your committees to the recent disclosures by Army Lieutenant Colonel Daniel L. Davis regarding the situation in Afghanistan—which appear to vary greatly from the statements to Congress by senior military officials. As the U.S. commits another year of funding to the war in Afghanistan, the public and Congress deserve an accurate assessment of the contingency effort. We urge you to hold prompt hearings to hear Lt. Col. Davis’s testimony and conduct thorough oversight of the war in Afghanistan.

After numerous conversations with officers and enlisted troops in the field, Lt. Col. Davis arrived at the conclusion that official statements on progress in Afghanistan were misleading, and wrote a report documenting the disparity between the official reports and the view on the ground. Lt. Col. Davis came to Congress with this information at great personal risk. Legislators who have read the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) for December 2011—a document prepared by the Director of National Intelligence—say that it supports Davis’s assessment. It is important for the public to see how this report from the intelligence community matches up with Davis’s allegations. In addition, the NIE should be declassified, as other NIEs have been in the past.
Lt. Col. Davis has written an article for *Armed Forces Journal* about the state of affairs in Afghanistan, in which he stated that there is a “discrepancy between official statements and the truth on the ground.” ¹ In recent weeks, he has given briefings to Members of Congress on the subject. He also had submitted the unclassified report he had written to the Army for an internal review rather than releasing it directly to the public, but others acquired the report and released it anyway. ² Lt. Col. Davis emailed the website Fabius Maximus that he “would really have preferred everyone wait until I had the review back from the Army.” ³

Congress must pay attention when a whistleblower comes forward with credible evidence that Congress may be misinformed, particularly when the stakes are this high. Lt. Col. Davis’s disclosures should be a catalyst for conducting effective oversight of the war in Afghanistan. Therefore, we join with the concerned Members of Congress who recently pushed for hearings on Lt. Col. Davis’s analysis and the state of affairs in Afghanistan. ⁴ We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Danielle Brian
Executive Director

cc: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
House Speaker John Boehner and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
Senator Jeff Merkley
Representatives Jimmy Duncan, John Garamendi, Timothy V. Johnson, Walter B. Jones, Barbara Lee, and Jim McGovern

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⁴ Letter from Members of Congress Walter B. Jones (R-NC), Jim McGovern (D-MA), Jimmy Duncan (R-TN), John Garamendi (D-CA), Timothy V. Johnson (R-IL), and Barbara Lee (D-CA), to John Boehner (R-OH), Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, February 10, 2012. https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.documentcloud.org/documents/293289/davis1-merged.pdf (Downloaded February 17, 2012)