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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

September 26, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

I read your comments on Thursday, September 25, in the national press about holding a full debate about the military operation in Iraq and Syria in early 2015 when the new Congress convenes.

On August 27, 2014, I joined Congressman Jim McGovern and Congresswoman Barbara Lee in asking you to allow a debate and a vote on an authorization for the use of United States Armed Services in Iraq and Syria before Congress recessed at the end of September. I am disappointed we did not have a debate on such an authorization.

Those of us in both parties who believe in the Constitution, believe that Congress must debate and declare war. As James Madison wrote, "THE POWER TO DECLARE WAR, INCLUDING THE POWER OF JUDGING THE CAUSES OF WAR, IS FULLY AND EXCLUSIVELY VESTED IN THE LEGISLATURE."

Mr. Speaker, I am asking you to allow a full debate and vote on an authorization for the use of United States Armed Forces in Iraq and Syria when Congress reconvenes in November. Many members are asking for this to take place before the end of the year.

As you probably know, the Pentagon confirmed yesterday, September 25, that the airstrikes being conducted by the United States in Iraq and Syria cost between \$7 million and \$10 million a day. I know that when we get back in the new year there will be a debate on raising the debt ceiling even higher. Recently, in questioning Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, I brought to his attention that America's debt was \$5.6 trillion in 2000. Today it is over \$17 trillion. I also asked Secretary Hagel whether he thinks Congress needs to pay for the operation in Syria and Iraq today or put it on the backs of our grandchildren. Secretary Hagel admitted that the operation the Obama administration is proposing in Iraq and Syria would not be brief. This is yet another reason for a debate now rather than later.

We need to have this debate sooner rather than later. The American people are asking for Congress to fulfill its constitutional obligation as it relates to war.

Sincerely,



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress