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

February 26, 2018

The Honorable James Mattis
Secretary Of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon, U. S. Department of Defense
Washington, D. C. 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I have written you in that past about my concerns as it pertains to the recently released Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) report documenting gross human rights violations being conducted by the Afghan National Security Forces. Specifically, the abduction and rape of young boys. The release of this report, although disturbing in a multitude of ways, brings about concerns about the manner in which the Department of Defense treated service members who intervened in such cases.

I am aware of two cases in which individuals, who attempted to report or intervene in these human rights violations, were later targeted for involuntary discharge. It appears that in both these cases there existed a link between their attempts to stop this abuse, and the service's decision to discharge them. I am specifically referring to the cases of Sergeant First Class Charles Martland, USA, and Major Jason Brezler, USMC. Thankfully, as a result of media attention and congressional inquiries, both of these decisions were overturned. I fear that it is likely that similar cases, not subject to such publicity, were not overturned.

The manner in which these cases were handled is distressing, and I fear that in the future this may result in an aversion by U.S. service members to report human rights violations. I urge you to take this into consideration as you provide guidance to the service chiefs and combatant commanders on how to handle such cases during present and future conflicts.

I greatly appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress