

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0524

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ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

November 14, 2012

Michael A. Sheehan
Assistant Secretary of Defense
Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Robert A. Blecksmith
Assistant Director
FBI Critical Incident Response Group
935 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Assistant Secretary Sheehan and Assistant Director Blecksmith:

I am writing to follow up on your response letter I recently received regarding our government's strategy in combating the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

The original letter to President Obama of May 3, 2012 was signed by a bi-partisan group of 69 Members of Congress, which later had an additional 23 Members of Congress requesting to add their names to the letter endorsing the specific actions requested. This brought the total number of signatories to 92.

While I sincerely appreciate your efforts in responding to our letter to President Obama on his behalf, after review of your response, we find it inadequate and request a complete response.

The majority of your reply covers in general terms all that was done and is currently being done. I and my colleagues are well aware of the positive actions to date. We highlighted that the United States is playing a vital and important role against IEDs. However, we stressed that these efforts are not enough. As we learned from the successful international effort over a decade ago to address the usage of landmines, confronting the global problem of IEDs requires a focused, holistic, and coordinated global response. Your response on behalf the President provides no new details of how you will close the gaps we identified. Specifically, I request that you address the following concerns:

1. We requested the President designate a Lead Federal Agency to develop a U.S. Government strategy that coordinates and shares IED event data and other information with the Global Campaign against IEDs to eliminate the root causes of IEDs and help control the proliferation of IED production materials and techniques, including promoting the exchange of IED-related event data, lessons learned, best practices, and alert and reporting techniques between and among relevant Federal Agencies and other public and private entities. This should include defining objective metrics with which to measure progress with respect to counter-IED programs, conducting public-education, and

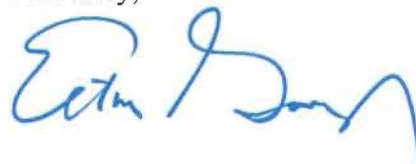
executing appropriate IED related information and technology transition. It should also encourage other governments and international organizations to join these efforts. Other than stating the existence of a revised Policy and summarizing the current efforts that we are all aware of and recognized in our letter. Please specifically address how this will be accomplished, identifying the lead agency, and coordination with the Global Campaign against IEDs. Please also provide a copy of the revised policy you reference in your letter.

2. We requested the President direct the Department of State introduce a resolution at the United Nations condemning the use of IEDs and calling for international cooperation in prosecuting IED users under international rule of law, while at the same time strengthening existing controls on the proliferation of IED production components such as explosive remnants of war, ammonium nitrate, and commercial explosives. Your response does not mention this action. Please provide the status and actions being taken by the President and Secretary of State in this regard.
3. We requested the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop a U.S. Government strategy partnered with Veterans Service Organizations, Military Service Organizations, and other public-private partners to identify the long term physical and psycho-social effects of IED related injuries. We then requested these findings to be publicized and best practices shared with appropriate agencies and a process to share this data between the DoD, VA and the private sector be developed. We must ensure adequate programs and benefits are available to affected veterans and their care-givers. One problem is that DoD is conducting blast related research and not fully sharing its findings with the VA or private sector partners. You also stated that the sharing of this information is vital, but you do not state how this will be accomplished. As we requested, please explain the process to share blast trauma tissue/physiology medical studies and other IED blast and other injury related research within the U.S. Government and shared with responsible private sector entities.

Further, you state you are “working with multilateral organizations, and with private sector partners to advance awareness of the IED threat and enhance our collective counter-IED knowledge and capabilities”, and that there is an updated policy, but you did not provide a copy of this revised policy. Please identify the agency tasked to lead that strategy across all U.S. government agencies. You also failed to address such key partners as the Joint IED Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC), etc. nor do you adequately detail how the information sharing we requested between these agencies, the various multi-national public and private partners, Veterans Service Organizations and the Global Campaign against IEDs will be accomplished.

I thank you for your efforts to date and look forward to your follow-up response.

Sincerely,



ELTON GALLEGLY
Member of Congress