

July 31, 2017

Dear Senator,

We are a nonpartisan group of former national security, law enforcement, intelligence, and interrogation professionals. Our collective professional experience includes service in the U.S. military, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Army Criminal Investigation Command, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

We write today to express our opposition to the nomination of Mr. Steven Bradbury to serve once again in a position of significant responsibility within the U.S. government as general counsel of the Department of Transportation. Our opposition stems from the necessary judgment and personal courage this office requires to provide candid and objective legal advice to policymakers that may be seeking politically expedient policy solutions.

We dedicated our professional lives to keeping our nation safe. That work demanded using every resource at our disposal, including and especially our moral authority. Our enemies act without conscience. We must not.

Mr. Bradbury spent many years serving in the Department of Justice – including as acting head of the Office of Legal Counsel – during the George W. Bush Administration. In this position, he prepared official memoranda that provided legal cover for other agencies in the U.S. Government to employ a program of interrogation tactics that amounted to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. These brutal methods – which included waterboarding – fundamentally violated domestic and international law governing detainee treatment and caused untold strategic and operational harm to our national security. As former interrogators, intelligence, and law enforcement professionals with extensive firsthand experience in the field of interrogation, we were shocked by Mr. Bradbury’s attempt to defend the use of the waterboard and other torture tactics based on the incorrect assertions that their use would not cause severe physical pain or suffering and would produce valuable intelligence. In our professional judgment, torture and other forms of detainee abuse are not only immoral and unlawful, they are ineffective and counterproductive in gathering reliable intelligence. They also tarnish America’s global standing, undermine critical alliances, and bolster our enemies’ propaganda efforts. If the Senate confirms Mr. Bradbury, it would send a clear message to the American public that authorizing the use of torture is not only acceptable but is not a barrier to advancement into the upper ranks of our government. We understand that Mr. Bradbury did not act alone in authorizing torture, but as his nomination is before you, we ask you to take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the ideals we strive to uphold by rejecting his nomination.

Torture is not a partisan issue. Our respect for human dignity is timeless, and we must never risk our national honor to prevail in any war. Your vote to reject this nomination would reflect the morally sound leadership that this country needs and would not forget.

Signed,

Frank Anderson – CIA (Ret.)

Glenn Carle – CIA (Ret.)

Barry Eisler – Former CIA

Mark Fallon – NCIS (Ret.)

Charlton Howard – NCIS (Ret.)

Timothy James – NCIS (Ret.)

Colonel Steven Kleinman – U.S. Air Force (Ret.)

Marcus Lewis – Former U.S. Army Interrogator

Mike Marks – NCIS (Ret.)

Robert McFadden – NCIS (Ret.)

Joe Navarro – FBI (Ret.)

William Quinn – Former U.S. Army Interrogator

Ken Robinson – U.S. Army (Ret.)

Patrick Skinner – CIA (Ret.)