

June 9, 2015

Dear Senator,

As intelligence and interrogation professionals who have offered our collective voice opposing torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, we strongly encourage you to support the amendment to the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act that solidifies the ban against torture and cruel treatment of detainees in U.S. custody.

While international and domestic law, including the 2005 Detainee Treatment Act, prohibit such cruelty, sadly high-level officials in the Executive Branch exploited loopholes and still authorized torture and cruel treatment. The interrogation methods that have kept America safe for generations are sophisticated, humane, lawful, and produce reliable, actionable intelligence in any interrogation scenario. To promote a return to that respected level of professionalism, there must be a single well-defined standard of conduct—consistent with our values as a nation—across all U.S. agencies to govern the detention and interrogation of people anywhere in U.S. custody.

The amendment would ensure lawful, effective, and humane interrogations of individuals taken into custody by requiring all agencies and departments to comply with the time-tested requirements of the Army Field Manual (“Human Intelligence Collector Operations”). It would also require a review of the Army Field Manual to ensure that best practices and the most recent evidenced-based research on humane interrogation are incorporated. It would also codify existing Department of Defense (DOD) practice of guaranteeing timely notification and access to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for detainees taken into custody—an important bulwark against abuse.

We strongly urge you to support this legislation to help move our country forward and reaffirm that there is no conflict between adhering to one of our nation’s essential and founding values—respect for inherent human dignity—and our ability to obtain the intelligence we need to protect the nation.

Sincerely,

Frank Anderson, CIA (Ret.)

Donald Canestraro, DEA (Ret.)

Glenn Carle, CIA (Ret.)

Jack Cloonan, CIA (Ret.)

Barry Eisler, Formerly CIA

Eric Fair, Formerly U.S. Army

Mark Fallon, NCIS (Ret.)

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David Irvine, Brigadier General, U.S. Army (Ret.)

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Steve Kleinman, Colonel, USAFR (Ret.)

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