

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 8, 2016

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman
Committee on Oversight & Government
Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Elijah Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight & Government
Reform
2471 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Thornberry and Chaffetz and Ranking Members Smith and Cummings:

Given your past interest and leadership regarding wasteful spending and oversight of the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), we respectfully request that the House Armed Services Committee and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform hold hearings to investigate the \$125 billion in bureaucratic waste brought to light by *The Washington Post* this week.¹

According to the *Post*, the study conducted by the Defense Business Board (DBB) provided a “clear path” for the DOD to save \$125 billion over five years without requiring layoffs or military personnel reductions. While we remain concerned that the DBB report was inappropriately buried, it is Congress’s role to investigate the inefficiencies highlighted in the report and make recommendations for improvements. This is especially important given that the Pentagon has never undergone a full audit, and the DBB report could be the first revelation of many uncovering wasteful spending.

It is important to put the \$125 billion into context. Just last week, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to authorize \$611.2 billion in Pentagon spending for Fiscal Year 2017. The waste identified in the DBB report could be used to improve DOD spending by twenty percent. The wasteful spending identified is also twenty times greater than the additional funding Congress recently provided to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and more than the entirety of what federal government contributes to our nation’s educational system annually.

We strongly encourage the Committees to investigate the spending decisions uncovered in the DBB report and any additional waste that may come to light. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request, and we look forward to working with you to advance solutions to

¹ Craig Whitlock & Bob Woodward, *Pentagon buries evidence of \$125 billion in bureaucratic waste*, WASH. POST (Dec. 5, 2016), available at <http://wapo.st/2gMufuo>.

this important issue. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Jackson in Congressman DeSaulnier's office or Josh Connolly in Congresswoman Jackie Speier's office.

Sincerely,



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress