

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 9, 2017

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

The Honorable Rex Tillerson
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

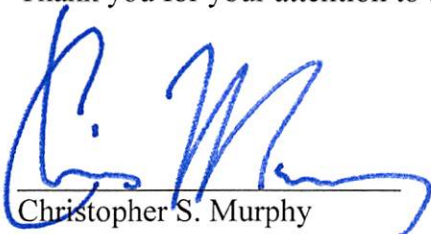
Michael P. Dempsey
Acting Director of National Intelligence
Office of the Directory of National Intelligence
Washington, DC 20511

Dear Secretary Mattis, Secretary Tillerson, and Acting Director Dempsey:

We write today with serious concerns about U.S. policy in Yemen and to urgently request a classified briefing regarding our actions and objectives there. The situation in Yemen remains complex, with an ongoing civil war and humanitarian crisis—further complicated by U.S. support for Saudi Arabia’s bombing campaign there—as well as a growing terrorist threat from Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Our counterterrorism mission against AQAP must remain a top priority, which is why reports that the Yemeni Foreign Minister has called for a ‘reassessment’ of U.S. counterterrorism operations following the recent raid are troubling. We therefore respectfully request a briefing for members of the United States Senate on the status of U.S. counterterrorism operations in Yemen, our ongoing involvement in the Yemeni civil war, our support for U.S. allies operating in Yemen, and overall U.S. objectives there.

Events of the last two weeks underscore the complexity and the risks of our involvement in Yemen, and we believe a detailed report to Congress from the Department of Defense, Department of State, and the Intelligence Community about U.S. policy there is necessary.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your timely response.


Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

Sincerely,


Rand Paul M.D.
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Mike Lee
United States Senator

CC: Senator John McCain, Senator Jack Reed