

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 16, 2007

United States Department of Defense  
Dr. Robert M. Gates  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Gates,

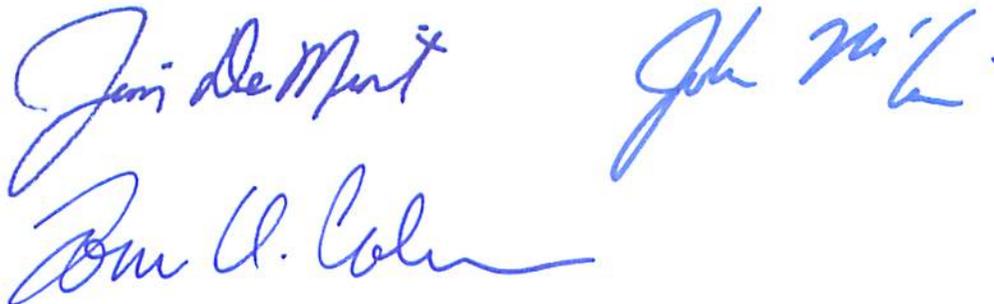
Unfortunately, it seems that the Democratic Leadership in Congress is unwilling to pass a supplemental spending bill that will provide our men and women in uniform with the funding they need to continue their operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. It also appears likely that you will be forced to redirect funds within various accounts at the Department of Defense to ensure that United States combat troops are funded while Democrats decide whether they want to have political votes to appeal to their base or want to pass a responsible supplemental spending bill.

As you develop contingency plans to keep funding available for the troops in harm's way, we strongly urge you to cut unnecessary Congressional earmarks as your first source of funding.

The Defense Appropriations bill President Bush recently signed contains over 2,000 earmarks accounting for over \$5 billion in wasteful spending. These projects divert critical defense resources from our men and women in combat to projects such as studying brown tree snakes and funding youth golf programs. Nearly all of these projects are included as report language and were never voted on by the House or Senate. As the Congressional Research Service has pointed out on a number of occasions, "Earmarks that appear in committee reports and the statements of managers do not legally bind agencies."

We hope you will move quickly to redirect these wasteful and unnecessary projects to the worthwhile purpose of equipping our men and women in the field. If there are any legal encumbrances that prevent you from transferring wasteful earmark funding to combat operations please ask Congress for the necessary authority.

Sincerely,



Jim DeMint      John McInnis  
Ron U. Cohen