

JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, CONNECTICUT, CHAIRMAN

CARL LEVIN, MICHIGAN
DANIEL K. AKAKA, HAWAII
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
MARK L. PRYOR, ARKANSAS
MARY L. LANDRIEU, LOUISIANA
CLAIRE McCASKILL, MISSOURI
JON TESTER, MONTANA
ROLAND W. BURRIS, ILLINOIS
EDWARD E. KAUFMAN, DELAWARE

SUSAN M. COLLINS, MAINE
TOM COBURN, OKLAHOMA
SCOTT BROWN, MASSACHUSETTS
JOHN McCAIN, ARIZONA
GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, OHIO
JOHN ENSIGN, NEVADA
LINDSEY GRAHAM, SOUTH CAROLINA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

MICHAEL L. ALEXANDER, STAFF DIRECTOR
BRANDON L. MILHORN, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL

December 7, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
House Republican Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker and Mr. Republican Leader:

On December 4, 2010, the United States Senate passed S.3860, a bill to require reports on the management of Arlington National Cemetery. As amended, the bill's passage in the Senate was communicated to the House of Representatives on December 6, 2010. We are writing today to request that you act on this bill before the end of the 111th Congress.

On July 29, 2010, the Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight, which we lead, held a hearing on the mismanagement of contracts at Arlington National Cemetery. The hearing reviewed the U.S. Army Inspector General's report finding major flaws in the operation of Arlington National Cemetery and heard testimony from Cemetery and Army officials. The Subcommittee also found that problems at Arlington may be far more extensive than previously acknowledged. The documents and information obtained by the Subcommittee suggest that 4,900 to 6,600 graves may be unmarked, improperly marked, or mislabeled on the Cemetery's maps.

Since the Subcommittee's hearing, additional errors have been identified at Arlington National Cemetery. As recently as this past Friday, December 3, 2010, reports confirmed that the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (CID), the Army's internal law enforcement division, is investigating criminal activity surrounding the October 2010 discovery of urns containing eight cremated remains, which were discovered in a single grave at Arlington National Cemetery.

This legislation requires the Secretary of the Army to provide regular reports to Congress on correcting the management, operations, burial discrepancies, and contracting issues at Arlington National Cemetery. It also requires the Comptroller General of the United States to report on the management and contracts of Arlington National Cemetery and the feasibility and advisability of transferring to or sharing jurisdiction of Army National Cemeteries with the Veterans Administration. Most importantly, it requires the Secretary of the Army to report to Congress on the ability of the Cemetery to verify the identity, location, and burial records for gravesites in Arlington National Cemetery and to report plans to remedy any deficiencies identified.

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable John Boehner
December 7, 2010
Page 2

The heartbreaking failure of the Army and Arlington National Cemetery to prevent and remedy the tragedies at our nation's most sacred burial ground for service members and their families requires prompt action. We respectfully request that you pass this legislation before the close of the 111th Congress.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight



Scott Brown
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight

cc: The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee

The Honorable Howard "Buck" McKeon
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee

The Honorable Bob Filner
Chairman
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

The Honorable Steve Buyer
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs