

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 14, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

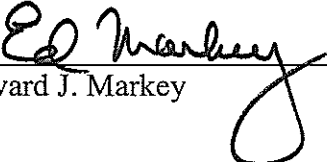
We are writing to you to express our deep concern over press reports that your administration may be considering introducing legislation that could result in an increased threat of inhumane treatment of our troops abroad should they become prisoners of war.

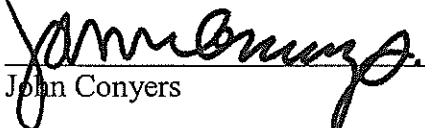
According to an article in the July 28, 2006 *Washington Post*, Justice Department officials have begun drafting legislation to amend the War Crimes Act of 1996 in order to grant U.S. personnel new protections from prosecution for violations of the Geneva Conventions. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales reportedly has also begun discussions with lawmakers to garner support for such changes, according to the article.

We are opposed to any changes in the War Crimes Act that would have the effect of undermining the proscriptions against torture or other cruel or degrading treatment contained in the Geneva Conventions and the Convention Against Torture. Such legislation, if adopted, would risk endangering American military personnel around the world by inviting reciprocal treatment by our adversaries and would harm the reputation of the United States as a leader promoting and protecting human rights.

Any changes to the War Crimes Act, which criminalizes violations of the Geneva Conventions, or other U.S. laws which implement our commitments under the Geneva Conventions, invite others to similarly weaken their observation of requirements for humane treatment of all detainees anywhere. American personnel and especially American troops around the world depend on the universality of the Geneva Conventions to protect them from murder, torture, and other inhumane treatment should they become prisoners. The United States cannot afford to invite the mistreatment of its soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen abroad by weakening our commitments to the fair and humane treatment of detainees in our custody or control.

Sincerely,

  
Edward J. Markey

  
John Conyers

*Barney Frank*

Barney Frank

*James P. McGovern*

James P. McGovern

*Pete Stark*

Pete Stark

*John W. Olver*

John W. Olver

*Jim McDermott*

Jim McDermott

*Betty McCollum*

Betty McCollum

*Tammy Baldwin*

Tammy Baldwin

*Rosa L. DeLauro*

Rosa L. DeLauro

*Sam Farr*

Sam Farr

*Maurice Hinchey*

Maurice Hinchey

*Michael M. Honda*

Michael M. Honda

*Rush Holt*

Rush Holt

*Martin T. Meehan*

Martin T. Meehan

*Henry Waxman*

Henry Waxman

*Raul M. Grijalva*

Raul M. Grijalva

*Barbara Lee*

Barbara Lee

*Lloyd Doggett*

Lloyd Doggett

*Maxine Waters*

Maxine Waters

*Diane E. Watson*

Diane E. Watson

*Michael Michaud*

Michael Michaud

*Carolyn B. Maloney*

Carolyn B. Maloney

*José E. Serrano*

José E. Serrano