

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 24, 2012

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

Putting an end to the Taliban's relentless and savage assault on women and girls must become a top priority for the world.

The tragic and cowardly shooting of 14-year-old Malala Yousufzai of Pakistan, who has championed freedom, liberty, and human rights for children, is the latest – and most shocking – blow in the Taliban's cold-hearted campaign to silence women through cruelty and persecution. Although Malala is recovering from gunshot wounds in the United Kingdom, the Taliban have brazenly vowed to kill her if she survives. We can't let this happen.

This courageous teenager, who first wrote in 2009 about the terror of life under the Taliban's tyranny, has lived in constant danger ever since. We urge you to work with Prime Minister Pervez Ashraf to ensure that the Government of Pakistan prosecutes those responsible for the attack on Malala to the fullest extent of the law. While Malala provides a beacon of hope to oppressed women and girls everywhere, she and her supporters cannot combat the Taliban's rule on their own. It is crucial that Prime Minister Ashraf and his government exhaust every effort to not only bring Malala's perpetrators to justice but actively protect all children's basic human rights which includes an equal education and freedom of speech.

If we are going to win the war on terrorism, it's simply not enough to bring the Osama bin Laden's of the world to justice; we also have to save heroes like Malala Yousufzai. The Taliban's brutal repression of women is widely documented and today it is estimated that the militant group is responsible for nearly 80 percent of the civilian casualties in Afghanistan. Afghans, Pakistanis, and Americans all have a shared interest in ridding the region of the Taliban and we must remain resolute in our determination.

As Members of Congress – and as Members of the Republican Women's Policy Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives – we believe that women and girls in Pakistan should be able to peacefully pursue an education and have the opportunity to contribute to their communities as we have. We commend the people of Pakistan for their forceful repudiation of this horrific incident, and hope that the U.S. Department of State will work with the Government of Pakistan to ensure that Malala and all girls throughout Pakistan can safely attend school in the coming months.

Thank you for considering our request. We stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,


MARY BONO MACK

Member of Congress



MARSHA BLACKBURN
Member of Congress



RENEE ELLMERS
Member of Congress



JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER
Member of Congress



LYNN JENKINS
Member of Congress



CYNTHIA LUMMIS
Member of Congress



CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS
Member of Congress



SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO
Member of Congress



SUE MYRICK
Member of Congress



MARTHA ROBY
Member of Congress



JEAN SCHMIDT
Member of Congress