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One Hundred Thirteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
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May 29, 2013

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you know, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs has been investigating the circumstances surrounding the deadly terrorist attacks that occurred last September 11th in Benghazi, Libya. As part of our inquiry, Committee Members have repeatedly asked the State Department to explain the employment status of certain Department personnel who were cited by the Accountability Review Board (ARB) for displaying "leadership and management deficiencies" that led to the inadequate security in Benghazi.¹

Initial reports indicated that these officials were "relieved of their duties," thus implying their employment had been terminated.² However, by all accounts, these individuals have instead been placed on administrative leave and may or may not be returning to work.³ Moreover, at least one of these individuals has stated that he has still not been informed of why he was removed from his position within the Department, or been allowed to view the ARB's conclusions with respect to his job performance.⁴ The Department's handling of these matters is of great concern to the Committee, other Members of Congress, and the public.

When appearing before the Committee on April 17, 2013, you testified that you would soon be weighing in on an "internal review and analysis" of the performance of these individuals with respect to their handling of security issues.⁵ Now that over one month has passed since your testimony, and over a full five months have passed since the ARB issued its report, we expect an

¹ Department of State, *Accountability Review Board for September 2012 Benghazi Attack*, December 19, 2012, p. 4.

² See, e.g., Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt. "4 are Out at State Dept. after Scathing Report on Benghazi Attack." *New York Times*. December 20, 2012: A6.

³ See, e.g., Glenn Kessler, "Has Anyone Been 'Fired' because of the Benghazi Attacks." *Washington Post*. May 22, 2013. Available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/post/has-anyone-been-fired-because-of-the-benghazi-attacks/2013/05/21/c29657aa-c27b-11e2-914f-a7aba60512a7_blog.html.

⁴ Josh Rogin. "Exclusive: Hillary's Benghazi 'Scapegoat' Speaks Out." *The Daily Beast*. May 20, 2013. Available at: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/05/20/exclusive-hillary-s-benghazi-scapegoat-speaks-out.html>.

⁵ Testimony of Secretary of State John F. Kerry before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, April 17, 2013.

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immediate update on this process, and confirmation as to whether the referenced personnel are still employed by the Department.

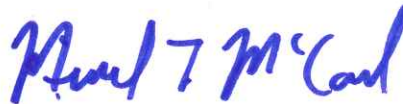
Additionally, if these officials are still employed but on administrative leave, please describe what steps the Department has taken to resolve the issue of their employment status. Please also provide a detailed account of any action taken by these officials to challenge the findings of the ARB report, including their basis for doing so. Lastly, if any of these individuals are no longer employed by the Department, please provide a detailed explanation of the circumstances leading to the termination of their employment.

Given the importance of improving embassy security through greater accountability, we ask that you give this matter your prompt attention. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



EDWARD R. ROYCE
Chairman



MICHAEL T. MCCAUL
Member of Congress



TED POE
Chairman
Subcommittee on Terrorism,
Nonproliferation, and Trade



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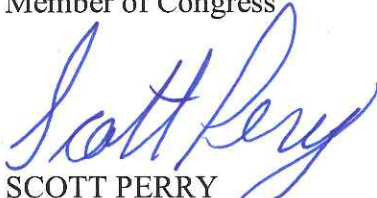
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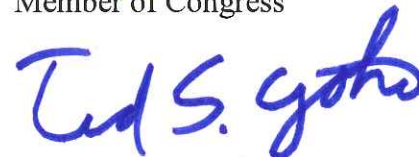
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