



THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

The Honorable Darrell E. Issa
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I appreciate that you and your committee are deeply interested in finding out what happened leading up to and during the attacks in Benghazi, and are looking for ways to prevent it from happening again. I share that commitment. Nobody will hold this Department more accountable than we hold ourselves – we served with Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods. As a former member of Congress, I know as well as anyone the vital role the Congress plays in this effort, and in asking the questions we all want answered.

As you know, I have established an Accountability Review Board (ARB) which will be led by Ambassador Thomas Pickering, and will include Admiral Michael Mullen, Catherine Bertini, Hugh Turner, and Richard Shinnick. The ARB begins its work this week. It is charged with determining whether our security systems and procedures in Benghazi were adequate, whether those systems and procedures were properly implemented, and any lessons that may be relevant to our work around the world. I intend to share the ARB's findings and our response with the Congress, and would encourage you to withhold any final conclusions about the Benghazi attack until the committee can review the ARB's findings.

We look forward to working with the Congress and your Committee as you proceed with your own review. As you know, we have already begun working with your Committee. We are committed to a process that is as transparent as possible, respecting the needs and integrity of the investigations underway. We will move as quickly as we can without forsaking accuracy.

To that end, if your staff would direct requests for information and logistics regarding potential hearings, witnesses, and timing to the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, we will work collaboratively with you to achieve the result we

both want: a full and accurate accounting of the events, and a path forward to prevent them from happening again. We will also address the specific questions in your letter and the document requests in Congressman Chaffetz's letter as expeditiously as possible, while taking into account any necessary measures to protect classified information.

Congress has been and must continue to be a full partner with us in providing for the security of our diplomatic and development professionals overseas, just as Congress provides for our troops. Together we must ensure all those who serve the United States overseas have the best protection we can provide as they pursue our interests all over the world – especially in places where that work is most difficult.

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

cc: Rep. Jason Chaffetz