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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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November 6, 2007

Mr. James F. McNulty
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Parsons
Corporate Headquarters
100 West Walnut Street
Pasadena, CA 91124

Dear Mr. McNulty:

On September 28, 2006, the Committee on Government Reform held a hearing entitled "Acquisition Under Duress: Reconstruction Contracting in Iraq." During that hearing, the Committee reviewed the work of Parsons on the construction of a new \$72 million police college in Baghdad.

At the hearing, Stuart Bowen, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, testified about a report issued by his office detailing critical problems with the construction of the facility. The Special Inspector General described how Parsons' work was so grossly deficient that urine and fecal matter were raining down on Iraqi police recruits. The report stated:

"toilets are continually draining through the reinforced concrete floors, from the top floor to the second floor to the ground floor, permeating and filling light fixtures, showers, and toilet areas, with liquids, including diluted urine and fecal matter";

"[t]he urine was so pervasive that it had permanently stained the ceiling tiles";

auditors "witnessed a light fixture so full of diluted urine and feces that it would not operate"; and

"the amount of material was so pervasive that it has soaked through the reinforced concrete floors causing deterioration of the reinforcing steel."¹

¹ Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, *Quick Reaction Report on the Baghdad Police College* (SIGIR PA-06-078.1 & SIGIR PA-06-079.1) (Sept. 27, 2006); see also

Also testifying at the hearing was Ernest O. Robbins II, Senior Vice President and Manager of the International Division at Parsons Infrastructure and Technology Group. Mr. Robbins testified that “we are repairing it at no cost to the government.” Mr. Robbins admitted that the problems were serious and informed the Committee that it would be dealing with its subcontractor to fix these problems. As Mr. Robbins stated: “there was no question. You’re right. This is not correct. We, with the Corps, got the subcontractor who had performed the work to come back.” Mr. Robbins explained that “the entire plumbing network for those barracks is being replaced.” He also testified that “Parsons will abide by the terms of the contract and we will deal with the government on a fair basis and we will abide by whatever the decision is.” He concluded: “the situation is being remedied.”²

Despite these statements, it appears that little improvement has been made over the past year to repair the Baghdad Police Academy. An account by the *New York Times* reports the following continuing problems:

“the ceilings are still stained with excrement, parts of the structures are crumbling, and sections of the buildings are unusable because the toilets are filthy and nonfunctioning”;

“[t]he concrete used in the construction was substandard and is already collapsing in places because of the constant rain of sewage”; and

“[t]he problems were so severe ... that the military had also been obliged to build new latrines outside and demolish some structures entirely and start over.”³

In response to this press report, a Parsons spokesperson stated that “Parsons has not been asked to provide any additional assistance on this project or with the warranty work.”⁴ She also asserted that “Parsons completed its work at the Baghdad Police College in the spring of 2006.”⁵ These recent statements appear to contradict the testimony given by Mr. Robbins, who had asserted that Parsons was working to remedy the construction failures as late as September 2006.

In order to investigate this issue further, the Committee requests that you provide, by Friday, December 7, 2007, copies of all documents and communications in your possession or control relating to the Baghdad Police College from September 1, 2006, to the present.

² House Committee on Government Reform, *Acquisition Under Duress: Reconstruction Contracting in Iraq* (Sept. 28, 2006).

³ *Iraqi Police Academy Remains Largely Unusable*, *New York Times* (Nov. 6, 2007).

⁴ *Id.*

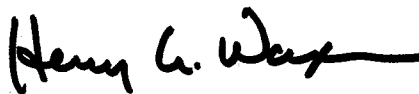
⁵ *Id.*

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The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee in the House of Representatives and has broad oversight jurisdiction as set forth in House Rule X. Enclosed with this letter are instructions on how to respond to the Committee's document request.

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Daum or David Rapallo of the Committee staff at (202) 225-5420.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry A. Waxman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Henry A. Waxman
Chairman

Enclosure

cc: Rep. Tom Davis
Ranking Minority Member