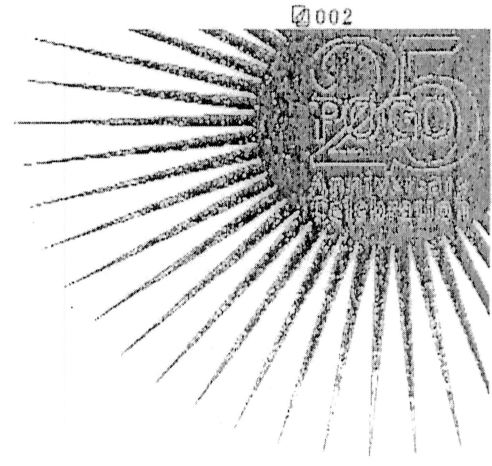


Project On Government Oversight

Exposing Corruption Exploring Solutions www.POGO.org



September 19, 2007

The Honorable James H. Webb
The Honorable Claire McCaskill

Via Facsimile: 202-224-3928

Dear Senators Webb and McCaskill:

The Project on Government Oversight appreciates being given the opportunity to review "The Commission on Wartime Contracting Act (S. 1825)." We believe this bill makes great strides towards holding accountable those who have been responsible for waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement of wartime contracts. We strongly endorse the aims and goals of S. 1825 which ensures that we are not only retroactive in achieving accountability in wartime contracts but recommends specific steps to move forward consistent with an open and transparent government.

In particular, POGO supports the following elements of the legislation:

- The establishment of an independent and bipartisan eight-member Commission on Wartime Contracting which will study and investigate the following:
 - Federal agency contracting for the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan
 - Federal agency contracting for the logistical support of coalition forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom
 - Federal agency contracting for the performance of security and intelligence functions in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom
- The recommended collaboration and consultation of the Commission on Wartime Contracting with the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction.
- The expansion of the role of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction to include investigative and audit capabilities associated with Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

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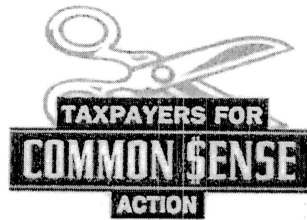
"The Commission on Wartime Contracting Act (S.1825)" is an important step in addressing the phenomenal burden which has been placed on taxpayers due to waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement of wartime contracts. This legislation will ensure that those who were responsible for such waste are held fully accountable.

We thank you for being a leader on this issue of critical importance and we support your legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Danielle Brian". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Danielle Brian
Executive Director



Support Webb-McCaskill Wartime Contract Commission Amendment to FY08 Defense Authorization

September 21, 2007

Dear Senator:

Taxpayers for Common Sense (TCS) urges you to support Sens. James Webb (D-VA) and Claire McCaskill's (D-MO) Wartime Contract Commission, Study and Investigation amendment to the FY08 Defense Authorization bill to expand the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) oversight to include Afghanistan and to establish a special commission to investigate and report on contracting practices, activities and failures in Iraq.

For several years, TCS has supported the creation of a "Truman Committee" for Iraq. During World War II, Sen. Harry Truman (D-MO) led a special committee investigating profiteering and contract irregularities. While not a senatorial committee, this amendment would establish a bi-partisan commission with subpoena powers to investigate contracting procedures and activities in the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. The SIGIR reports that document individual contracting failures demand an overarching review, recommendations and "lessons learned" to inform ongoing and future reconstruction efforts whether overseas or here in the U.S. after a catastrophe like Hurricane Katrina. It is clear that our national involvement overseas will continue for the foreseeable future and the nation has billions of dollars in contracting lessons to be learned from failures in Iraq.

Further, the valuable SIGIR investigations in Iraq would be similarly valuable in Afghanistan and TCS strongly supports expansion of the IG's purview.

Again TCS strongly urges the Senate to adopt the Webb-McCaskill contracting amendment as part of the FY08 Defense Authorization bill. Please contact me or Steve Ellis, 202-546-8500 ext. 126 or steve@taxpayer.net with questions.

Sincerely,

Ryan Alexander
President



IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS OF AMERICA

September 20, 2007

The Honorable Jim Webb
United States Senate
144 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4605

Dear Senator Webb,

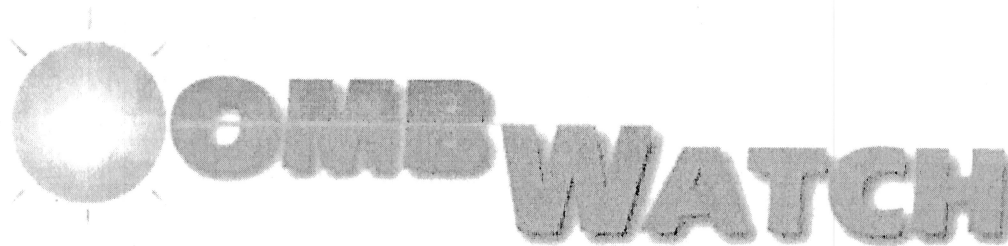
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) is our nation's first and largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization for veterans of the current conflicts. Since 2004, IAVA has worked tirelessly to ensure that our men and women in uniform receive the support they have earned through service to our country. That is why we applaud your efforts to ensure that America's taxpayer's dollars are being utilized in the most efficient manner for those serving on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan, through S.1825, the "Commission on Wartime Contracting Establishment Act" Act.

Our government has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on private contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is the government's responsibility to ensure private contracting in wartime situations is held to the highest of standards. Accountability is a priority for the military and must be priority for civilian contractors supporting us. But among the many companies hired to equip and support the troops, some have put profit over patriotism. Every dollar wasted by a corrupt contractor is a dollar that could have been spent on new armor or better vehicles for our troops in theatre. War profiteering is a crime, and those responsible must be held to account.

Our military has answered the call to serve our nation and has done so with honor and unwavering devotion to duty. Now is the time to ensure that our government fulfills the promises we have made to these men and women who have sacrificed so much. We must ensure that we provide the most efficient support possible and hold those who may take advantage of these times accountable. We wholeheartedly endorse the "Commission on Wartime Contracting Establishment Act" Act.

Sincerely,

Paul Rieckhoff
Executive Director



September 17, 2007

Re: Adoption of the Commission on War Contracting Bill (S. 1825)

Dear Senator:

OMB Watch, a government transparency, fiscal policy and regulatory watchdog nonprofit organization, we want applaud the Commission on War Contracting Establishment Act (S. 1825). This legislation will ensure that contracts related to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars will receive the oversight needed to ensure responsible and effective governance. The bill will perform three essential functions:

1. Investigate wartime contracting and procedures.
2. Recommend changes to reform and improve contracting procedures.
3. Expand the authority of the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR), which has a proven record of exposing waste, fraud and abuse.

These policies will help ensure the federal government holds contractors accountable and outsources services for the right reasons and under the right circumstances. It is possible that the bill will be offered as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008. **We urge all members to support the adoption of the Commission on War Contracting Establishment Act (S. 1825).**

Oversight of wartime contracting is one of the most critical tasks facing Congress. Much of the military functions in Iraq and Afghanistan have been performed by contractors. Yet, the public remains in the dark about how well contractors have performed and the full extent of contractor waste, fraud and abuse. Furthermore, contract oversight is important outside of the Iraq and Afghanistan operations. Total funding devoted to contracting by all federal agencies has doubled since 2000.

A commission dedicated to investigating contracting is necessary to meet the scale of the current problems in wartime contracting. It would be given subpoena powers and a broad and ambitious mission. The SIGIR would have sufficient authority to thoroughly investigate contracting misconduct and mishaps. OMB Watch is hopeful the commission will focus more public attention on reforming the government contracting process.

Once convened, the commission would benefit from focusing some of its resources on certain failings in the contracting process that have already been identified. It ought to investigate the extent to which agencies failed to comply with federal acquisition regulations relating to prior contractor performance. Specifically, the commission should study whether or not agencies adequately investigated contractor compliance with laws and regulations relating to workplace safety and health, environmental enforcement actions, workplace discrimination – including trafficking of persons, federal trade commission actions, and tax code violations. It should also find

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whether agencies considered using government workers to perform the functions assigned to contractors, and on what basis they made the decision to contract out.

This bill promotes responsible and efficient contracting in federal agencies during both war and peace. We strongly urge your support for adoption of the Commission on War Contracting Establishment Act.

Sincerely,

Adam Hughes

Sean Moulton



Federal Fiscal Policy Director

Information Policy Director

Government Accountability Project

National Office

1612 K Street, NW Suite #1100 • Washington, D.C. 20006

202.408.0034 • www.whistleblower.org

September 21, 2007

Re: Please Support S. 1825, the Wartime Contracting Establishment Act, as an amendment to the defense authorization legislation

Dear Senator,

The Government Accountability Project (GAP), a 30-year old non-profit, non-partisan organization that supports government and corporate whistleblowers, is writing to support efforts to include a wartime contracting amendment on this year's defense authorization legislation. It is our understanding that Senators Webb and McCaskill will soon introduce S. 1825, the Wartime Contracting Establishment Act, for consideration on the defense bill. If passed, it will be a landmark accountability measure both for armed services members serving our country, and for the taxpayers. It sets a high standard of public service leadership from freshman Senators that we hope the rest of the Senate will match.

The unprecedented growth in contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan has been matched by a corresponding rise in waste, fraud, and abuse of U.S. tax dollars allocated for wartime objectives. Many abuses have been documented, but we will not know the full extent of corruption without intervention by the U.S. Congress. The Webb-McCaskill amendment takes a proactive approach to confronting this issue.

There is a real need to learn the truth about federal agency contracting in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. With many billions of our tax dollars certain to continue to pour into these operations, the time for bipartisan inquiry is now. Of particular importance may be the expansion of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction's (SIGIR's) area of responsibility. SIGIR has a demonstrated track-record of uncovering waste, fraud and abuse in Iraq reconstruction contracts. With an updated mandate to work with the Commission, its effectiveness will only be increased. But no law enforcement authority can succeed against corruption without testimony from eye-witnesses. To be credible, anti-corruption campaigns must prove both their commitment and authority to protect those who may be risking their lives to bear witness. The Iraq Inspector General has proved that its commitment can be trusted. It is up to Congress to give it the tools to maximize the flow of evidence.

The Senate recently approved whistleblower protections for employees of Department of Defense contractors. This is an essential first step toward curbing wartime contracting abuses: witnesses have to know they will be protected for exposing corruption and waste. The McCaskill-Webb amendment creates an effective one-two

punch that will leave no doubt about Congress' intention to stop such practices. We urge you to support S. 1825 as an amendment to the FY2008 Defense Authorization legislation.

With appreciation,



Tom Devine
Legal Director



Adam Miles
Legislative Representative



Sept. 25, 2007

Dear Senator:

On behalf of its 300,000 members and supporters, Common Cause urges you to support an amendment to the FY 2008 Defense Authorization bill that would create a commission to study and investigate wartime contracts and contracting processes in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Senator James Webb (D-VA) and Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO) are the sponsors of this amendment.

The proposed commission would assess the extent of fraud, mismanagement, waste and misuse associated with military contracts as well as the policies, procedures, processes and performance of those contracts. The commission could also help answer critical questions about the advisability of the move to increasingly depend on civilian contractors hired to perform wartime functions.

The New York Times recently reported that \$6 billion in military contracts to provide food water and shelter to American troops was under review by criminal investigators. An additional \$88 billion in contracts are being audited for financial irregularities. And in 2005, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) found that nearly \$9 billion in funds for Iraq was unaccounted for.

Federal prosecutors are currently investigating charges that a private American security firm operating in Iraq, Blackwater USA, smuggled weapons into Iraq and sold them to groups designated by the United States as terrorist organizations. In addition, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki views the shooting of Iraq civilians last week by Blackwater USA personnel to be a threat to Iraqi sovereignty and is expected to refer criminal charges to the Iraqi courts, along with evidence of six other instances of civilian shootings by company employees.

This alleged behavior by an American contractor, and the astounding lack of accountability for billions of taxpayer dollars on the part of the Pentagon has outraged Congressional lawmakers of both parties and calls out for a thorough investigation by an independent, bipartisan commission.

It is long past time to establish this commission. Common Cause applauds Senator Webb and Senator McCaskill for sponsoring this amendment and we most urgently ask you to support it.

Sincerely,

President and CEO
Common Cause

Chief of Legislative Affairs
Common Cause

September 26, 2007

Dear Senator:

We write to strongly urge your support for an amendment to the FY2008 Defense Appropriations bill sponsored by Senators James Webb (VA) and Claire McCaskill (MO). The amendment establishes critical oversight for contracts awarded for work on Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Recent high profile media reports regarding wartime contractors have uncovered disturbing information regarding waste, fraud, and abuse of public funds.

- A senior military official is quoted in the Washington Post today calling the recent incident involving the private security contractor Blackwater “a nightmare” and went on to say that “this is going to hurt us badly. It may be worse than Abu Ghraib, and it comes at a time when we're trying to have an impact for the long term.”
- The U.S. Government Accountability Office reported last December that the military is losing millions of dollars because it can not monitor private contractors in remote locations.
- Earlier this year, the Defense Audit Contract Agency raised its estimate of fraud and abuse in Iraqi reconstruction projects from \$3.5 billion to more than \$10 billion.

The mounting evidence of extensive waste, fraud, and abuse of federal dollars awarded to private contractors working in Iraq and Afghanistan must be fully investigated and those responsible held accountable. The current mechanisms for oversight are woefully inadequate. Our troops and the American people deserve better.

The Webb-McCaskill amendment is an essential, common-sense answer to the growing number of reports of misconduct by private contractors involved in these missions. The amendment creates a bipartisan commission modeled after the highly successful Truman Commission that investigated waste, fraud and abuse during World War II.

The amendment would establish an eight member bipartisan panel to:

- (1) review contracts for reconstruction efforts and logistical support for the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan;
- (2) review contracts involving security and intelligence functions in Iraq and Afghanistan;
- (3) strengthen the role of the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction; and
- (4) assign the Special Inspector General, working in coordination with the Commission, the responsibility to perform audits of contracts awarded for work in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

U.S. PIRG applauds the leadership of Senators Webb and McCaskill in offering this critical amendment. This simple step is essential to any meaningful accountability among federal contractors working in Iraq and Afghanistan. We encourage you to call for a vote on the amendment and to vote for it when it comes to the Senate floor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gary Kalman".

Gary Kalman
Democracy Advocate