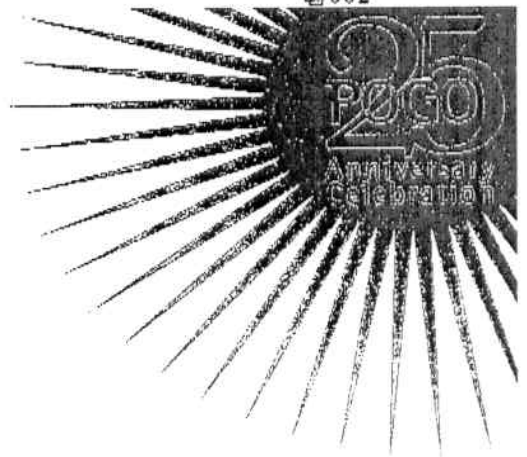


# Project On Government Oversight

Exposing Corruption Exploring Solutions [www.POGO.org](http://www.POGO.org)

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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 black 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](mailto:steve@taxpayer.net) with questions.

Sincerely,

Ryan Alexander  
President



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



## 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

## **Government Accountability Project**

National Office

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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