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Lee Terry
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September 14, 2012

Chairman Darrell Issa
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Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-5074 Fax: (202) 225-3974

Chairman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
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Dear Chairman Issa and Chairman Ros-Lehtinen,

The past few days have seen the tragic deaths of four Americans at the Libyan consulate in Benghazi, as well as extensive damage to the Egyptian and Yemeni embassies. We have also witnessed violent protests at a growing number of our foreign relations outposts. These attacks on our sovereignty are in direct violation of the greatest international standard: diplomatic immunity. After the violent protests last year, we understood that these were conflict-prone areas. However, instead of taking action, the Department of State left some of these posts without U.S. security, bulletproof windows, or reinforced doors.¹ These potential deficiencies persisted despite the violent and uncertain climate in these areas. We simply cannot accept the idea that American diplomats were left to fend for themselves.


We respectfully request that one or both of your committees conduct a hearing on how we can better protect our diplomats abroad. For example, should we staff Marines in hostile areas? Should we provide reinforced doors, and bulletproof windows for non-embassy facilities? Should we redefine what is required to remove facilities from the

¹ See Philip Ewing and Jonathan Allen, *Ambassador Stevens Killed at Site with no Marines*, POLITICO (Sept. 12, 2012), http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0912/81134.html?hp=t2_7 (“The Benghazi consulate had “lock-and-key” security, not the same level of defenses as a formal embassy, an intelligence source told POLITICO. That means it had no bulletproof glass, reinforced doors or other features common to embassies.”).

“interim facility” category? The focus of the inquiry should be to determine what measures we can take to better ensure the safety of our diplomats.

Forces hostile not only to freedom of speech but also to the very safety of our citizens have threatened our country. We need to defend those diplomats who work every day to establish peaceful connections. The deaths of Ambassador Stevens and his colleagues are an unacceptable cost and a desperate reminder of our responsibility to ensure the safety of officials abroad. Never again should these peacemakers be left with inadequate security in dangerous environments.

Sincerely,



LEE TERRY
Member of Congress



Mary Bono Mack



Steve Scalise



Frank R. Wolf



Paul C. Brown



Tom Latham

