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Mary Bono Mack  
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October 10, 2012

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

The tragic and cowardly shooting of 14-year-old Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan, who has championed freedom and the rights of women and girls living under tyranny, cruelty and persecution, deserves our nation's immediate attention. Although Malala is recovering from gunshot wounds, the Taliban have brazenly vowed to kill her if she survives. We cannot let this happen.

This courageous teenager, who first wrote in 2009 about the terror of life under Taliban control, has lived in constant danger ever since. I am urging you, Madam Secretary – in the strongest terms possible – to offer Malala “safe haven” here in the United States, as well as access to the best medical care possible. While Malala provides a beacon of hope to oppressed women and girls everywhere, she also represents an ongoing threat to the Taliban's rule by intimidation and fear.

Clearly, if we are ever going to win the war on terrorism, it's not enough to bring the Osama bin Laden's of the world to justice; we also have to save heroes like Malala Yousafzai. The Taliban's brutal repression of women is widely documented, and today it's estimated that the militant group is responsible for 80 percent of the civilian casualties in Afghanistan.

As the United States winds down its military mission in that part of the world, let's step up our diplomatic efforts to promote freedom and women's rights. Our nation has long honored the Right of Asylum because of political or religious persecution, and this case certainly passes any litmus test.

As Chairman of the Women's Policy Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives – and as a mother and grandmother – let's work together to bring Malala Yousafzai and her family to the United States, where she can continue to speak out against tyranny and oppression. With terrorism spreading throughout the world, we need more leaders – not more martyrs.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of my request. I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Bono Mack".

MARY BONO MACK  
Member of Congress