

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 22, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Honorable Janet Napolitano:

Recently the Department of Homeland Security released a report with regards to "Rightwing Extremism." The report labeled many commonly held views as "radical," such as opposition to illegal immigration, the belief in the right of the State to conduct its own affairs, and the fear of communist regimes. The labeling of these views as a threat to the State is something not done in this country since the Alien and Sedition Acts. We find this highly offensive.


The highly politicized document engages in selective perception and a bias in favor of only those events which confirm the prejudices of its authors. Most troubling, however, are the contents of the "Disgruntled Veterans" section.

It is astonishing to us that this administration would label the men and women who have served this country so ably in Iraq and Afghanistan as possible terrorists. The lumping of these members of the Armed Forces in with mad-men like Timothy McVeigh is not only morally reproachable, but intellectually disingenuous. Such use of selective information is unbecoming of your department and the office you serve.

Indeed, the incarceration rate for military personnel and returning veterans is lower than that of the general population. In 2004, the incarceration rate was 486 per 100,000 for the general population versus 153 per 100,000 for military personnel. By age, the incarceration rate was 1% lower for veterans versus nonveterans in the 18-24 demographic, and 45% lower in the 25-34 demographic. Substituting the anecdotal evidence of the report for actual statistical data shows that a member of the military is less likely to commit a crime.

We are requesting a clarification of this matter and we await your response. In particular, we hope to hear how your department came to these conclusions, the process followed for producing this report, and what data was used as the basis for this report.

Sincerely,



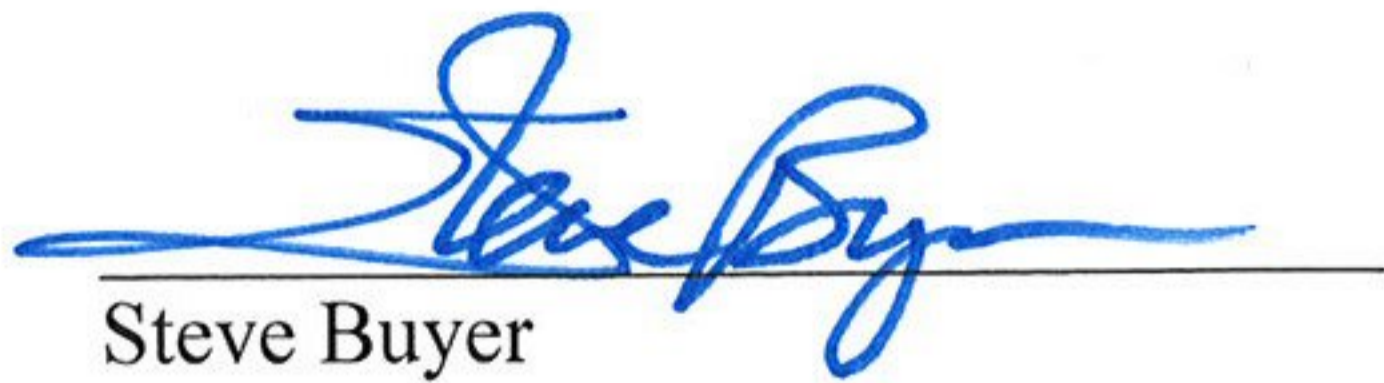
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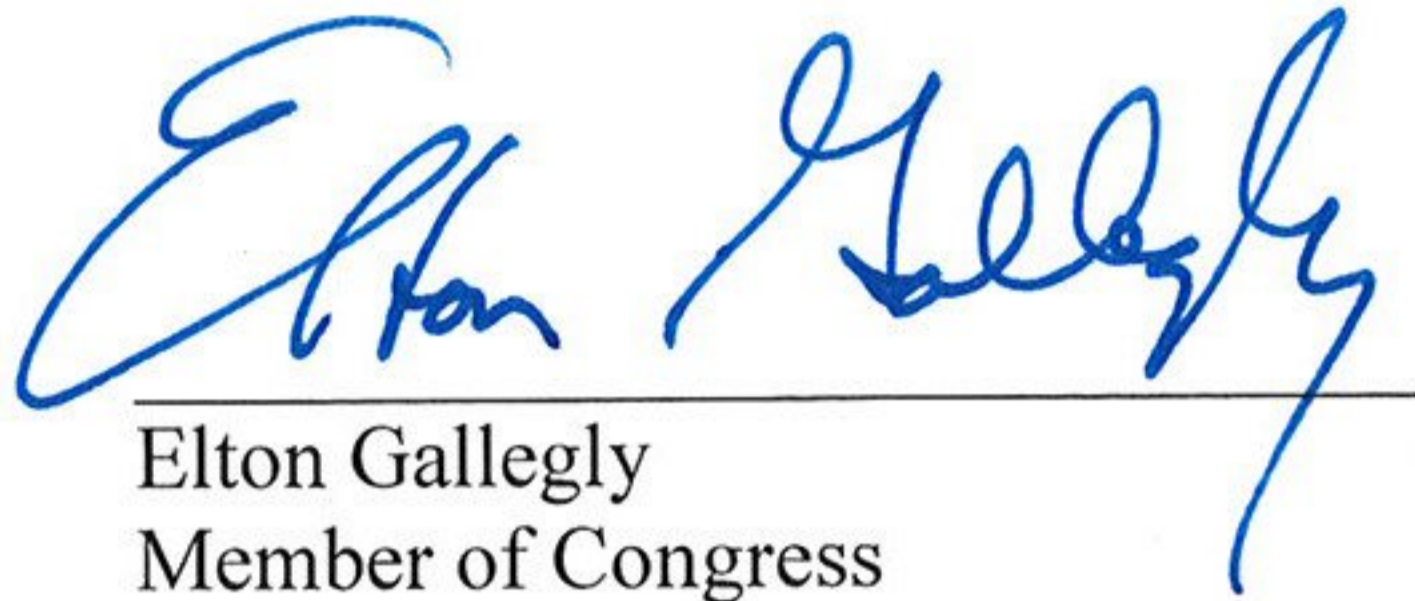
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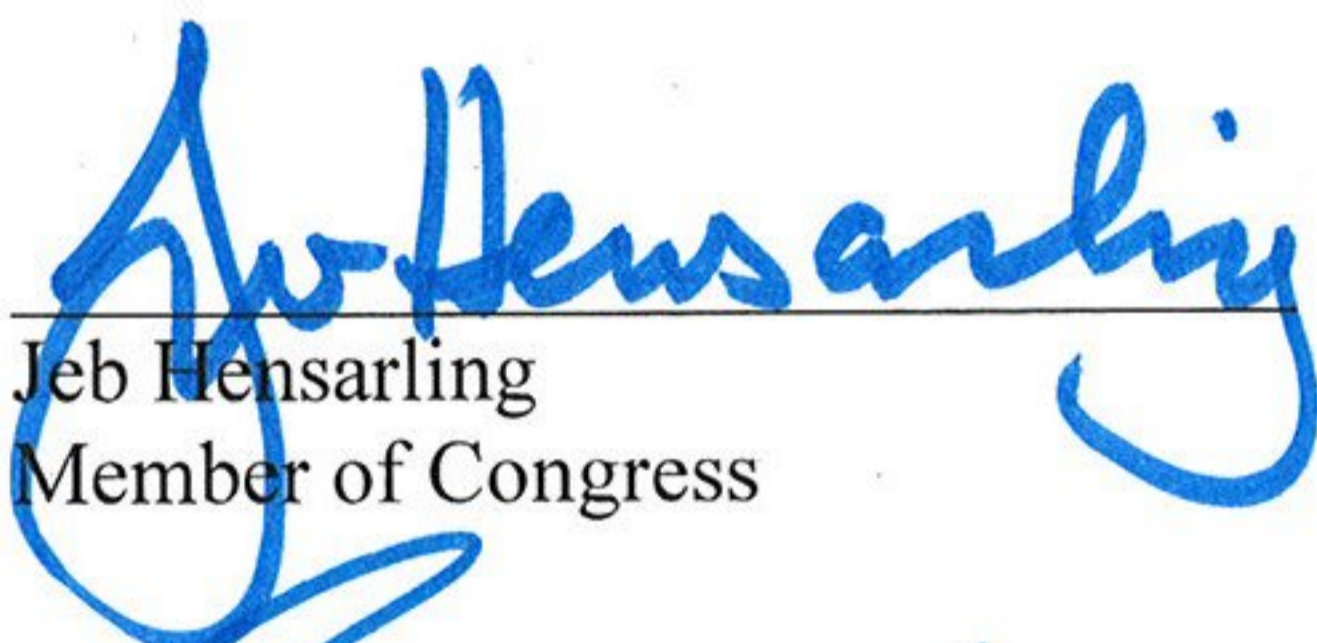
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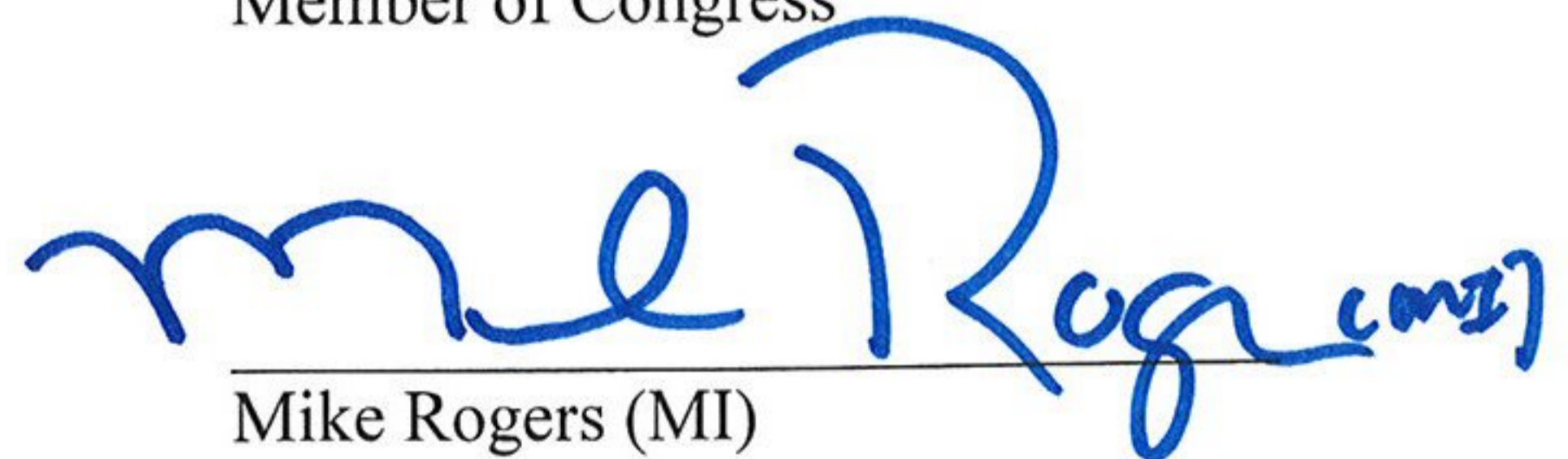
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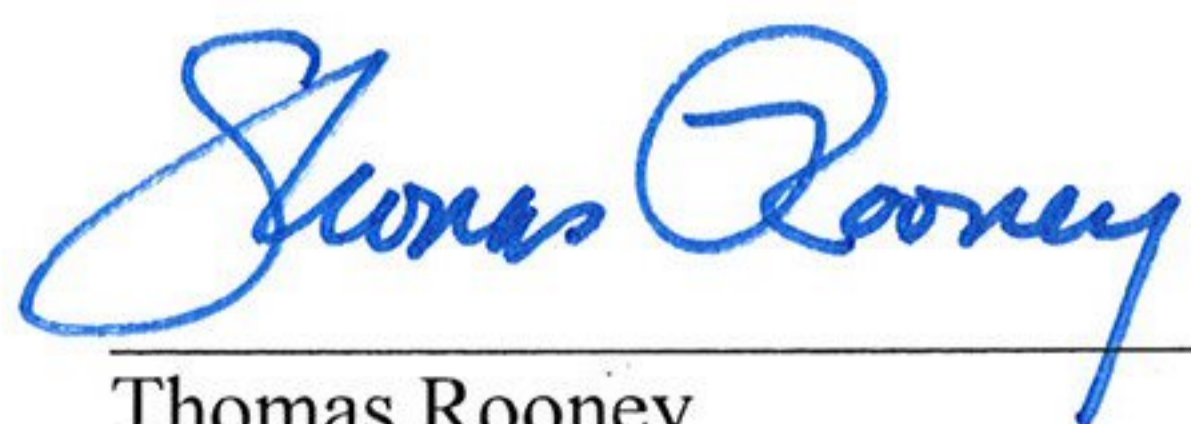
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