

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 16, 2009

Dr. Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Gates:

We appreciate your interest stated during the May 13, 2009 House Armed Services Committee hearing to protect child custody rights for our men and women in uniform.

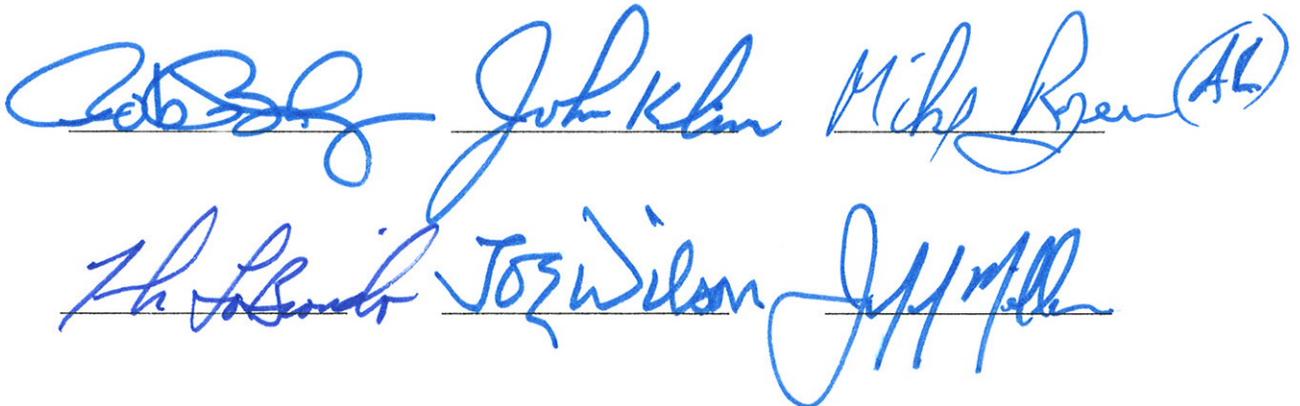
As you know, legislative language addressing this issue has already passed the House of Representatives three times. First, as Section 577 of the House passed FY2008 National Defense Authorization Act (HR1585). Additionally, portions of this legislation were also included in Section 584 of the final House passed version of the FY2008 NDAA (HR 4986). Finally, last year this language passed the House as a stand-alone bill (HR 6048) and was attached to the FY2009 NDAA. Nearly 60 members from both sides of the aisle signed on to HR 6048 as co-sponsors.

Today, the House Armed Services Committee passed their FY2010 NDAA. This bill contains similar language that would protect custody rights for military parents. As we move forward with the current legislative session and consideration of the FY2010 NDAA, we look forward to your continued interest in addressing this important issue to ensure that our men and women in uniform have their parental rights protected.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress



Handwritten signatures of other members of Congress, including John Klein, Mike Ryan (AL), and others.

Gladys Hahn Walter B. Jones Boyle

Buck McHenry Doug Lamborn Bob Wittman

Mary Fallin Wm. L. Craig Ken Starks
OK-5

Jph Fleming Steve Largent Phil Abernethy
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Carol Sue Potts Robert E. M. Frank Johnson

A Susan A Davis Falk R. Blatter Ann

Scott Murphy Viki Tompkins Jim W. Smith Jr.

John Gifford Jeane Vin Snyder

Richard John Alan Smith

Bill Shuster _____

Mike McIntyre _____