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J. Randy Forbes
United States Congress
4th District, Virginia

March 13, 2014

The Honorable Susan Rice
National Security Advisor
600 17th St NW
Washington, DC 20508-0001

Dear Ms. Rice:

We write today to continue our important dialogue on U.S. strategy towards the Asia-Pacific region. As you know, the 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Bill included a requirement for the State Department to lead an interagency review of U.S. strategy in this region. More specifically, it called for an “integrated, multi-year planning and budget strategy for a rebalancing of United States policy in Asia that links United States interests in the region with the necessary resources and personnel required for implementation, management and oversight of such strategy.” We would like to express our strong support for this undertaking. Should it be executed successfully, we believe great value can be found both in the process undertaken to execute this effort and the ultimate utility it can provide to the Congress, the interagency, the American public, and our partners across the region.

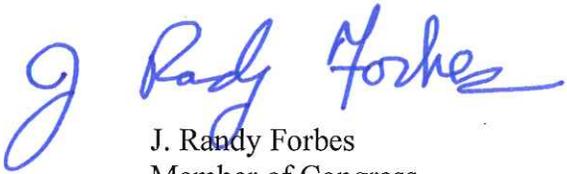
As you know, strategy is the reconciliation of objectives, ways, and means. In terms of our objectives, we share the Administration’s commitment to sustaining a robust, rules-based regional order that favors strong alliances, free markets, and political liberty. However, an articulation of the specific ways and means that will be necessary to achieve these objectives remains elusive. The strategy exercise required in this year’s appropriations bill provides an opportunity to fill this void.

Administration officials have argued that “a strategic turn to the (Asia-Pacific) fits logically into our overall global effort to secure and sustain America's global leadership. The success of this turn... requires smart execution of a coherent regional strategy.” To fulfill this strategy, they have described “six key lines of action” that we should pursue: strengthening bilateral security alliances; improving relationships with emerging powers; engagement with regional multilateral institutions; expanding trade and investment; bolstering capable military presence; and promoting democracy and human rights. We agree that these lines of actions should underpin the “ways” of our strategy and hope that the integrated, multi-year planning and budget effort the Administration is now conducting will adopt them as a basis for this review. Finally, we seek to better comprehend the resources that will be required to support the ways, and objectives of our Asia-Pacific strategy so that the Congress can be a partner in this effort.

In conclusion, we want to reiterate that our continued push for an Asia-Pacific Strategy Review is not meant as way to oppose the Administration's efforts in the region. To the contrary, we desperately wish to see our nation succeed, for our own prosperity and security in addition to that of our allies. A comprehensive, multi-year strategy, in classified and unclassified form, is critical to marshaling the resources for these endeavors and providing effective oversight of their implementation.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We look forward to continuing to work with you to support this vital effort.

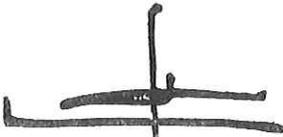
Sincerely,



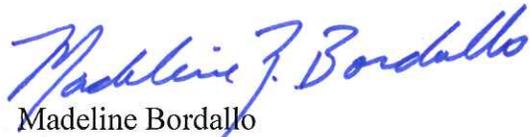
J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress



Rob Wittman
Member of Congress



Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress



Madeline Bordallo
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