

**COMMITTEES:  
ARMED SERVICES**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
READINESS – CHAIRMAN

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
SEAPOWER AND EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

**JUDICIARY**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM,  
AND HOMELAND SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
THE CONSTITUTION



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

2438 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-6365

425-H SOUTH MAIN STREET  
EMPORIA, VA 23847  
(434) 634-5575

9401 COURTHOUSE ROAD, SUITE 201  
CHESTERFIELD, VA 23832  
(804) 318-1363

505 INDEPENDENCE PARKWAY  
LAKE CENTER II—SUITE 104  
CHESAPEAKE, VA 23320  
(757) 382-0080

January 20, 2012

The Honorable Leon Panetta  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1300

Dear Secretary Panetta:

I am writing regarding the Department of Defense's new Defense Strategic Guidance, released on January 5, 2012. Specifically, I am concerned about the level of risk the Nation is accepting under this new strategy. At the briefing you noted that, "We do accept some risks in this strategy as all strategies must. Because we will be somewhat smaller, these risks will be measured in time and in capacity." In addition, you commented at the briefing how the strategy review process enabled you "to assess risk, to set priorities and to make some very hard choices."

The Conclusion to the Strategic Guidance says that "Force and program decisions made by the Department of Defense will be made in accordance with the strategic approach described in this document, which is designed to ensure our Armed Forces can meet the demands of the U.S. National Security Strategy at acceptable risk." To better comprehend the degree of risk we will be accepting under this new strategy, I would like to know how the Defense Strategic Guidance was informed by the Administration's National Security Strategy. More specifically, pertinent to TITLE 50 > CHAPTER 15 > SUBCHAPTER I, I would like to better understand how the President's classified and unclassified National Security Strategy reports, required by law to be delivered each year to Congress, helped to:

- 1) Identify the risks, challenges, and threats found in today's national security environment;
- 2) Inform how the U.S. military is postured for the future, specifically in the 20-year timeframe mandated in the QDR; and
- 3) Prioritize the Primary Missions set forth in the Defense Strategic Guidance.

The Administration has failed to submit either a classified or unclassified National Security Strategy Report to Congress in both 2009 and 2011. At a time when we're facing fiscal uncertainty and a complex global security environment, I believe this document is a critical part of our national security planning process. I therefore look forward to receiving the Administration's 2012 classified and unclassified National Security Strategy Reports accompanying the President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget.

Administration's 2012 classified and unclassified National Security Strategy Reports accompanying the President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget.

I am also contacting Mr. Tom Donilon, the National Security Advisor, requesting his office provide similar information on the Administration's strategy. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J Randy Forbes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

J. Randy Forbes  
Member of Congress