Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 9, 2014

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

It has been five years since your Department made clear its need for a consolidated facility to improve efficiency, decrease operating costs, and provide our diplomats, agents and their families with the training necessary for being stationed in some of the most high-threat, high-risk countries around the world.

In 2011, the State Department concluded that Fort Pickett, Virginia is the preferred site for a new State Department Foreign Affairs Security Training Center (FASTC). The Administration requested that the Department conduct due diligence to ensure that the site was not only adequate, but that it was cost effective as well. After conducting thorough and extensive analyses and studies, the Administration re-affirmed Fort Pickett as the location for the training center on April 17, 2014. Unfortunately, during that process, no tangible progress was made to develop the Ft. Pickett site.

It has now been two years since the world witnessed a devastating attack in Benghazi, Libya, that took the lives of four Americans including our Ambassador. Just days ago, Ansar al-Sharia, an affiliate of al Qaeda, launched a rocket at the United States embassy in Sana, Yemen.

We believe that it is imperative that the State Department act immediately in its development of the FASTC at Fort Pickett. America has an obligation that when we send diplomats and their families around the world to represent our nation we have provided them and those responsible for their protection the training they deserve. The need for this training is more critical now than ever. We cannot afford to wait.

We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your attention to this important issue as we work to provide the best training possible so our diplomats are prepared and our nation is able to protect its embassies.

Sincerely,

TIM KAINE
Member of Congress

J. RANDY FORBES
Member of Congress

ROBERT HURT
Member of Congress