

February 28, 2011

Senator Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations

Senator Thad Cochran
Ranking Minority Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations

Senator Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Department of State,
Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies

Senator Lindsey Graham
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on the Department of State,
Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies

Dear Chairman Inouye, Ranking Minority Member Cochran, Subcommittee Chairman Leahy, and Ranking Minority Member Graham:

As Deans and Directors of the leading Schools of International Affairs around the world that train young professionals for careers in international affairs, we urge you to restore the public funding for the United States Institute of Peace. The U.S. Institute of Peace, created by Congress in 1984 as a non partisan federal institution to support the nation's capacity to prevent, manage and resolve international conflicts, has had its FY2011 funding eliminated from the House of Representatives' version of the federal budget continuing resolution bill (HR1). We deeply oppose this measure.

The U.S. Institute of Peace has worked on the ground to stop and resolve actual conflicts in dozens of countries around the globe. But it has also contributed to the understanding of conflict and how to deal with it. It has helped to build the conflict management and resolution field, both as an area of study and as an applied science. The Institute is not a think tank – of which there are many. The best analogy is to an applied research facility. Like a teaching hospital, USIP sponsors research and puts it to practice, training the next generation of professionals in the process. It supports and develops the best thinking about conflict management, it deploys practitioners steeped in conflict best practices into the field in overseas war zones, and it educates and trains current and future professionals.

Furthermore, its programs have inspired high school, college and graduate students to enter into public service, in both the civilian and military fields. Faculty and students in each of our institutions have benefited from USIP's programs, and many of them are giving back to their country and communities.

Zeroing out USIP's funding, will dramatically reduce global capacity to prevent and resolve conflict, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq where the Institute is training defense personnel from the Pentagon heading to Kabul, and training civilians in Iraq for the withdrawal of U.S. forces in July. A funding cut also jeopardizes the Institute's work on countering extremism in Pakistan. If the United States is serious about winning the peace as well as fighting wars, its national leaders and citizens must defend the institutions that are doing the hard work of transitioning societies from war to peace. USIP has a permanent home in the United States capital from which to work, teach, inspire, and prepare current and future generations of peacemakers both in the US and abroad --and to be a symbol of humanity's ability to reduce violent international conflict in the 21st century.

We urge Congress to support the U.S. Institute of Peace and its Congressional mandate to prevent and resolve conflict, and to bring sustainable peace to zones of conflict. Achievement of this goal will serve American foreign policy and security interests, stabilize regions plagued by terrorism, improve the global economy, and reinforce the United States' standing in the world.

Respectfully,



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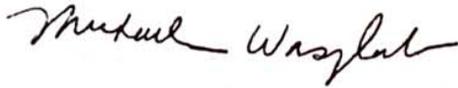
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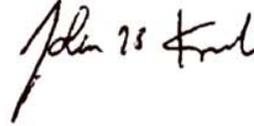
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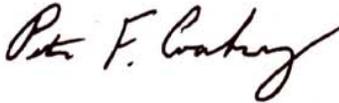
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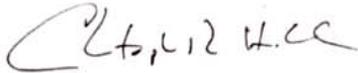
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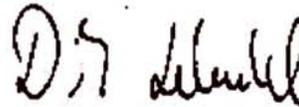
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