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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

January 21, 2010

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Mr. John Brennan  
Deputy National Security Advisor  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. Brennan:

I am deeply concerned about the conflicting information that members of Congress have received about the interrogation of the alleged Christmas Day airline bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab. I would appreciate your help in clarifying these conflicting reports and explaining our interrogation policy.

It is becoming clear to me is that there was no coordinated interagency management of the Abdulmutallab interrogation before he was read Miranda rights and provided an attorney. In light of recent intelligence reports indicating other potential terror plots against the U.S., this haste may have cost the U.S. Government and our intelligence professionals critical information that could have helped to uncover and disrupt future attacks.

Last August, the Administration announced a major change in our Nation's interrogation policy based on the recommendations of the Interrogation Task Force. At the time to policy was announced, the Congress was told that the President had approved a series of policy changes. It is now five months later and the Administration has not provided the new policy to the Congress. Can you please provide me with a copy of the Administration's interrogation policy approved by the President in August, 2009, classified as appropriate? Can you also please provide me with a copy of any final memorandum of understanding related to implementation of the new policy? In addition, the Administration reports that the High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group (HIG) envisioned in the new policy is not yet operational. How will the HIG operate, and what is the timeline for the HIG to begin operations?

Despite the fact that the HIG is not yet operational, a cornerstone of the new interrogation policy was that the "principal function" of interrogations of High-Value Detainees would be "intelligence gathering rather than law enforcement". It is therefore very troubling that in the case of Mr. Abdulmutallab, it appears that key entities of the intelligence community were not consulted or involved in the interrogation or the decision to forego extensive interrogation and treat this as a case for Federal prosecution. Was anyone in the intelligence community, outside of the FBI, consulted regarding this interrogation?

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A report published yesterday by *Newsweek's* Michael Isikoff cites unnamed officials as stating that the HIG was specifically envisioned to handle the questioning of high-value Al Qaeda leaders captured overseas. This assertion is contrary to briefings I have received from administration officials. Does the new policy give the HIG or any other entity the authority to interrogate terrorists detained inside the U.S.? What is the definition of "High-Value Detainee", and did Mr. Abdulmutallab fit that definition? Regardless of where a detainee is apprehended, if the person has intelligence value, the underlying purpose should be to get as much information as possible.

Finally, I remain concerned about the length of the interrogation of Mr. Abdulmutallab. By all accounts investigators spent only a few hours with him, at most. It is troubling to think that an opportunity to gain critical intelligence may have been lost because we did not put the right people in place, consult the intelligence community, and give interrogators the necessary time to conduct an effective, intelligence-driven, interrogation.

These are critical questions that must be answered to ensure proper congressional oversight. Last week, I sent you the enclosed letter with a series of additional questions pertaining to this terrorist plot and the developing threat from Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. I would appreciate a prompt response to these questions as well. I urge you to work *with* members of Congress to provide a clear picture of the events of December 25, 2009 and to ensure that our federal interrogators have the support and resources need to secure necessary and timely intelligence from detained terrorists.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

WHILE MISTAKES WERE MADE,  
THE IMPORTANT THING IS FOR  
THE ADM TO GET IT RIGHT  
THE NEXT TIME. THANK YOU