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U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

364 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

<http://veterans.house.gov>

August 31, 2021

The Honorable Mark Takano
 364 Cannon House Office Building
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Takano,

As our nation bears witness to President Biden's failed withdrawal from Afghanistan, our nation's veterans are being bombarded with devastating images of retreat resulting in the loss of life and liberty. As a result, many veterans have understandably expressed fear, stress, disdain, or regret about their service, worrying if their sacrifices and the loss of their fellow servicemembers occurred in vain.

Needless to say, this is an incredibly painful time for our servicemembers and veterans, particularly those who served in Afghanistan and Iraq over the past 20 years. Our hearts are with them and also with all the Gold Star families and loved ones of servicemembers and veterans across the country.

As we mourn the sacrifice that our selfless soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are making in Kabul, we are deeply concerned about the psychological impact that this foreign policy disaster is having on our nation's veterans at home. With this in mind, we urge you to bring the House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVAC) back to Washington, D.C. immediately to conduct a full committee hearing on the short and long-term implications of this devastating debacle on veteran mental health and ensure veterans are aware of the many resources VA has to offer them during this challenging time.

The hearing should include Secretary McDonough, leaders from the veteran community like the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, and individual servicemembers and veterans who can speak to the immediate and long-term effects of the stress and trauma they are undergoing.

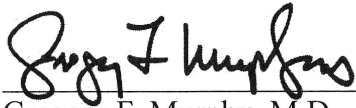
We must convey to our nation's veterans that their service and sacrifice have not been in vain, and that despite political failures in Washington, they are heroes that have indeed accomplished their mission in Afghanistan and left the world a better, safer place.

Chairman Mark Takano

Page 2

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this pressing matter. As the tragic situation in Afghanistan continues to unfold, we look forward to your prompt reply.

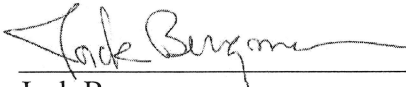
Sincerely,



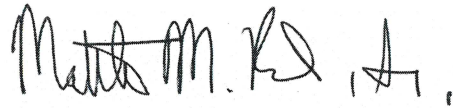
Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
Member of Congress



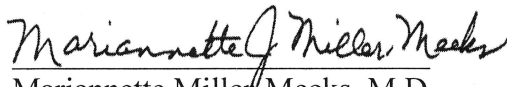
Mike Bost, Ranking Member
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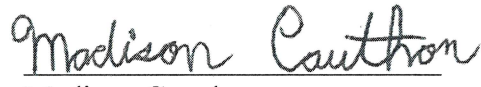
Jack Bergman
Member of Congress



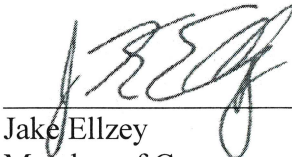
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