

February 25, 2014

Senator Dianne Feinstein
Chairman, Senate Select Committee on
Intelligence
211 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Saxby Chambliss
Vice Chairman, Senate Select Committee on
Intelligence
211 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Study of the CIA's Detention and Interrogation Program

Dear Chairman Feinstein and Vice Chairman Chambliss:

We are writing as strong supporters of the Senate Intelligence Committee's effort to investigate and establish the facts surrounding the CIA's detention and interrogation program in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks. We urge the Committee to declassify and publicly release its 6,300 page report with as few redactions as possible. Any minority views and the response of the Central Intelligence Agency should also be made public.

We understand the report documents the use of torture, other ill-treatment, and enforced disappearance in the years following the September 11th attacks. Torture is illegal under U.S. and international law; it is also immoral and – according to military and intelligence experts – ineffective and counterproductive. But in the absence of a comprehensive public examination of the facts based on the historical record, the use of torture continues to be the subject of intense speculation and debate.

Declassifying the Committee's report – the most comprehensive review to date of the CIA detention and interrogation program based on the classified record – will help us to ensure that torture is not used by, or on behalf of, the U.S. government again. In 2009, the Senate Armed Services Committee released a report investigating the involvement of the Defense Department in detainee abuses. That investigation, the results of which were made public, helped the Defense Department put in place procedures aimed at preventing the same abuses from recurring. The Intelligence Committee has a duty to properly exercise its oversight function and make sure that the CIA does the same. Making public one of the most significant oversight efforts in the history of the United States Senate is a key step toward that end.

The use of torture and cruel treatment as official U.S. policy has had serious consequences for America's national security, foreign policy interests, and credibility in promoting human rights around the world. The Committee can begin to undo some of the damage done by publicly releasing its full study of the CIA's detention and interrogation program with as few redactions as possible. Release of this study is critical to establish the truth and prevent torture.

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union
Amnesty International USA
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for National Security Studies
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
National Religious Campaign Against Torture
National Security Network
Open Society Policy Center
Physicians for Human Rights
The Center for Victims of Torture
The Constitution Project

CC: Members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence