

9/11 Families & Whistleblowers DEMAND The End To The Secrecy

1/27/2005

WASHINGTON- An unprecedented group of national security whistle blowers and family members of 9/11 victims gathered today to demand that the government stop silencing employees who expose national security blunders and called on Congress to hold hearings into the government's actions against whistle blowers. "The government is taking extreme steps to shield itself from political embarrassment while gambling with our safety," said Ann Beeson, Associate Legal Director of the American Civil Liberties Union. "The government has fired whistle blowers, retroactively classified public information and used special privileges not to protect us but to cover-up mistakes."

The ACLU is urging the D.C. Court of Appeals to reinstate the case of Sibel Edmonds, a former FBI translator who was fired in retaliation for whistle blowing. Fourteen 9/11 family member advocacy groups and public interest organizations filed a friend-of-the-court brief this month in support of Edmonds. Many of them joined her today at a news conference in Washington, along with national security whistle blowers Michael German, Coleen Rowley, Manny Johnson, Robert Woo, Ray McGovern, Mel Goodman and Bogdan Dzakovic, among others.

The ACLU and many of the groups signing the brief today called for Congressional hearings to determine whether the Justice Department withheld from the lower court its knowledge of an internal report concluding that Edmonds was fired for her whistle blowing. The groups are also seeking an investigation into whether the Justice Department retroactively classified documents to perpetuate a cover-up in Edmonds' case.

"The issues surrounding the Edmonds case are so significant that Congress must hold hearings to investigate the government's actions," said Danielle Brian, Executive Director of the Project On Government Oversight, a watchdog group that signed the appeal brief. "As the people's representatives, Congress has the duty to protect whistle blowers who seek to uncover and publicize the misuse of government authority."

Edmonds, a former Middle Eastern language specialist hired by the FBI shortly after 9/11, was fired in 2002 after repeatedly reporting serious security breaches and misconduct in the agency's translation program.

"My case is one of many in which the government has fired those who uncover weaknesses in our ability to prevent terrorist attacks," Edmonds said. "If we truly want to protect America, we must first protect America's national security whistle blowers."

Edmonds challenged her retaliatory dismissal by filing suit in federal court. Last July, the district court dismissed her case when Attorney General John Ashcroft invoked the so-called state secrets privilege. In legal papers, the ACLU has sharply criticized the government's radical theory that every aspect of the Edmonds case involves state secrets and therefore it cannot go forward.

The groups that signed on to the friend-of-the court brief supporting Edmonds' appeal include 9/11 Families United to Bankrupt Terrorism, Coalition of 9/11 Families, National Air Disaster Alliance, 9/11 Families for a Secure America, September 11th Advocates, and the World Trade Center United Family Group.

"It is imperative that people aware of government misdeeds and mistakes feel they can come forward without retaliation," said Bill Doyle, whose son Joseph was a victim in the 9/11 World Trade Center attack. "This is about more than employee protections. It is about national security -- something that directly impacts all of us and that 9/11 family members know firsthand."

An unclassified summary of the Justice Department's Inspector General report on Edmonds' termination, released after two years on January 14, concluded that she was fired for reporting serious security breaches and misconduct in the agency's translation program. The report also stated that the FBI's retaliation "may have the effect of discouraging others from raising concerns."

The ACLU has announced its willingness to support other national security whistle blowers and has encouraged others to come forward. The group has set up a website that includes a complaint form for whistle blowers who feel they have been retaliated against for exposing misconduct or corruption, as well as other documents in the Edmonds case, online at www.aclu.org/whistleblower.

Oral argument in Edmonds' case is scheduled for April 21, 2005. In addition to Beeson, co-counsel in the case are: Melissa Goodman and Benjamin Wizner of the national ACLU; Mark S. Zaid, Managing Partner of the Washington, D.C. law firm Krieger and Zaid; Art Spitzer of the ACLU of the National Capital Area; and Eric Seiff of New York.

<http://www.aclu.org/safefree/general/18838prs20050126.html> To read speech given by Sibel Edmonds visit: http://www.justacitizen.org/articles_documents/SibelSpeech012605.htm

More background at: <http://www.justacitizen.org> and in other stories posted on this site. Conduct a site search to locate all posted stories on Sibel's case.

September 11th Advocates Statement re. 9/11 Commission's Declassified Monograph on FAA Failures* *

Friday, February 11, 2005 - 03:14 PM
Posted by: khence

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 11, 2005

September 11th was neither an intelligence failure nor was it a failure of imagination. It was nonfeasance on behalf of a whole host of government agencies, including the FAA.

[snip]

Notably missing from this monograph is any information pertaining to NORAD's failure to timely scramble jets, which leads us to wonder what else is being withheld from the public.

[snip]Of the 105 warnings issued, 52 warnings regarding al Qaeda were given to the FAA by the intelligence community in a six month period from April 2001 to September 2001. According to the 9/11 Commission's final report, there were eight information

circulars put out by the FAA between July 2, and September 10, 2001. Five of these information circulars targeted overseas threats, while the remaining three targeted **domestic threats**.

The **52 threats regarding al Qaeda** were not received by the FAA in a vacuum. From March 2001 to September 2001, according to the Joint Inquiry of Congress, our Intelligence Community received at least **41 specific threats of a possible domestic attack by al Qaeda**. Additionally, the FAA was also made aware of the **August 16, 2001 arrest of Zaccarias Moussouai**. Finally, the FAA attended a **high level meeting on July 5, 2001 where the domestic threat posed by al Qaeda was discussed by all relevant intelligence agencies**.

According to the newly released FAA monograph, in the spring of 2001 the FAA knew that if **"the intent of the hijacker is not to exchange hostages for prisoners, but to commit suicide in a spectacular explosion, a domestic hijacking would probably be preferable"**.

The aforementioned statement is yet another indicator of how widely known it was in the national security community that al Qaeda was interested in using planes as missiles. Yet, as the historic record also widely indicates, former National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice publicly stated that she didn't think that anyone could imagine that planes could be used as missiles.

Furthermore, Ms. Rice also testified, under oath, before the 9/11 Commission, that the August 6, 2001 PDB, "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in the U.S.," contained purely "historical" threat information. The revelation of the 52 warnings given to the FAA during this same time period would seem to indicate that Ms. Rice perjured herself during her testimony.

Moreover, Ms. Rice also testified that there was nothing more the U.S. government could have done during the summer of 2001 to thwart the attacks of 9/11. Yet, the newly released 9/11 Monograph states that the **federal air marshal program was specifically deleted from all domestic flights during the summer of 2001 as a result of cost cutting by the airlines**. Certainly, placing air marshals on domestic flights was well within the purview of Ms. Rice's own responsibilities and tasking as National Security Advisor. Why has she not been held accountable? Additionally, why has no one in the airline community been held accountable?

An FAA spokesperson asserts that the FAA didn't have specific information regarding means or methods that would have enabled them to tailor any counter measures. This statement clearly contradicts the reality detailed in this report. Stepping up security in the face of terror warnings is not a new concept for America's government agencies. **The FAA testified before the 9/11 Commission that during the millennium an unknown terror plot caused them to ratchet up their security procedures. With 52 warnings, why was this not done in 2001?**

The American public must not be lulled into a false sense of security. While government reports might allege that the myriad of government agencies, individuals, and institutions that failed our nation on 9/11 have been fixed post-9/11, the disturbing fact remains that after all the failures of 9/11 have been revealed, far too many of the same individuals who were unable to react appropriately to clear and abundant warnings, **are still in their positions today**.

Notably missing from this monograph is any information pertaining to NORAD's failure to timely scramble jets, which leads us to wonder what else is being withheld from the public.

September 11th Advocates

Kristen Breitweiser
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Threats Before 9/11

The New York Times -- February 14, 2005

http://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/14/opinion/14terror.html?_r=1

Letter to the Editor:

"9/11 Report Cites Many Warnings About Hijackings" (front page, Feb. 10) makes us wonder why the Federal Aviation Administration made a decision before 9/11 to remove sky marshals from all domestic flights. With 52 threats from Al Qaeda being posed against United States airliners, why would anyone cut the domestic use of sky marshals?

Who is responsible for this decision, and why has this person not been held accountable?

Moreover, how is it possible that Condoleezza Rice, then the national security adviser, testified before the 9/11 commission that the threats presented in the Aug. 6, 2001, presidential daily briefing were "historical" in nature? These threats were current, specific and concerned domestic suicide hijackings. Ms. Rice testified that there was nothing the government could have done to thwart the attacks. Increasing the presence of sky marshals on domestic flights might have made a difference. So, too, would have securing cockpit doors.

One would hope that the new national intelligence director would override such deadly financial decisions by the F.A.A. and the airline industry.

Kristen Breitweiser
Monica Gabrielle

The writers are members of September 11 Advocates.

September 11th Advocates: Statement Regarding 9/11 Commission Hearings

Friday, June 24, 2005 - 03:35 PM

For Immediate Release -- June 6, 2005

The 9/11 Commission summer hearing schedule begins today, Monday, June 6, 2005 with "Assessing Progress of CIA and FBI Reform."

In July 2004, when the 9/11 Commission released its Final Report, we read with enormous interest, Chapter 6 - "From Threat to Threat", including footnote #44. Footnote #44 details an instance where a CIA desk officer intentionally withheld vital information from the FBI about two of the 9/11 hijackers who were inside the United States. This footnote further states that the CIA desk officer covered-up the decision to withhold said vital information from the FBI. Finally, footnote #44 states that the CIA desk officer could not recall who told her to carry out such acts. While several notable instances of this sort of intentional withholding of vital information from and among intelligence agencies are found throughout the 9/11 Commission's Final Report, we call special attention to four additional examples in this press release. We do so with the hope that the 9/11 Commissioners will now explain why the truth has not been revealed to the American public about one of our intelligence agency's ongoing surveillance of the 9/11 hijackers while they were living inside the United States in the 18 months leading up to the 9/11 attacks.

1. The 9/11 Commission Final Report, Chapter 8, "The System Was Blinking Red," January 2001: Identification of Khallad, p. 266, footnotes 55-62.
2. The 9/11 Commission Final Report, Chapter 8, "The System Was Blinking Red," Spring 2001: Looking Again at Kuala Lumpur, p. 267, footnotes 63-66.
3. The 9/11 Commission Final Report, Chapter 8, "The System Was Blinking Red," June 2001: The Meeting in New York, p. 268, footnotes 67-72.
4. The 9/11 Commission Final Report, Chapter 8, "The System Was Blinking Red," August 2001: The Search for Mihdhar and Hazmi Begins and Fails, p. 269, footnotes 73-85.

The "watchlisting issue" has been reported by the media and the 9/11 Commission as a series of benign oversights, a sort of institutional competitiveness gone awry, and/or a gross misunderstanding of evidentiary standards in criminal/intelligence investigations. We disagree. A careful review of the aforementioned footnotes reveals a pattern of behavior during the 18 months immediately preceding the 9/11 attacks that was arguably criminal-in-nature and contributory-in-part to the "catastrophic success" of the 9/11 plot.

The ongoing myth that the CIA's failure to communicate with the FBI was some sort of institutional failure that is readily fixable by intelligence community reforms is a notion that is whimsical at best and extremely harmful to our nation at worst. When individuals who run our intelligence agencies make repeated, intentional decisions that eventually lead to the deaths of almost 3,000 innocent people, those individuals should be held accountable not given Medals of Freedom.

Ultimately, unless today's hearing finally addresses the intentional lack of communication between the CIA and FBI rather than continuing to label these actions as "oversights" and/or "misunderstandings", these hearings will fail to serve their purpose.

September 11th Advocates

Kristen Breitweiser
Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken See also:

9/11 Widow Comments on Delayed CIA Report on 9/11

Statement of September 11th Advocates Regarding Surveillance of Mohammed Atta

Wednesday, August 10, 2005 - 08:59 AM

As a group of 9/11 widows who fought for the creation of the 9/11 Independent Commission, we are horrified to learn of further possible evidence (as detailed by the New York Times article, "4 in 9/11 Plot Are Called Tied to Qaeda in '00") that the 9/11 Commission failed to fully investigate all of the facts and circumstances surrounding the 9/11 attacks.

By legislative mandate, Public Law 107-306, November 27, 2002, the 9/11 Independent Commission was charged with providing a full accounting of the 9/11 attacks to the American people. As has been indicated repeatedly since the release of the Commission's Final Report and via the NY Times article published yesterday, the 9/11 Commission failed to provide said full accounting. As a result, each Commissioner and Staff Member should be held accountable. Nearly four years since the attacks of 9/11, we are tired of our nation's leaders (elected and appointed officials from both political parties) not being held accountable for their actions or inactions - particularly when it comes to fighting the "ongoing war against terrorism." We believe that the time has come for the American people to demand the necessary accountability from all of our leaders. The 9/11 Commissioners and Staff who had a legal obligation to investigate and report upon all of the facts relevant to the 9/11 attacks should, therefore, be the very first individuals to be held accountable and responsible for their collective failure to meet their legislative mandate.

Because the 9/11 Commission's Report is incomplete, nearly four years after the 9/11 attacks, the American people clearly suffer from a false sense of security. How can we know that we are truly safer from terrorists if the 9/11 Commission has chosen to hide certain facts? Particularly when those withheld facts detail specific actions made by intelligence community officials at the following agencies: the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Security Agency, and the National Security Council. These are the very same agencies and individuals that are charged with keeping us safe from the terrorists today. Yet, a close inspection of the failures made by these individuals reveals that these same individuals had ample opportunity to unravel the 9/11 plot prior to the 9/11 attacks and failed to do so. In fact, a fair reading of these occurrences could lead one to believe that some of these individual actions or inactions actually contributed to the "catastrophic success" of the 9/11 attacks.

The revelation of this information demands answers that are forthcoming, clear, and concise. The 9/11 attacks could have and should have been prevented. To date, not one individual has been held accountable for this nation's failure to prevent the 9/11 attacks. Thus, the 9/11 Commission Report is incomplete and illusory.

As 9/11 widows who fought tirelessly for the creation of the 9/11 Commission, we are wholly disappointed to learn that the Commission's Final Report is a hollow failure. We spent innumerable hours of our time away from our families to ensure that the 9/11 Commission had the tools and resources necessary to provide a complete and thorough accounting of the 9/11 attacks to the American people. We truly wanted to learn lessons from the 9/11 attacks so that we could all live in a safer environment. We find this latest revelation of the Commission's failure to adequately and aggressively pursue the complete truth surrounding 9/11 absolutely shameful.

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9/11 Widows Further 9/11 Commission "Mistakes"

Tuesday, August 23, 2005 - 01:03 PM

Statement of September 11th Advocates Regarding Further 9/11 Commission "Mistakes"

For Immediate Release -- August 23, 2005

It has come to our attention that two of the 9/11 hijackers – Al Hazmi and Al Mihdhar – were in the NY/NJ area in December of 2000. The evidence of this new piece of knowledge is found on page A-21 of the 9/11 Commission's visa travel monograph. On that page you will find two identification cards issued by USA ID to Al Mihdhar and Al Hazmi. Please note the expiration date of those identification cards – December 2006. It should also be noted that USA ID only provides identification cards for a six year duration. The date of issuance, therefore, can be ascertained by subtracting six years from the date of expiration. Thus, the date of issuance was December 2000. This information is highly relevant in that it reveals a glaring "mistake" in the Commission's timeline regarding the whereabouts of two of the key 9-11 hijackers. Namely, that both Al Hazmi and Al Mihdhar were in the NY - NJ area nearly two months after the Cole bombing – an Al Qaeda attack that cost the lives of 17 US Sailors in Yemen in October 2000

We request the Commission explain their "mistake" to the American people and further investigate the concrete whereabouts of these two hijackers for the time period of June 2000 until the day of 9-11. Recall that the Commission reports that Al Mihdhar left the United States in June of 2000 not to return until July of 2001.

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Regarding the Release of the CIA Inspector General's Report post- 9/11

Thursday, August 25, 2005 - 12:56 PM
Statement of September 11th Advocates
For Immediate Release -- August 25, 2005

We are deeply disturbed to learn that an investigation of the CIA, conducted at the direction of the Joint House and Senate Congressional Intelligence Committees in 2002, will not be declassified and released as soon as possible.

This report presumably discusses failures within the CIA and identifies performance deficiencies among high-ranking CIA officials. The findings in this report must be shared with all members of Congress and with the American public to ensure that the problems identified are addressed and corrected, thus moving to restore faith in this agency.

We call for the immediate release of this report. To shield CIA officials from accountability and to continue to cover-up deficiencies in that agency puts the safety of our nation at risk. Four years post 9-11 this is truly unacceptable.

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9/11 Widows Group Decries Pentagon Call for Closed Judiciary Hearings on Able Danger

Monday, September 19, 2005 - 03:29 PM

September 11th Advocates Statement
Regarding Senate Judiciary "Able Danger" Hearing
September 19, 2005

We were stunned to learn that the Pentagon is calling for the Senate hearing regarding "Able Danger" scheduled for Wednesday, September 21st, to be closed to the public.

Recall that Able Danger was the data mining operation run out of the Defense Intelligence Agency that allegedly identified four of the 9/11 hijackers one year prior to the attacks. There has been much controversy surrounding these findings and their significance cannot be overstated. This information, relating to Able Danger, changes the entire 9/11 "story" and would therefore impact many of the 9/11 Commission's recommendations. After attempting to seek the truth for four years, it would be a travesty to keep the facts surrounding

this operation from the public. The insistence on secrecy by governmental agencies only makes their motives suspect and ultimately serves to keep the American public at risk.

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Former Family Steering Committee members Request Judiciary Compell Testimony of Key Witnesses

Wednesday, September 21, 2005 - 02:27 PM

For Immediate Release -- 9/21/05

September 11th Advocates Statement
Regarding Today's Open Able Danger Hearing
September 21, 2005

It is with great dissatisfaction that we find ourselves not attending today's "open" hearing of the Senate Judiciary Committee that was to investigate the Able Danger operation.

Rather than "closing" the Able Danger hearing to the public, it is our opinion that the Pentagon simply barred, persuaded or suggested to the previously named and confirmed Pentagon witnesses who were slated to attend said hearing, that they simply not attend. The key witnesses who we believe were formerly scheduled to testify at today's hearing included, but were not limited to the following: Lt. Col. Tony Shaffer, Navy Capt. Scott Phillpott, Defense Contractor JD Smith, an individual with the last name Wentworth, and an individual with the last name Pricer. Additionally, we would have hoped that the following persons of interest would have also been asked to testify because we believe they too have valuable information to share on "Operation Able Danger": Former DIA interrogator and analyst, Kie Fallis; Former Chief of DIA's Persian Gulf Division, Jay Saunders; Former DIA Terrorism Division Senior Middle East Analyst, Randy Mac Robbie; Former DIA Terrorism Warning Chief, Gary Greco; Former DIA Chief of the Office for Counterterrorism Analysis, Bob Pecha and Former DIA Director, Vice Admiral Thomas Wilson.

We respectfully thank the Senate Judiciary Committee, for attempting to hold a hearing that would have clearly served the nation's interest with regard to national security matters. We continue to support full, transparent access to all vital information regarding our national security because we believe that in order to remain vigilant in the war against terror, we must garner the will of the nation and that can only be achieved by having a fully informed and engaged citizenry.

Unfortunately, because of the Pentagon's decision with regard to the Able Danger information, we must now respectfully ask the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to vote to use their subpoena power to compel the appearance of the aforementioned witness list from the Department of Defense. We will continue to follow the progress of this issue closely by reporting the breakdown of the Committee's subpoena vote.

It should be noted that the Committee needs a unanimous vote in order to issue these subpoenas. Certainly, we remain hopeful that since this issue is of paramount importance to the sanctity and security of this nation, that such a unanimous vote will be swift and summarily taken by the Committee. In light of the importance of this matter, we have taken the liberty of listing all members of the Senate Judiciary on this Press Release. We request that all Americans contact these members to encourage them to immediately vote in support of the issuance of these subpoenas to the Department of Defense.

Moreover, since the Able Danger operation entails individuals, policies, and decisions made by both the Clinton and Bush Administrations as they pertained to the growing terrorist threat posed by Al Qaeda in the years preceding 9/11, we would hope that all Americans realize that this is not a political issue, but is a national security issue. Certainly, under the Clinton Administration, America suffered the bombing of the USS Cole, while under the Bush Administration we suffered the attacks of 9/11. Both of these al Qaeda attacks were carried out by individuals who were allegedly identified and under active surveillance by DIA's Able Danger Operation. Thus, we need to ascertain why these attacks were not thwarted prior to their commission. Subsequently, as 9/11 family members who fought for the creation of the 9/11 Commission, we would also like to discern why the 9/11 Commission failed to include such highly relevant information within the pages of its "definitive" final report.

Only a truly open hearing can furnish the opportunity for all key individuals with pertinent, relevant material and evidence, to freely come forward to share their information with the American public. In addition, only a truly open hearing can confirm, clarify and/or dismiss the many outstanding and extremely disturbing issues surrounding Operation Able Danger.

The members of the Senate Judiciary Committee are:

Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) (202) 224-4254
Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) (202) 224-4242
Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) (202) 224-2152; fax (202) 228-0400
Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) (202) 224-5251; fax (202) 224-6331
Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA) (202) 224-3744
Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) (202) 224-4543; fax (202) 224-2417
Senator Jon Kyl (R-AZ) (202) 224-4521; fax (202) 224-2207
Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE) (202) 224-5042; fax (202) 224-0139
Senator Mike DeWine (R-OH) (202) 224-2315; fax (202) 224-6519
Senator Herbert Kohl (D-WI) (202) 224-5653; fax (202) 224-9787
Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) (202) 224-5972
Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) (202) 224-2934; fax (202) 228-2856
Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS) (202) 224-6521; fax (202) 228-1265

Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) (202) 224-5754; fax (202) 224-6008
Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA) (202) 224-5653; fax (202) 224-9787
Senator Russell Feingold (D-WI) (202) 224-5323; fax (202) 224-2725
Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) (202) 224-6542; fax (202) 228-3027
Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) (202) 224-4124; fax (202) 224-3149

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September 11th Advocates

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Statement of September 11th Advocates Regarding NSA Surveillance

by The 9/11 "Jersey Girls"

As a group of women whose husbands were killed by terrorists on 9/11, we strongly believe that all available means should be utilized to stop terrorists in their tracks. It is for this reason that we lobbied and fought for the creation of a 9/11 Independent Commission.

While fighting for this Commission, we learned that prior to September 11th our intelligence apparatus held all of the puzzle pieces (the proverbial dots) needed to prevent 9/11. The problem was not that we didn't have and use enough of the right tools, but rather that our intelligence community failed to connect the dots and puzzle pieces that it already had. Therefore, the terrorists were able to achieve their goal by murdering 3,000 innocent people on 9/11.

Recently, President Bush has stated that his NSA surveillance program is a tool that was lacking in our government's arsenal prior to 9/11. He repeatedly argues that such a program will prevent another 9/11. Moreover, President Bush justifies his breach of our constitutional laws by arguing that following the FISA law would cause our intelligence community to be too clumsy and slow while dealing with a nimble enemy.

Respectfully, we call President Bush's attention to two points of fact that negate his position.

One: Our government intercepted two al Qaeda communications, during routine monitoring, on September 10, 2001 - "tomorrow is zero hour" and "the match begins tomorrow."

Unfortunately, those crucial intercepts were reportedly not translated until September 12, 2001. It was certainly not any FISA court issue that delayed such translation. Rather, the delay was ostensibly due to NSA's overwhelming workload created by its voluminous influx of information that needed to be translated and analyzed on a daily basis. Nevertheless, our government was able to routinely and effortlessly gather such sensitive communications well before the 9/11 attacks.

Two: The "need for speed" with regard to eavesdropping on potential terrorists is already built into the FISA court system, as it currently exists. For example, the President can start eavesdropping immediately on anyone he deems it necessary to eavesdrop on and take 72 hours to subsequently ask for a FISA warrant. Moreover, in a time of war, the President is given a full fifteen days to retroactively ask for such a warrant.

Thus, why is there any need for the President to circumvent the law?

Additionally, with no formalized FISA court approval, there is no paper trail as to what our government knows and when it knows it. In truth, the FISA court provides an excellent repository that not only provides the necessary "checks and balances" with regard to civil liberties, but it also yields accountability that can be borne out in the days after the next terrorist attack.

Such circumvention of our nation's laws by our very own President raises grave concerns. His action is unfounded, illegal and unnecessary. Moreover, it threatens the very principles of democracy that our military is so courageously defending overseas.

Our nation must not, under the guise of national security and protecting citizens, allow any person holding the office of President of the United States to trample the sacred Constitution that this great country was founded on.

Retaining our civil liberties and our cherished democracy in the face of a looming terrorist threat is the only way we will win this "war on terror".

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September 11th Advocates Statement on Hayden, others rewarded after 9/11

For Immediate Release -- May 11, 2006

There has been an untenable pattern in this administration where abysmal failure gets rewarded and accountability is not found. For example:

1. Condoleezza Rice was promoted to Secretary of State:

On May 16, 2002, Condoleezza Rice, as National Security Advisor, said, "No one could have predicted that planes could be used as missiles", despite many prior intelligence reports on that precise topic and the fact that she was in Italy in July 2001 with the President who had to sleep on a boat for fear that a plane might be used as a missile in an assassination attempt against him.

On September 11, 2001, four planes were used as missiles. Our National Security Agencies were unprepared. 3000 people were killed.

In 2005, Condoleezza Rice was promoted from National Security Advisor to Secretary of State.

2. George Tenet was heralded as a hero and given the Medal of Freedom:

Tenet led the CIA through three of the US Intelligence communities largest failures: the U.S.S. Cole bombing, 9/11, and the lack of WMD in Iraq.

George Tenet was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom, one of our countries most esteemed honors.

3. FBI agents Michael Maltbie and David Frasca were promoted within the ranks of the FBI:

Moussaoui's arresting officer, FBI agent Harry Samit, tried some 70 times to get a FISA warrant to search Moussaoui's belongings before the 9/11 attacks. Samit testified during the Moussaoui penalty phase that he was thwarted by two agents at FBI HQ: Michael Maltbie, and David Frasca. These men scrubbed clean Samit's FISA requests of any references to terrorist ties that Moussaoui might have had, and then refused to allow the FISA requests to even be made.

The US Government has asserted that had they been able to search Moussaoui's belongings, the 9/11 plot could have been prevented.

Maltbie and Frasca were both promoted within the ranks of the FBI, where they are still employed today.

4. Steven Hadley was promoted to National Security Advisor:

Steven Hadley is the man responsible for placing the misleading and erroneous 16 words in the State of the Union Address regarding WMD in Iraq.

Steven Hadley was promoted to National Security Advisor in 2005.

5. Porter Goss was promoted to Director of the CIA:

Porter Goss was the Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee prior to and after 9/11. In such capacity he was responsible for the Congressional oversight of the intelligence community and its agencies. With an intelligence community still in complete disarray nearly 5 years post-9/11, Goss was at least in part responsible for that.

President Bush appointed Goss to head the CIA in 2004.

6. General Michael Hayden is now being appointed to Director of the CIA:

On September 10, 2001, two intercepts were received by the NSA:

"tomorrow is zero hour" and "the match begins tomorrow".

According to the official record, these intercepts were not translated until September 12, 2001. In the summer of threat, the NSA apparently had a shortage of translators.

General Michael Hayden was head of the NSA in September of 2001.

Moreover, Hayden is the architect of the president's illegal wiretapping program. The congressional intelligence committees were not briefed about this program, as is required by law.

General Michael Hayden is now being promoted to head the CIA.

Nearly five years post-9/11, the agencies that comprise our national security apparatus are floundering because no real reforms have taken place. This failure lies solely within the hands of President Bush and Congress who fail to take our homeland security seriously and make it a number one priority.

However, one must remain mindful that any intelligence agency can only be as good as the individuals that comprise that agency and lead that agency.

How can we expect optimal results from an intelligence community that continues to be led by incompetent individuals with clear records of failure? Why is our President choosing individuals who have clearly showed failures of judgment and failures of competence that have cost thousands of lives?

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9/11 Widows Respond to Coulter's 'Slander'

By E&P Staff
Published: June 07, 2006 7:55 AM ET

NEW YORK Syndicated columnist and author Ann Coulter appeared on the Today Show on Tuesday, promoting a new book. Host Matt Lauer asked her to explain certain remarks in the book aimed at activist 9/11 widows, including her charge that they were nothing but "self obsessed" and celebrity-seeking "broads" who are "enjoying" their husbands' deaths "so much."

After she defended these statements, he closed by saying, "always fun to have you here."

In response, a group of five 9/11 widows, who may have been the prime targets of Coulter's remarks, issued the following statement:

We did not choose to become widowed on September 11, 2001. The attack, which tore our families apart and destroyed our former lives, caused us to ask some serious questions regarding the systems that our country has in place to protect its citizens.

Through our constant research, we came to learn how the protocols were supposed to have worked. Thus, we asked for an independent commission to investigate the loopholes which obviously existed and allowed us to be so utterly vulnerable to terrorists. Our only motivation ever was to make our Nation safer. Could we learn from this tragedy so that it would not be repeated?

We are forced to respond to Ms. Coulter's accusations to set the record straight because we have been slandered.

Contrary to Ms. Coulter's statements, there was no joy in watching men that we loved burn alive. There was no happiness in telling our children that their fathers were never coming home again. We adored these men and miss them every day.

It is in their honor and memory, that we will once again refocus the Nation's attention to the real issues at hand: our lack of security, leadership and progress in the five years since 9/11.

We are continuously reminded that we are still a nation at risk. Therefore, the following is a partial list of areas still desperately in need of attention and public outcry. We should continuously be holding the feet of our elected officials to the fire to fix these shortcomings.

1. Homeland Security Funding based on risk. Inattention to this area causes police officers, firefighters and other emergency/first responder personnel to be ill equipped in emergencies. Fixing this will save lives on the day of the next attack.
2. Intelligence Community Oversight. Without proper oversight, there exists no one joint, bicameral intelligence panel with power to both authorize and appropriate funding for intelligence activities. Without such funding we are unable to capitalize on all intelligence community resources and abilities to thwart potential terrorist attacks. Fixing this will save lives on the day of the next attack.
3. Transportation Security. There has been no concerted effort to harden mass transportation security. Our planes, buses, subways, and railways remain under-protected and highly vulnerable. These are all identifiable soft targets of potential terrorist attack. The terror attacks in Spain and London attest to this fact. Fixing our transportation systems may save lives on the day of the next attack.
4. Information Sharing among Intelligence Agencies. Information sharing among intelligence agencies has not improved since 9/11. The attacks on 9/11 could have been prevented had information been shared among intelligence agencies. On the day of the next attack, more lives may be saved if our intelligence agencies work together.
5. Loose Nukes. A concerted effort has not been made to secure the thousands of loose nukes scattered around the world – particularly in the former Soviet Union. Securing these loose nukes could make it less likely for a terrorist group to use this method in an attack, thereby saving lives.
6. Security at Chemical Plants, Nuclear Plants, Ports. We must, as a nation, secure these known and identifiable soft targets of Terrorism. Doing so will save many lives.
7. Border Security. We continue to have porous borders and INS and Customs systems in shambles. We need a concerted effort to integrate our border security into the larger national security apparatus.
8. Civil Liberties Oversight Board. Given the President's NSA Surveillance Program and the re-instatement of the Patriot Act, this Nation is in dire need of a Civil Liberties Oversight Board to insure that a proper balance is found between national security versus the protection of our constitutional rights.

--September 11th Advocates

Kristen Breitweiser
Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken

September 11th Advocates Regarding Declassification and Release of Documents

June 18, 2007

The Public's Right to Know - Declassification and Release of Documents petition (<http://www.petitiononline.com/july10/petition.html>) surpassed 15,000 signatures. As promised, we have hand delivered it to lawmakers in Washington, DC.

UPDATE

Recently, during our meetings with lawmakers, we discussed the declassification and release of all transcripts and documents relating to the July 10, 2001 meeting that took place between former CIA Director George Tenet and then National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, the redacted 28 pages of the Joint Inquiry Into The Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001 (JICI) and the CIA Inspector General's report, "CIA Accountability With Respect To The 9/11 Attacks", as mentioned in the Petition.

Almost six years have passed since September 11, 2001, yet critical information continues to be withheld from the American public

regarding the attacks. Included in this statement is an "Action Alert" and background information explaining the importance of transparency in our government.

Since there is currently active legislation (Wyden-Bond Amendment attached to bill #S.4) regarding the CIA Inspector General's Report, we decided, for the moment, to focus our attention on this particular document.

After reviewing the evidence produced by the Joint Inquiry of Congress into the 9/11 Attacks, both Republican and Democratic Congressmen agreed that a CIA Inspector General review into individual responsibility was necessary. Faced with the facts, these Congressmen understood that accountability in the Intelligence Community was crucial. Their intent was that a final declassified CIA/IG report was to be released to the public and where deemed appropriate by the report, for personnel at all levels to be held accountable for any omission, commission, or failure to meet professional standards in regard to the events of September 11, 2001. Americans have the right to know that competent people are serving them in these strategic positions - our safety depends on it.

Once again, we need your help to get this declassified report released as soon as possible!!

**** ACTION ALERT ****

Please call and/or fax the following people. Tell them it is of the utmost importance to the future safety of the American public that the CIA Inspector General's Report on September 11th be released immediately!

The White House
Comments: (202) 456-1111 Fax (202) 456-2461

DNI Mike McConnell
Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Washington, DC 20511
(703) 733-8600

General Michael Hayden, Director CIA
(703) 482-0623; Fax (703) 482-1739

Members of the Senate Select Intelligence Committee 2007-2008

Democrats

John D. Rockefeller IV, West Virginia Chairman
(202) 224-6472; Fax (202) 224-7665

Dianne Feinstein, California
(202) 224-3841; Fax: (202) 228-3954

Ron Wyden, Oregon
(202) 224-5244

Evan Bayh, Indiana
(202) 224-5623

Barbara A. Mikulski, Maryland
(202) 224-4654

Russell D. Feingold, Wisconsin
(202) 224-5323; Fax (202) 224-2725

Bill Nelson, Florida
(202)-224-5274; Fax (202) 228-2183

Sheldon Whitehouse, Rhode Island
(202) 224-2921; Fax (202) 228-6362

Republicans

Christopher S. Bond, Missouri Vice-Chairman
(202) 224-5721

John Warner, Virginia
(202) 224-2023; Fax (202) 224-6295

Chuck Hagel, Nebraska
(202) 224-4224; Fax: (202) 224-5213

Saxby Chambliss, Georgia
(202) 224-3521; Fax: (202) 224-0103

Orrin Hatch, Utah
(202) 224-5251; Fax: (202) 224-6331

Olympia J. Snowe, Maine
(202) 224-5344; Fax: (202) 224-1946

Richard Burr, North Carolina
(202) 224-3154; Fax (202) 228-2981

BACKGROUND

Joint Inquiry:

In February of 2002, The Joint Inquiry (JICI) was formed by the Senate and House Select Committees on Intelligence in order to analyze what information related to the attack was available to the intelligence community prior to September 11, 2001. The JICI found systemic failures and offered recommendations on improving intelligence community operations. In their investigation, the JICI reviewed relevant documents, held public and closed hearings and interviewed numerous members of the intelligence community.

In December 2002, the final report from the Joint Congressional Committee investigating 9/11 requested that the CIA's Inspector General review the specific roles of individuals, since according to the committee's report: "Assured standards of accountability are critical to developing the personal responsibility, urgency, and diligence which our counterterrorism responsibility requires."

To underscore the need for accountability the report requested that: "the Inspector General at various agencies including the CIA, were instructed to conduct investigations and reviews to determine whether and to what extent personnel at all levels should be held accountable for any omission, commission, or failure to meet professional standards in regard to the identification, prevention, or disruption of terrorist attacks, including the events of September 11, 2001".

Senator Richard Shelby, who served on the Joint Inquiry and was privy to all intelligence information reiterated the importance of accountability in his additional views in the JICI, " ... because we face a grave ongoing threat, we must begin reforming the Community immediately. Otherwise we will be unable to meet this threat ... If we are indeed at war, accountability is more important now than ever, for it is through insisting upon accountability that life-threatening problems may best be fixed...."

Because of the JICI'S recommendation, CIA Inspector General, John L. Helgerson, spent 17 months exploring every area of the agency's performance prior to 9/11. According to numerous media accounts following this extensive review, the IG's final report stated that certain individuals failed to meet an acceptable standard of performance, and it recommended that their conduct be assessed by an internal review board for possible disciplinary action. The final report was then given to Porter Goss, the CIA Director at that time,

Senate Intelligence Committee:

In August 2005, after almost one year of reviewing the report and giving certain individuals a chance to rebut the claims against them, CIA Director Porter Goss, finally released the report to Congress. After an additional six weeks, Goss rejected appeals from both congressional intelligence committees to make it public. No action has ever been taken against the individuals named by the Inspector General and presumably many are still at their jobs.

Correspondence then began between the Senate Intelligence Committee and the CIA requesting the declassification and release of the report. The requests are as follows:

August 2005: request for declassification and release by Chairman Roberts to then CIA Director Porter Goss. DENIED!

January 2006: request for redaction and release by Senator Wyden to Director Goss. DENIED!

May 2006: issue of declassification and release raised again during confirmation hearings for new CIA Director General Michael Hayden, who stated in a letter to Senator Wyden that he "intended to examine the issue."

June 2006: Committee staff prepared a proposed redacted version of the Executive Summary of the report, which Chairman Roberts sent to General Hayden for Comment.

August 2006: General Hayden notified the Committee that he did not intend to declassify the report.

September 2006: Chairman Roberts forwarded the proposed redacted Executive Summary to DNI Negroponte and requested that he work with the Committee to determine what redactions would be necessary in order to release the report.

November 2006: Negroponte declined to do so.

January 2007: upon the organization of the Committee in the current Congress, Chairman Rockefeller, Vice Chairman Bond and Senator Wyden wrote to Director Negroponte with their comments on his [Negroponte's] November letter and again highlighted the need for this report to be declassified and made public. NO RESPONSE!

March 2007: Senate Bill S.4, legislation enacting the 9/11 Commission recommendations to make America more secure, including the amendment to release the CIA's IG report on 9/11, passed with a vote of 60-38.

June 2007: The Bill, S.4, remains stalled, the Commission recommendations have yet to be implemented and the CIA/IG report remains hidden.

Media:

In his Newsweek article of January 31, 2007, Michael Isikoff said the following:

"The report, prepared by the CIA's inspector general, is the only major 9/11 government review that has still not been made publicly available."

"When it was completed in August 2005, NEWSWEEK and other publications reported that it contained sharp criticisms of former CIA director George Tenet and other top agency officials for failing to address the threat posed by Al Qaeda, as well as other mistakes that might have prevented the attacks."

Isikoff goes on to say, "What's really behind the intelligence community's refusal to release the report, the senators suspect, is a desire to protect the reputations of some of the main figures."

The May 17, 2007 Associated Press article by Katherine Shrader said the following:

"It's amazing the efforts the administration is going to stonewall this," Wyden said. "The American people have a right to know what the Central Intelligence Agency was doing in those critical months before 9/11.... I am going to bulldog this until the public gets it."

Completed in June 2005, the inspector general's report examined the personal responsibility of individuals at the CIA before and after the attacks. Other agencies' reviews examined structural problems within their organizations.

For Immediate Release
June 18, 2007

Statement of September 11th Advocates

Regarding the Release of the CIA Inspector General's Report – Post 9/11

June 18, 2007

"The report, prepared by the CIA's inspector general, is the only major 9/11 government review that has still not been made publicly available."

Michael Isikoff, Newsweek, January 31, 2007

Almost six years have passed since the attacks of September 11, 2001, yet critical information continues to be withheld from the American public regarding the attacks.

In 2002, after reviewing the evidence produced by the Joint Inquiry of Congress into the 9/11 Attacks, both Republican and Democratic Congressmen agreed that a CIA Inspector General review into individual responsibility was necessary. Faced with the facts, these Congressmen understood that accountability in the Intelligence Community was crucial. Their intent was that a final declassified CIA/IG report be released to the public and where deemed appropriate by the report, for personnel at all levels to be held accountable for any omission, commission, or failure to meet professional standards in regard to the events of September 11, 2001. To date, despite enormous efforts from the Senate Intelligence Committee, nothing has happened.

Michael Isikoff wrote in his January 2007 Newsweek article that, "When it [the CIA/IG report] was completed in August 2005, NEWSWEEK and other publications reported that it contained sharp criticisms of former CIA director George Tenet and other top agency officials for failing to address the threat posed by Al Qaeda, as well as other mistakes that might have prevented the attacks."

Isikoff goes on to say, "What's really behind the intelligence community's refusal to release the report, the senators suspect, is a desire to protect the reputations of some of the main figures."

Since sources and methods are not revealed in a declassified report, national security is protected and thus not an excuse for withholding this document. Since when does embarrassment meet any standard for keeping a government report secret? Isn't it time for our elected and appointed officials to do the job that they were sent to our Nation's Capitol for: to protect the public and not reputations?

Americans have the right to know that the problems identified in this report have been addressed and corrected. We have the right to know that competent people are serving us in strategic positions – our safety and security depends on it. Incompetence costs lives.

Legislation, co-sponsored by Senators Ron Wyden D-OR and Kit Bond R-MO, calling for the release of the 9/11 CIA/IG report, already exists, has passed the Senate and has strong bipartisan support. Yet, the White House and the CIA continue to refuse to release the already declassified version of the report.

It is sadly and abundantly clear that, once again, only heightened public pressure on the Administration and the CIA will force accountability. We call on the public and the press to demand the release of the declassified version of the 9/11 CIA's Inspector General report.

Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken

9/11 Widows Issue Statement Re. Pentagon Deception & 9/11 Commission

Friday, August 04, 2006

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Mandate of the 9/11 Commission

The 9/11 Independent Commission was established by law to "... ascertain, evaluate, and report on the evidence developed by all relevant governmental agencies regarding the facts and circumstances surrounding the attacks;..."make a full and complete accounting of the circumstances surrounding the attacks, and the extent of the United States' preparedness for, and immediate response to, the attacks..."

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Recent stories in the Washington Post, the New York Times, as well as the release of the transcripts of the NORAD tapes in Vanity Fair, clearly show that the 9/11 Commission failed in its duties.

According to current reports, the Commission knew that it had been deceived by NORAD. In May 2003, representatives of NORAD testified, in full regalia, before the 9/11 Commission equipped with an easel and visual aids to highlight NORAD's timeline for the day of 9/11. In June 2004, NORAD testified again, changing its previous testimony. The new timeline blamed the lack of military response on late notification by the FAA. The Commissioners never determined or explained why there was a discrepancy between the two sets of testimonies. Governor Kean is quoted in the Washington Post article as saying "we, to this day don't know why NORAD told us what they told us, it was just so far from the truth ... It's one of those loose ends that never got tied".

The fact that the Commission did not see fit to tie up all loose ends in their final report or to hold those who came before them

accountable for lying and/or making misleading statements puts into question the veracity of the entire Commission's report. Individuals who came before the Commission to testify, after NORAD's appearance, had no reason to state the truth. It was abundantly clear that there would be no repercussions for any misrepresentations.

Furthermore, the lack of tenacity and curiosity, by the Commissioners themselves, to determine why NORAD had deceived them is unconscionable. Knowing full well that the lack of military response was such a critical failure, begs the question of whether that same lack of tenacity and curiosity was applied to other critical areas of the 9/11 investigation.

We fought to establish the 9/11 Independent Commission because we believed that American citizens would be better served if our nation's vulnerabilities were uncovered and then fixed.

Unfortunately, once again the failure to fully and properly investigate all areas, not follow all leads and not address the need for accountability, whether it be bureaucrats lying at a hearing or personnel with questionable performance of assigned duties, continues to leave this Nation and its citizens vulnerable and at risk.

The 9/11 Commission was derelict in its duties. What we needed from them was a thorough investigation into the events of September 11th. Inexcusably, five years later, we still do.

Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken

September Eleventh Advocates: An Open Letter To All Senate Judiciary Committee Members

September 11th Advocates
For Immediate Release
July 27, 2007

Watching Attorney General Alberto Gonzales testify before Congress on July 24, 2007, for the third time, was excruciatingly painful.

During Gonzales' testimony, it became abundantly clear that Americans were witnessing the unraveling of the fabric of America. We do not feel that this is an overstatement.

The Attorney General, a man who supposedly *personifies* America's rule of law, obfuscated, committed perjury, and belittled the very institution, the Congress, which makes America a great Democracy. Over and over, we publicly witnessed Gonzales' refusal to answer the questions posed by you – a Committee authorized to conduct oversight duties. You were made to look frustrated and foolish as your attempts at Executive Branch oversight were thwarted by the bizarre, circular non-answers of Attorney General Gonzales. For the third time, you were unable to penetrate his stonewalling.

We want to know, is it not a crime to mislead and outright lie to the Congress? How many more opportunities will you give Attorney General Gonzales to make a farce of our system by denying Congress information that would allow you to do your job and properly perform your oversight role?

The Bush Administration has repeatedly told us that American troops are fighting to spread democracy in Iraq. Ironically, here in America we seem to be losing the core principles that make us one. Mr. Gonzales' testimony and the Administration's refusal to have key people testify at the hearings, without any accountability, make a mockery of our system of checks and balances. We are supposed to have three **equal** branches of government: the Executive, Judicial and Legislative. While they are often on opposite sides of an issue, the three branches are to be unified in the maintenance of American civil liberties, not working in concert to covertly undermine and rescind them. Again, no one branch is supposed to have absolute power, nor should any combination of the other two be cowed or manipulated into consensus against the interests of the American people.

And, while we support these inquiries and applaud your patience and attempts to solicit truthful and substantive answers to your questions during all of the Gonzales hearings, it was disconcerting to watch the disdainful contempt that the Attorney General exhibited for the entire process.

Sadder still, it appears that you are becoming unwittingly complicit in your own undoing. It is evident that what we are watching is the U.S. Congress in the process of making itself irrelevant. When the Executive Branch alone is allowed to act without any oversight, or any accountability, then what we will become is a dictatorship. And once all Americans realize that Congress is unable to perform any oversight, whether it is due to lack of will or complicity, you will no longer be needed. Once it becomes apparent that the Executive Branch *is not only making the laws but also deciding which laws to follow*, the Congress will be just a quaint, unnecessary and useless artifact.

This Administration, aided and abetted by some members of Congress, has repeatedly deceived the American people by allowing the Executive Branch to ignore the rule of law and divisions of power specifically stated in the Constitution. This Administration's "constitutionally and legally challenged" activities include, but are certainly not limited to: taking America into a pre-emptive war on false pretenses, warrantless wiretapping, illegal torture, and the political firing of attorneys. Where are those who took an oath to uphold the Constitution and are supposed to represent us in our government ... our Congress?

While we understand that you only have limited tools in your arsenal to address these matters, what we don't understand is why you have yet to use them. We also understand that using these tools may involve a lengthy and highly contentious process that we will all have to endure. Yet in the annals of history, the only thing that will count is whether or not you upheld the rule of law and fulfilled your Constitutional responsibilities. The mere countenance of argument and eventual capitulation will only ensure our collective demise, and the continued abuse of power by others in the future. But by seeking the truth and reestablishing the balance of power you can negate the current Administration's unilateral quest for domination, and hopefully, begin to restore the United States' international and regional standing in the world.

Thus, **all** options for achieving these goals should be put back on the table.

Show the American public and the world that our democracy has been reinstated. That the system put in place by our forefathers, the system that this Administration says it wants to spread throughout the world is once again viable and indeed worth saving. Fight with all

that you have to save our democracy here in America. You owe it to every American, but most of all you owe it to the men and women in the military that have been repeatedly put in harm's way attempting to establish a democracy overseas.

The future of our Democracy is in grave danger. It is imperative that you act immediately.

September 11th Advocates

Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken

September 11th Advocates Statement in Support of Sibel Edmonds

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 17, 2008

As United States Citizens and 9/11 widows, we wholeheartedly support the whistle-blowing efforts of Sibel Edmonds, former Contract Linguist for the FBI. Like Sibel, we too had hoped that the 9/11 Commission would bring to the fore of the American public's attention the facts that led up to the attacks on that horrific day. We believed that the whistle-blowers would be invaluable assets to the Commission's investigation.

Who would be in a better position to help the 9/11 Commission make recommendations to fix the failures that allowed the 9/11 attacks to succeed than current and former employees who worked in the agencies and had the courage and integrity to report on their shortcomings as well as their successes?

Sibel's testimony and that of other whistle-blowers, if used properly or at all, should have been the basis of the 9/11 Commission's recommendations. Then the reforms would have been truly responsive to the problems that existed in protecting our nation's security.

Sibel had first hand knowledge of the inner workings of our FBI translation department, as well as information that came from translating messages from wiretaps. Some of that information was related to lapses in protocols and procedures within the FBI translation department. These infractions were so serious that they enabled breaches in our National Security. Other information alleged criminal involvement of current and former members of the Intelligence Agencies, Congress, leaders of international and domestic organizations and businesses and high-level officials within the Bush Administration.

The claims that Sibel made were indeed shocking. She testified privately before the 9/11 Commission over the course of several hours. She supplied them with specific document information including names of expert witnesses who could corroborate her testimony. In addition, through relationships that Sibel had made with other current and former employees, she offered to the 9/11 Commission the contact information of additional potential whistle-blowers.

However, none of the information that Sibel provided to the Commission ever made its way into the Commission's final report. Nor do we know if the Commission ever called upon the additional whistle-blowers to supply their testimonies.

The result of all Sibel's whistle-blowing was that she was fired from the FBI and ultimately gagged when John Ashcroft, the former Attorney General, asserted an arcane law of "States Secret Privilege". By this time, Sibel had taken her concerns and conveyed this information to her supervisors at the FBI, members of the Judiciary Committee, the FBI Inspector General and the 9/11 Commission, all of whom would have been able to corroborate her claims. In fact, the FBI Inspector General's report publicly did. Much to our dismay, when Sibel appealed her case to the Supreme Court, she was denied attendance. The court's decision was made without Sibel or her attorney being present – they were asked to leave the courtroom.

We can fully understand Sibel's frustration. The failure of our government to take action on her information is clearly detrimental to our country's security and yet little has been done to correct these problems and she remains gagged. Why? We believe that true Patriots and leaders of this nation would want an accurate assessment of Sibel's allegations as well as the resulting appropriate action.

Sibel Edmonds knows who, hiding behind the guise of National Security and the protection of certain diplomatic relations, has abdicated their duties without regard to the deadly and costly consequences of 9/11. It is time for all of America to be informed. It is time we demand the justice that is our right and responsibility. It is time that Sibel's information is publicly heard and acted upon to make this nation safe and time to recognize Sibel for the heroine and patriot that she truly is.

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September 11th Advocates
Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken

September 11th Advocates Comment On The Impending Release Of Philip Shenon's Book The Commission: The Uncensored History of the 9/11 Investigation

For Immediate Release
February 4, 2008

Philip Shenon's new book, The Commission: The Uncensored History of the 9/11 Investigation, serves to justify our suspicions and the concerns of the Family Steering Committee, that we attempted to publicly air during the course of the 9/11 Commission's tenure.

One of the most egregious revelations put forth by Mr. Shenon is the fact that Philip Zelikow was hired as the Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission, despite his direct ties to the Bush Administration. In 2000-2001 he served as a member of Condoleezza Rice's National Security Council (NSC) transition team, where he was allegedly the "architect" of the decision to demote Richard Clarke and his counter terrorism team within the NSC. Furthermore he was a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) from 2001-2003, where Zelikow drafted most of the 2002 "National Security Strategy of the United States," creating the pre-emptive Iraq war

strategy. These areas were within the scope of the Commission's mandate and as such were of critical importance to determine what, if any, impact they had on the government's ability to prevent the 9/11 attacks.

As the Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission, Philip Zelikow was given the responsibility for choosing the entire direction of the Commission's investigation. Essentially, Mr. Zelikow determined who was or was not interviewed as a witness, and which information was or was not looked at. He also influenced which documents would be requested from the various agencies. It seemed to us, that allowing an individual with this much involvement in the Bush administration to run the investigation, might give the appearance of impropriety and could ultimately taint the Commission's findings.

In a statement issued by the Family Steering Committee of March 20, 2004 we wrote:

It is apparent that Dr. Zelikow should never have been permitted to be Executive Staff Director of the Commission. As Executive Staff Director, his job has been to steer the direction of the Commission's investigation, an investigation whose mandate includes understanding why the Bush Administration failed to prioritize the Al Qaeda threat.

In the same statement we also called for:

Zelikow's immediate resignation; Zelikow's testimony in public and under oath; and the subpoena of Zelikow's notes from the intelligence briefings he attended with Richard Clarke.

Commission Chairman Tom Kean and Vice-Chair Lee Hamilton instead chose to have Mr. Zelikow recuse himself from the areas of the investigation that dealt with the transition period. However, they allowed Mr. Zelikow to be one of only two people (Ms. Gorelick was the other) to review the Presidential Daily Briefings (PDB's), reports that went to the heart of what the White House and its National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, knew prior to 9/11. While investigating the events that led up to the September 11th attacks, Philip Zelikow was called as a witness by the 9/11 Commission though transcripts of his testimony were never made public.

Despite our vehement objections, Mr. Zelikow was allowed to remain in his position as what seemed to be the "gatekeeper" of the 9/11 Commission.

Mr. Shenon's book illustrates just how deeply and insidiously the Commission's basic fact-finding work was compromised by Zelikow's conflicts. He recounts that even after his recusal, Mr. Zelikow continued to insert himself into the work of "Team 3," of the Commission. This team was responsible for examining the White House, and therefore, the conduct of Condoleezza Rice and Richard Clarke during the months prior to 9/11.

According to the author, Team 3 staffers would come to believe that Mr. Zelikow prevented them from submitting a report that would have depicted Ms. Rice's performance as "amount[ing] to incompetence, or something not far from it."

Evidence of the possible duplicitous nature of Mr. Zelikow's role on the 9/11 Commission was further exemplified by his numerous conversations with Karl Rove, President Bush's Senior Political Advisor. When questioned about his contact with Rove, Zelikow's response was to tell his secretary to stop logging his calls.

Contrary to former Commissioner John Lehman's recent comment on MSNBC that Zelikow's conversations with Rove are a "red herring", these contacts with Rove should have been a red flag. Negotiating for or procuring of White House documents for the Commission should have been done through the Office of White House Counsel NOT the President's political advisor. Consequently, knowing how this would appear, one must ask why Zelikow was speaking with Rove?

It is abundantly clear that Philip Zelikow should have immediately been replaced when the first rumblings of his impropriety and conflicts of interest surfaced. When all of this information became clear, the Commissioners and the press should have called for Zelikow's resignation. We did. Shamefully, most were silent.

Further evidence of political maneuvering came to light in the story of Commissioner Max Cleland. Cleland was publicly critical of the Commission and the Bush White House. According to Shenon's book, when it became obvious that Max Cleland would continue to be loudly critical, Commission Chairman Tom Kean and Vice-Chair Lee Hamilton sought the help of Senator Tom Daschle to find Cleland a new job. Thus, Max Cleland was quietly removed and silenced with a new job in the Bush Administration.

Also revealed in Shenon's book is the fact that the Commission's staff never ventured to the National Security Agency (NSA), the chief collector of intelligence information, in order to review their "voluminous treasure trove of documents". At NSA Headquarters, 27 miles from the Commission's offices, there was a "gold mine" of information detailing terrorist's threats and connections, including those of al Qaeda. General Michael Hayden, who headed the NSA at the time, was eager to cooperate and share what his organization had with the 9/11 Commission, but Executive Director Zelikow was not interested.

A lone staffer, who understood the importance of these archives, had the information moved to a reading room within walking distance of the Commission's offices. Even then, she was the only member of the Commission to take the time to read these documents. By her own admission, this insightful staffer had concerns as to how much she, on her own, would be able to glean from these jargon filled documents. Why didn't Phil Zelikow make reviewing these vital NSA documents a Commission priority? It seems clear that not every fact and lead was followed in this investigation compromising the validity of the Commission's final report and its findings.

Moreover, the "Pre-9/11 story" largely revolved around second and third hand knowledge of interrogations of tortured individuals, detainees that were being held in secret locations.

According to many sources at the CIA and deep within the government, confessions extracted from individuals who are tortured are generally deemed useless. A tortured detainee will say anything in order to make the torture stop and therefore, the confession cannot be trusted. One needs to look no further than the Army Field Manual on Interrogation (FM 34-52), which states in Chapter 1:

"Experience indicates that the use of force is not necessary to gain the cooperation of sources for interrogation. Therefore, the use of force is a poor technique, as it yields unreliable results, may damage subsequent collection efforts, and can induce the source to say whatever he thinks the interrogator wants to hear."

How could the Commission have based their entire pre-9/11 narrative on these unreliable, torture-induced confessions?

We believe that author Phil Shenon has revealed information which only scratches the surface as to what went on behind the scenes of this investigation.

Why, when this Congressionally mandated Commission could have done much to fix the fatal flaws in our government by conducting a real investigation and making vital recommendations, would they instead allow it to become a sham. This investigation was meant to fix the loopholes that allowed our Country to be so vulnerable. Why would they choose instead, to succumb to political machinations? What would we find out if a real investigation into September 11, 2001 were ever done?

The bottom line is that the most deadly attack on American soil since Pearl Harbor remains dangerously unexamined. This can only be remedied with an investigation guided by the facts and conducted outside the reach of those with a vested interest in suppressing the truth.

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September 11th Advocates Statement Regarding "6 Guantanamo Detainees"

For Immediate Release
February 19, 2008

The recent news reports that our government has finally charged the "6 Guantanamo Detainees" for crimes connected to the 9/11 terrorist attacks has focused on the fact that our government is calling for the death penalty. While we all agree that the perpetrators of 9/11 should be brought to justice, the death penalty is not the issue.

The real issue is that it must first be proven that these six detainees are indeed the guilty parties.

Although we attempted to have this kind of information brought to light through the work of the 9/11 Independent Commission, much of their work is now suspect because, by their own admission, they wrote the 9/11 story based on third hand information. The Commission itself was never allowed to interview the detainees; instead they had to use notes taken by the CIA interrogators of those interviews. In their document requests, the commissioners failed to use the standard language that defines "documents" as being computer discs, "videos", etc. As such, the CIA did not hand over the videotaped interrogation interviews of the detainees, contending recently, that the Commission never asked specifically for "videos". It has since been reported that the CIA, against orders, destroyed these tapes and thus this evidence.

As unconscionable as the destruction of these videotapes was, what has made it even more egregious, is that the tapes would have, according to the CIA, revealed that some of the detainees were subjected to harsh, enhanced interrogation techniques, including water boarding. This was done, even though it is widely agreed by military experts that confessions or evidence garnered through extreme measures, such as torture, are unreliable. Therefore, even if the evidence in these tapes contained detainee confessions to some aspects of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, this evidence would now be considered tainted.

Further complicating these matters, the Administration has decided to try these men in Military Tribunals. Bringing these six men to trial with a system that is secretive in nature and lacking in due process, which uses tainted evidence, is a dangerous endeavor. All Americans, and indeed the entire international community, must have the opportunity to witness the body of evidence that ties these individuals to the 9/11 terrorists' plot. Otherwise the credibility of any verdict will lack legitimacy. Moreover, unless these trials are above reproach, any convictions - death penalty or otherwise - will bring the wrath of the international community, damaging what is left of America's standing in the world. Considering that we continue to rely heavily on cooperation from other nations to provide us with intelligence information on would be terrorists, this course of action can only be detrimental to these crucial relationships, thereby jeopardizing our national security.

These trials, when they finally take place, will be scrutinized around the globe. Unless the victims' families, the American public and the entire world can be convinced that we are trying and convicting the people who are truly responsible for the 9/11 crimes, these trials will be seen as a miserable failure, dimming our prospects of improved international relationships, and making us more vulnerable to terrorist attacks in the future. In our pursuit of justice with regard to the six Guantanamo detainees, we implore you, let us not do more harm than good.

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Statement of September 11th Advocates Regarding the Release of the NIST Final Draft of Collapse of WTC7

For Immediate Release
September 26, 2008

NIST has finally released its long awaited investigative report regarding the collapse of World Trade Center 7. WTC 7 was the third building in the World Trade Center Complex to collapse at 5:20 PM on September 11, 2001. However, *this building was not hit by an airplane.*

As family members of 9/11 victims, we were extremely interested in the findings of this report. We had hoped that NIST's report would serve to explain the cause of a total collapse of a conventional steel building and be able to refute the rampant conspiracy theories. We also hoped that this report, in conjunction with NIST's final reports on WTC 1 and 2, would offer recommendations for improved building and fire codes to ensure public safety in **ALL** buildings going forward.

While we feel that technical experts should review, critique and replicate the findings within this report, we also feel that we must express

our concerns based on public comments by NIST regarding their findings.

Over the past seven years, the Families of the 9/11 Victims have been repeatedly told by fire experts, engineers and architects that we should **NOT FOCUS** our efforts on advocating for building and fire code changes based on the collapse of the WTC 1 and 2 towers. We were continuously reminded that *the crashing of airplanes into buildings was a unique event*. Additionally, we were told that the design and construction of WTC Towers 1 and 2 was unique and that there were no other buildings of that particular height or design in the world. We were repeatedly told that the key was WTC 7 since this building was of conventional design and height, yet it too collapsed *without the unique event of an airplane striking it*.

As admitted by Dr. Shyam Sunder of NIST, WTC 7 was a more conventional design, like many other buildings in NYC and across the country.

Essentially, the construction of WTC 7 utilized traditional steel frame skeleton (uniformly spaced column and beam construction), without the questionable bar joists and trusses used in the construction of the WTC 1 and 2 Towers. WTC 7 was not a "tube" building like the WTC Towers. It was a rectangular shape and was less than half the height of WTC 1 and 2.

Dr. Sunder also stated that WTC 7 met all New York City codes. Yet, WTC 7 is the first steel high-rise building of traditional construction in the United States – and the world, to completely collapse as a result of fire.

According to the briefing given by Dr. Shyam Sunder on August 21, 2008, the collapse of WTC 7 was due to fire that was ignited by debris from another WTC building which was then fed by office paper and furnishings – **NOT** the diesel fuel tank stored in the building by Giuliani and his Administration against the strong advice of the FDNY, **NOT** a plane, and apparently, as stated by Dr. Sunder, *"there were no flaws with the construction of the building"*.

We don't how the rest of the country is feeling about this news, but we are very scared! These findings suggest that **ANY EXISTING** building is prone to a progressive collapse if a fire should start and the sprinkler system fails for whatever reason – regardless of how it starts! This is a distinct possibility, especially in earthquake prone areas where the water supplies can easily fail and the availability of firefighters is scarce or stretched very thin.

The ultimate purpose of advocating for the \$16 million to have NIST study this event was to determine how to make buildings safer in the future. If we are now to believe that any skyscraper is subject to total collapse from fire, why isn't NIST emphasizing the impact on **EXISTING** buildings? The actual quality of spray-on fireproofing is a well-known problem throughout the country. NIST's report indicates that a complete burnout, without sprinkler system or fire department intervention, could lead to the complete collapse of **ANY** high-rise. NIST needs to rewrite its "new" recommendation B (5.12) and provide guidance for **EXISTING** buildings.

NIST should put the most important conclusion in plain English and announce it to the entire country: **UNCONTROLLED FIRES IN HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS CAN LEAD TO THEIR TOTAL COLLAPSE.**

NIST also needs to be more aggressive with the code writing groups regarding this critical fact, communicating with them through a high-profile meeting that includes the Director of NIST and the leaders of these code groups.

NIST must address this dangerous issue immediately. The future safety of the public and the fire services hangs in the balance.

Refusal to make changes based on economics, greed, willingness to retain the status quo, cowardice to accept responsibility, failure of leadership to promote reform and political expediency are a deadly combination to the public at large.

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September 11th Advocates Statement Regarding Guantanamo Quagmire and Accountability

For Immediate Release
February 10, 2009

The Military Commissions System at Guantanamo Bay was an attempt by the Bush Administration to create an "extralegal zone", wherein the rule of law was ignored. Many Guantanamo detainees were subject to detention without charges, rendition and illegal torture. The Military Commissions System, which allowed evidence obtained through torture and coercive interrogation tactics, has been a dismal failure both legally and practically. The Supreme Court has rejected the policies of this system each time it has reviewed them. Because of the Bush Administration's mistaken belief in its ability to craft a new legal system, which clearly created avoidable moral and legal challenges, justice may never be served.

President Obama has paused all proceedings at Guantanamo Bay for 120 days in order for his legal team to attempt to design a system in which the verdicts will withstand the scrutiny of the inevitable appeals process. He is rightfully attempting to fix the quagmire that was created by the previous administration.

If, ultimately, the detainees held at Guantanamo Bay are unable to be properly prosecuted because of the fatal flaws in the system, then those in the Bush Administration who were responsible for creating that failed system should be held accountable.

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Additionally, please see earlier statements.

September 11th Advocates Statement Regarding the Closing of Guantanamo Bay

January 23, 2009

The Guantanamo Bay Detention Center continues to be an enormous stain on America's reputation. Newly elected President Obama has taken the first step in removing this stain by keeping his campaign promise to the American people.

The temporary halting of proceedings at Gitmo gives us the "audacity to hope" that President Obama will be able to restore America's good name, which has been repeatedly tarnished during the past eight years.

We appreciate the tough decisions that President Obama has been forced to make and admire him for taking these difficult tasks on. We look forward to hearing his plan for closing Guantanamo Bay forever, finding a just way to try the detainees and putting an end to this horrific chapter in America's history.

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September 11th Advocates Statement

April 3, 2008

As women whose husbands were killed on September 11 2001, we feel strongly that the perpetrators of that horrific crime should be brought to justice. But first it is imperative to prove that these six detainees are indeed the guilty parties.

Unfortunately, the Administration insists on trying the suspects in the broken military commissions system. Prosecuting these men within a system that is secretive in nature and lacking in due process, and which uses evidence tainted by questionable interrogation methods and possibly even torture, is a dangerous endeavor. All Americans, and indeed the entire international community, must have the opportunity to witness for themselves the body of evidence that ties these individuals to the 9/11 terrorists' plot. Otherwise the credibility of any verdict will lack legitimacy. Moreover, unless these trials are above reproach, any convictions will bring the wrath of the international community, damaging what is left of America's standing in the world. Considering that we continue to rely heavily on cooperation from other nations to provide us with intelligence information on would be terrorists, this course of action can only be detrimental to these crucial relationships, thereby jeopardizing our national security.

These trials, when they finally take place, will be scrutinized around the globe. Unless the victims' families, the American public and the entire world can be convinced that we are trying and convicting the people who are truly responsible for the 9/11 crimes, these trials will be seen as a miserable failure, dimming our prospects of improved international relationships, and making us more vulnerable to terrorist attacks in the future.

On behalf of ourselves, our husbands, and our families, we support the American Civil Liberties Union in its pursuit of justice and insistence on due process. The only outcome worth pursuing is the truth, and the only way get there is by fair trials that uphold the Constitution.

September 11th Advocates

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The September 11th Advocates Write An Open Letter To Senator Patrick Leahy

March 3, 2009

Dear Senator Leahy,

We felt compelled to write to you regarding your recent call for the formation of a "Truth Commission". According to your press comments, this Commission is supposed to look at the following:

- the politicization of prosecution in the Justice Department
- the wiretapping of U.S. citizens
- the flawed intelligence used to justify the invasion of Iraq
- the use of torture at Guantanamo and so-called black sites abroad

These are serious allegations of criminal activity by certain members of the Bush Administration. While we applaud your initiative in looking into these matters, we feel this approach is wrong.

As the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, you already have the responsibility and legal authority to investigate matters relating to federal criminal law without having to form a special commission. You are also bound by your oath of office to support and uphold the Constitution by ensuring that those who govern also abide by the rule of law.

Furthermore, a "Truth Commission" will not fix the real problems that our country faces, nor will it guarantee that we will get to the truth.

The 9/11 Commission, which you want to model your commission after, is a perfect example of that flawed process.

The 9/11 Commission was mandated to follow the facts surrounding the events of September 11, 2001 to wherever they might lead and make national security recommendations based upon those facts. Sadly, prior to even beginning their investigation, like you, the 9/11 Commissioners agreed amongst themselves that their role was to /fact find, not fault find/.

This decision resulted in individuals not being held accountable for their specific failures. These people were shown to be incompetent in the 9/11 Commission's Final Report but were left in their positions, or worse, promoted. No one should be allowed to make this compromise on behalf of the American people. How can any agency be deemed fixed or reformed if the people working there are inept? How can anyone feel safer?

At the 9/11 Commission hearings, little actual evidence was ever produced. Many individuals were not sworn in, critical witnesses were either not called to testify or were permitted to dictate the parameters of their own questioning, pertinent questions were omitted and there was little follow-up. Whistleblower testimony was suppressed or avoided all together. The National Security Agency, an intelligence agency that is responsible for the collection and analysis of foreign communications and foreign intelligence, was barely investigated at all.

With the narrative of the 9/11 Commission's final report predetermined and with the preexisting intention to never hold anyone accountable in place, the 9/11 Commission was doomed to fail as a real investigation.

The end result of the 9/11 Commission's work was that some of the recommendations that they produced were in fact, based on distortions and omissions. Since their mandate of a complete accounting was ignored, the recommendations were incomplete at best.

There was clearly no desire on the part of Congress to force the Commission to meet its legislative mandate. Accordingly, there were no repercussions for the fact that the investigation and its recommendations were incomplete. It could be surmised that holding no one accountable was more important than uncovering and disclosing the truth. This could compromise the future safety of American citizens.

Why then would you want to model another Commission after it? Why would you want another Commission at all?

Senator Leahy, in light of the fact that the 9/11 Commission's worst offense was not fully investigating the September 11th attacks, completing that investigation should also be included on your list of matters to be examined.

America's founding fathers, prescient in their fears of unrestrained power, created three separate but equal branches of government. They had hoped to maintain and enforce the limits of the Executive Branch.

The Bush Administration was allowed to circumvent too many Constitutional restrictions effectively undermining America's system of justice, our nation's integrity and commitment to the rule of law. The Bush Administration's seizing of power proves the adage that "absolute power corrupts absolutely".

The days of no fault government must end; and where there is clear criminal activity, people must be prosecuted. The law must be upheld without exception before we can be assured of the safety of the nation.

These duties cannot be ignored for the sake of expediency.

Senator Leahy, our nation needs you to investigate and, if warranted, refer the cases for criminal prosecution in transparent trials. We do not need another meaningless commission resulting in no accountability at the taxpayers' expense. Show all Americans that you have the courage to uphold the law, bring accountability to those who abuse their positions of power and prevent such abuses from happening again.

The November 2008 elections proved that Americans want the rule of law restored for those in Washington who are elected to represent us. You, Senator Leahy, are in the position to lead the way and work toward the change we were promised.

Sincerely,

September 11th Advocates

Patty Casazza
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Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken