



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2009

Honorable Robert Gates
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Gates:

We are writing to express our concern over the recent announcement that the incoming Obama Administration plans to issue an executive order that would close the terrorist prison at Guantanamo Bay and transfer these terror suspects, to among other locations, United States Marine Corps (USMC) Camp Pendleton. As Representatives of the San Diego community, we believe this decision could seriously endanger the mission at USMC Camp Pendleton and urge that it be taken off the list for consideration.

Not only is Camp Pendleton the major west coast base for the USMC, but it also serves as the primary amphibious training bases for the USMC. I Marine Expeditionary Force, 1st Marine Division, 1st Force Service Support Group, elements of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity all call Camp Pendleton home. Since Operation Iraqi Freedom began, there have always been units from Camp Pendleton fighting in Iraq. We believe that at a time when we are fighting two wars, the Marines must not be distracted from their wartime mission. We feel that introducing Guantanamo Bay terrorist suspects would certainly negatively impact Camp Pendleton's training and wartime missions.

In addition, approximately 14,000 family members reside at Camp Pendleton and thousands of other access the base for services. For those Marines serving overseas in harm's way they should now not have to worry about the safety of their families.

Again, we strongly urge that Camp Pendleton and other military locations in the U.S. be removed for consideration as locations to move enemy combatants. We look forward to hearing from you on this very critical issue.

Sincerely,

Darrell Issa
Member of Congress

Brian Bilbray
Member of Congress

Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress