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October 12, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray  
The Honorable Jeb Hensarling  
The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction  
The United States Congress  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Murray and Representative Hensarling,

Our country is facing tough economic times. The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction has the challenging task of identifying \$1.5 trillion in spending cuts or revenue increases over the next ten years. I believe we must identify targeted areas for reductions, rather than across the board cuts. At the same time, we must ensure that we are promoting growth and creating jobs.

On the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, we conducted a thorough top-to-bottom assessment of the budget for the intelligence community. We identified more than a billion dollars of reductions from the President's budget request while at the same time giving our intelligence professionals the resources, capabilities and authorities they need to keep our country safe. These cuts, included in the Intelligence Authorization Act (IAA) for FY 2012, make smart choices by trimming where possible, eliminating duplicative efforts and ensuring we do not affect the current critical capabilities and core mission that will protect our nation while also providing for the future. It aligns our resources with our current threats.

We cut the fat, but I believe we also must continue to create jobs in certain high-priority areas that will help stimulate our economy. In the IAA for FY 2012, we instruct the intelligence community to strategically create positions where there is a substantial need, such as FBI surveillance officers to keep watch on terrorists, NSA cyber professionals and other analysts to protect computers from malicious intrusions and Treasury financial professionals to follow the money in terrorist cases. The bill also makes strong investments in technology and builds expertise among industry personnel by creating an "Efficiency Investment Fund" to allow intelligence agencies to invest in smart technologies and programs now that reap large savings in the future. It requires the Director of National Intelligence to determine why the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity, known as IARPA, is not producing the cutting-edge research it was created to generate to keep us a step ahead of future adversaries. In addition, commercial imagery was fully funded to spur growth in the civilian satellite sector and increase competition to ultimately bring the cost to government down.

The IAA for FY 2012 passed the House of Representatives in early September by an overwhelming bi-partisan margin. The measure is awaiting action in the Senate. I urge the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction to consider these well thought out, targeted reductions while doing their work.

Sincerely,



C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Ranking Member  
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence