

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 22, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you very much for your strong support of the U.S.-Cyprus relationship. As a fellow democracy, the Republic of Cyprus shares basic values with the United States and has remained a close friend and ally for many years.

Based on its location in such a troublesome neighborhood, we agree strongly with Secretary of State Clinton that our relationship with the Republic of Cyprus is "strategically important." Indeed, the U.S.-Cyprus friendship remains an anchor of American foreign policy toward the region. Moreover, as a member of the European Union, Cyprus shares our traditions of freedom and a market-based economy, and embraces a thoroughly Western culture and outlook.

Recent tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean have also highlighted Cyprus' stabilizing role in the region. Cyprus denied the use of its ports to the controversial Gaza 'flotilla' in 2010 and is preventing the use of its territory for actions that might destabilize the already tense Middle East. It also captured an arms-laden ship traveling from Syria to Hamas in Gaza in 2009, and it has stood staunchly with the United States against the Iranian nuclear program.

We have appreciated the fair approach you and Secretary Clinton have adopted toward our Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot friends in Cyprus. We believe it is important that this fair approach is implemented consistently by all American officials. We look forward to working with you to see how this goal can be achieved.

It is deeply unfortunate that the Turkish occupation and division of Cyprus, a sovereign E.U. member state, has continued for nearly four decades. We urge you to help Turkey understand that this occupation is against its interests, violates international law, and does not promote the safety and security of Turkish Cypriots who would prosper in a united Cypriot republic. Moreover, news of the interruption of Christmas services last December at several Orthodox Churches by Turkish troops in occupied northern Cyprus only served to undermine Turkey's desired image and its prospects for E.U. accession.

We firmly support the Cyprus settlement process and hope that it will lead to a fair and lasting agreement for the benefit of all Cypriots. Such settlement efforts must hold steadfastly to key values including internationally protected human rights and democratic rule of a majority of all Cypriots. Further, American officials must act with cognizance of the relationship between these goals and the need for strong regional allies when it comes to standing up against threats to our national interests, such as that posed by Iran's nuclear program.

Again, we appreciate your support for the U.S.-Cyprus relationship and look forward to the day when Cyprus is sovereign and reunified.

Sincerely,



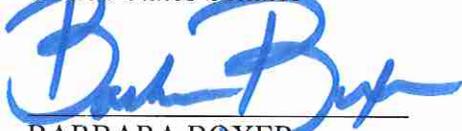
ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



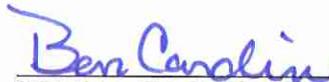
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United States Senator



CARL LEVIN
United States Senator



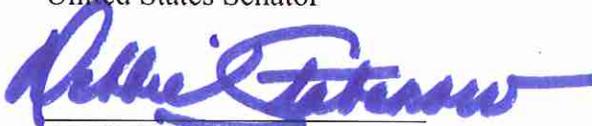
BARBARA BOXER
United States Senator



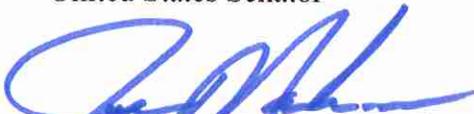
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RICHARD DURBIN
United States Senator



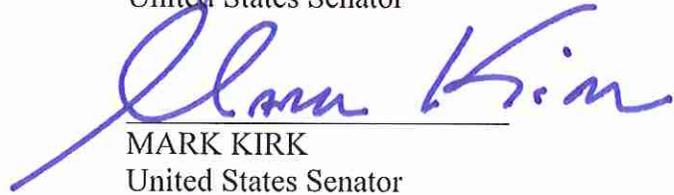
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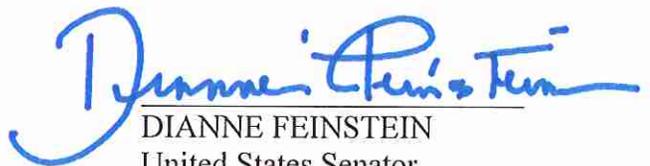
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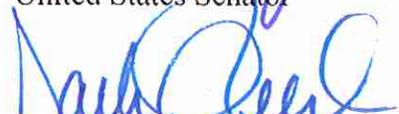
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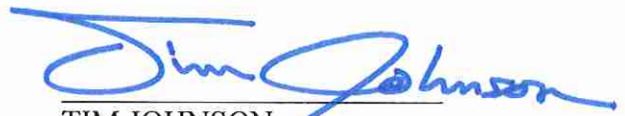
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



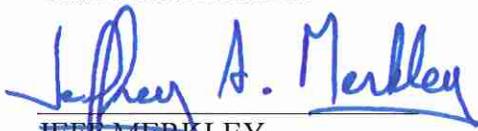
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE
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MARK BEGICH
United States Senator



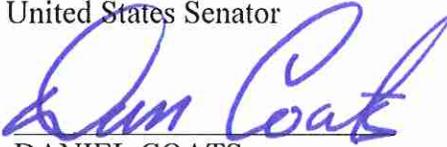
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