

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 16, 2006

The Honorable Jim Kolbe  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Foreign Operations Appropriations  
Room HB-26 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515-6021

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Foreign Operations Appropriations  
1016 Longworth  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Kolbe and Ranking Member Lowey:

Thank you for your leadership on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations. As you prepare the FY2007 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, we write in support of Armenia and US-Armenia relations and we respectfully request that you consider the items described below in your bill.

**Maintain Military Parity**

We are deeply troubled that the Administration's request for Foreign Military Financing (FMF), Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, De-mining and Related Assistance (NADR), and International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding for Azerbaijan is considerably higher than the request for Armenia. We believe that this imbalance simply cannot be allowed to occur.

Congress must ensure that Armenia's level of FMF assistance is raised to \$4.5 million, NADR assistance is raised to \$4.8 million, and IMET assistance is raised to \$855,000. U.S. policy toward the south Caucasus has been to maintain parity between Armenia and Azerbaijan. This policy was reached in agreement in Congress and was maintained by President Bush in last year's budget proposal. A lack of military parity would undo this policy and weaken ongoing peace negotiations regarding Nagorno-Karabakh. Furthermore, we believe that any imbalance will contribute to further instability in the region if Congress does not ensure military parity. **Therefore, we strongly urge you to include \$4.5 million in FMF, \$4.8 million in NADR, and \$855,000 in IMET funding for Armenia in the FY2007 bill, equal to Azerbaijan.**

**Economic Assistance to Armenia**

The dual blockades of Armenia by Azerbaijan and Turkey continue to impede Armenia's economic well-being. Despite these blockades, Armenia continues to successfully

implement economic and democratic reforms. As long as Armenia suffers from blockades on its east and west borders, continued and robust U.S. assistance to Armenia will be needed to help minimize their impact. Our assistance has provided an important positive effect and will continue to do so when provided at appropriate levels. For fiscal year 2006, \$75 million was provided for Armenia. Maintaining this level of support is critical. **Therefore, we request you include language ensuring that not less than \$75 million in Economic Support Funds is appropriated for Armenia in Fiscal Year 2007.**

**Assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh**


We thank you for your continued support for assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh. This support is in our country's interests and helps alleviate the conditions of the Nagorno-Karabakh people. It is important for Congress to maintain a strong position on this funding to ensure that these programs continue. **Therefore, we request you include language directing USAID to spend \$5 million in Fiscal Year 2007 for programs in Nagorno-Karabakh.**

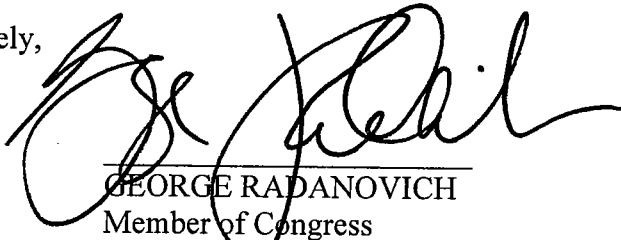
**Section 907**

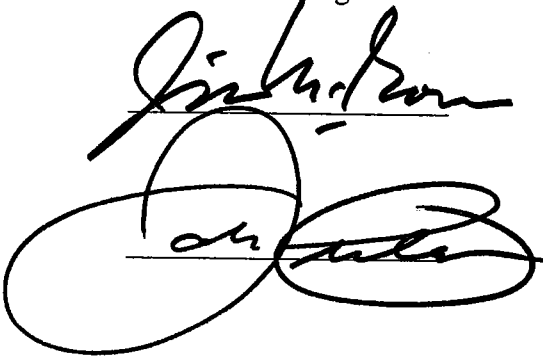
We request that you join us in opposing any changes to Section 907 in the fiscal year 2007 bill. Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act remains a fundamental element of U.S. policy toward the south Caucasus. Because Azerbaijan continues its blockade of Armenia, Section 907 is necessary. As you know, the FY2002 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act provided a limited and conditional waiver to Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act in order for the U.S. to effectively combat terrorism. Specifically, at the time, former Secretary of State Colin Powell asked for flexibility to counter terrorist elements and organizations operating within Azerbaijan. **We strongly support Section 907 and request that you not make any further changes to this law.**

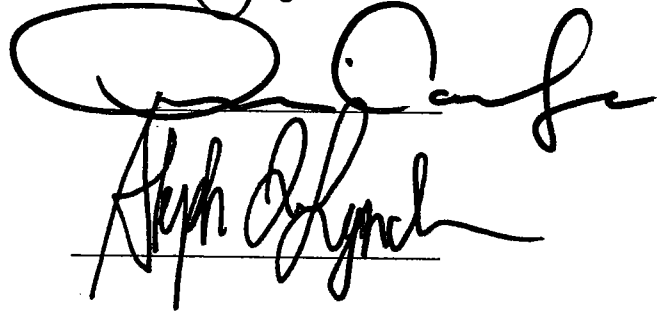
We appreciate your consideration of these requests.

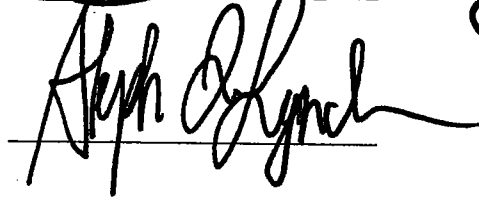
Sincerely,

  
FRANK PALLONE, JR.  
Member of Congress

  
GEORGE RADANOVICH  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN DINGELL  
Member of Congress

  
AL SWIFT  
Member of Congress

  
AL SWIFT  
Member of Congress

Carl Bluff

John LeBeck

Mike Ferguson

Joe Schumy M.D.

Paul Holt

Michael McHardy

Grace J. Napolitano

Scott Garnett

Jim Holt

Mike Filivatos

John Longenecker

David Dini

Tom Simmons

Liane E. Watson

James Longevin

Paul Shum

Lois Capp

Thunder McCall

James Brown

Clayton Styer

Tom Allen

Bobby L. Kersh

William D. Decker

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John W. McHugh  
Max Mear

Miss D. Matsui

Colleen B. Mulaney

Mark Sander

Ellie Burtis

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J. Faxon

Harold L. Roman

Dale E. Childer

Edward J. Markey

Barney Frank

Joe Carter

Ken A. Waxman

Colt Allen

Eric L. Emge