

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 29, 2018

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We write to you regarding Section 1290 of H.R. 5515, the *John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 (P.L. 115-232)*, which President Trump signed into law on August 13, 2018.

As you know, Yemen is suffering from the world's worst humanitarian crisis. According to the United Nations, an estimated 22 million people—three-quarters of Yemen's population—require assistance. Eighteen million people are food insecure, and more than 8 million are in danger of starvation. Nearly half of all children in Yemen are stunted and 400,000 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition.

The ongoing civil war has caused or exacerbated these horrific humanitarian conditions. Iran and other nefarious actors have capitalized on the instability resulting from the civil war to threaten the U.S., our partners, and our interests. We believe this humanitarian crisis and the threats to our interests will only worsen the longer the civil war continues. The deeply tragic and troubling airstrike on August 9th, which reportedly killed dozens of people—most of whom were children—and the continued Iranian-backed ballistic missile attacks on Saudi Arabia only heighten our concerns. Based on this, we believe America's national security interests and our humanitarian principles demand that we redouble our efforts to press all parties to end the civil war, protect civilians, and provide full and unfettered humanitarian access.

That is why our legislation, which ultimately became Section 1290 of the NDAA, enjoys such broad, bipartisan, and bicameral support. It is worth noting that both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee approved versions of our legislation. Subsequently, NDAA Conferees from both chambers decided to include the provision in the final NDAA, which was then approved by the full Senate and House of Representatives and signed into law by the President.

Section 1290 provides leverage that the administration can use to hold our security partners accountable to their commitments and further U.S. interests, principles, and objectives in Yemen. Within 30 days, this statute requires you to submit a certification to Congress regarding the actions of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen. We note that the provision provides a national security waiver. However, if you utilize this waiver, we look forward to

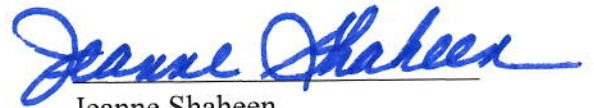
reviewing the report as required in subsection (a)(2)(B). In accordance with the law, we look forward to reviewing your written, detailed, and unclassified certification no later than September 12, 2018.

Thank you for your distinguished service to our nation.

Sincerely,



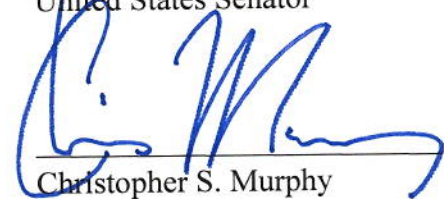
Todd Young
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



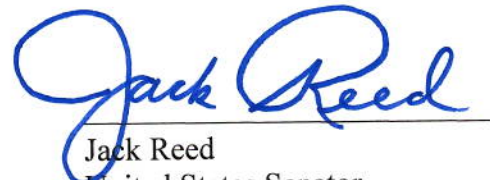
Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



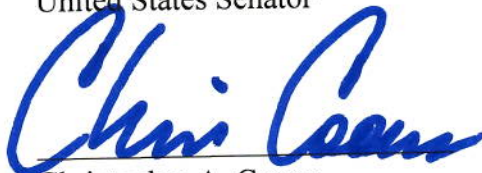
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



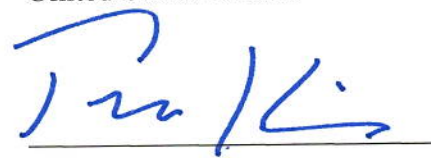
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

CC:

Secretary of Defense James Mattis
Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development Mark Green