

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 6, 2020

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Inhofe and Smith, Ranking Members Reed and Thornberry, and Conferees:

We are writing to urge you to protect the work of the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) in the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) conference report. Specifically, we request that you exclude section 1532 of the Senate-passed NDAA from the final version of the legislation. This provision limits the jurisdiction of SIGAR to just six specific reconstruction funds, which would significantly and negatively impact the ability of SIGAR to conduct oversight of congressionally-appropriated funds intended to aid Afghanistan.

SIGAR was established in 2008 to root out waste, fraud, and abuse, and to exercise oversight authority over the billions of dollars spent in Afghanistan on reconstruction efforts. SIGAR has been instrumental in uncovering wasteful spending in Afghanistan, including one example in which the DOD spent over \$43 million to construct a single gas station. The amendments to SIGAR's authority proposed by section 1532 of the Senate-passed NDAA would severely restrict SIGAR's oversight of reconstruction spending, to exclude internationally monitored trust funds like the World-Bank-administered Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, military construction, human rights and anti-corruption assistance, and certain counternarcotics programs. Additionally, the provision would change the reporting requirement from quarterly to semi-annually, hampering the ability of Congress to respond quickly to wasteful or fraudulent spending.

Therefore, we encourage the final conference report to reflect the value and importance of SIGAR's oversight work in ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely by excluding section 1532 from the final legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Rand Paul
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator