

PETER WELCH
AT-LARGE, VERMONT

CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP
HOUSE DEMOCRATIC
STEERING & POLICY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT
REFORM

2303 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4500
202-225-4115

DISTRICT:
128 LAKESIDE AVENUE
SUITE 235
BURLINGTON, VT 05401
(802) 652-2450
(888) 605-7270

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4500

June 5, 2014

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Recent news reports suggest Syrian opposition leaders will ask you to provide them with man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS, or anti-aircraft missiles). As you and your advisors well know, providing these potent and easy-to-use anti-aircraft missiles in an unstable war zone is fraught with risk.

Our view is that the risk of these anti-aircraft weapons falling into the wrong hands, specifically jihadist elements whose primary goal is to do harm to the United States or our allies, exceeds the potential benefit of assisting the rebels we support. And while some safeguards may mitigate the risk (the use of fingerprint scanners and GPS tracking systems), none are fail-safe. Once the weapons are delivered they are beyond our control and up for grabs in a chaotic war zone.

We urge you to reject the request by the Syrian opposition for anti-aircraft missiles.

Sincerely,



PETER WELCH
Member of Congress




WALTER JONES
Member of Congress




MICK MULVANEY
Member of Congress





RICK NOLAN
Member of Congress


JAMES P. MCGOVERN
Member of Congress

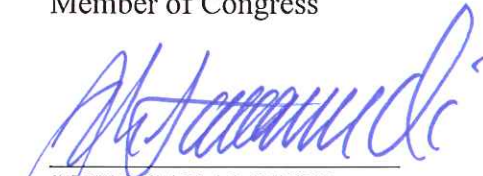

JOHN CAMPBELL
Member of Congress

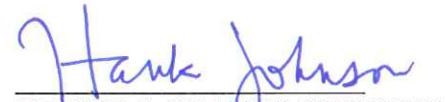

ALAN GRAYSON
Member of Congress



MARK POCAN
Member of Congress


PAUL BROUN
Member of Congress

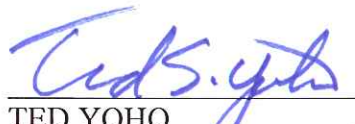

PETER DEFAZIO
Member of Congress



JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress


HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON
Member of Congress


ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA
Member of Congress

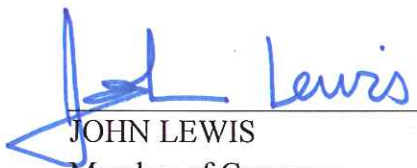

STEVE COHEN
Member of Congress


TED YOHO
Member of Congress


JOHN CONYERS JR.
Member of Congress


MICHAEL CAPUANO
Member of Congress


DANNY K. DAVIS
Member of Congress


JOHN LEWIS
Member of Congress