

ALCEE L. HASTINGS

20TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON RULES

UNITED STATES
HELSINKI COMMISSION
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER

FLORIDA DELEGATION
CO-CHAIRMAN

SENIOR DEMOCRATIC WHIP



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0923

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

- 2353 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0923
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-1313
FAX: (202) 225-1171
- 2701 W. OAKLAND PARK BOULEVARD
SUITE 200
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 33311
TELEPHONE: (954) 733-2800
FAX: (954) 735-9444
- TOWN OF MAGONIA PARK
MUNICIPAL CENTER
1755 EAST TIFFANY DRIVE
MAGONIA PARK, FL 33407
TELEPHONE: (561) 469-7048

www.alceehastings.house.gov

September 23, 2014

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

I write to inform you that I sent the attached letter to Speaker Boehner today, calling on him, as I did on August 14, 2014, to bring the U.S. House of Representatives back into session so that we may address the nature, duration, and scope of our nation's military operations to defeat the ongoing threat posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

The situation in both Iraq and Syria on a political, humanitarian and military level grow increasingly dire, and we may very well have a duty to meet these difficulties with force along with any number of other strategic responses. However, Congress has a duty to discuss these issues and act accordingly under the United States Constitution and the War Powers Resolution. We must also reexamine the relevancy of the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists (AUMF) with regard to the current U.S. airstrikes in Syria and future military operations to address ISIL. The AUMF was born from the need to take immediate and bold action to respond to the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The time has come, however, for Congress to fulfill its constitutional role in committing our military resources to global conflicts, and specifically examine whether the required strategy in Iraq and Syria necessitates additional Congressional authorization.

I certainly appreciate your timely attention to the complex and difficult situation unfolding in Iraq and Syria, and want you to know that I am eager to facilitate a resolution to the current crisis by making sure that the United States exercises the full might of its democracy to achieve the best outcome for the American people and all those threatened by ISIL.

I thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alcee L. Hastings".

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

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**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0923**

September 23, 2014

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

In the early hours of September 23, 2014, the United States led coalition partners in an airstrike campaign in Syria. This marked a new chapter in the ongoing struggle to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which poses a direct threat to the lives of Americans and peoples all around the world. However, I remain deeply concerned by the continued lack of broader Congressional authorization of our nation's military operations with regard to ISIL. To this end, as I did on August 14, 2014, I must once again respectfully call upon you to bring the U.S. House of Representatives back into session so that we may meet our constitutional responsibility under Article I to address the nature, duration, and scope of these and future activities.

As Members of Congress, we have a duty to ensure that the United States does not enter a conflict without appropriate deliberation or debate. We abdicate this responsibility when we do not exercise full oversight of our military commitment. In particular, the Administration's reliance on the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists (AUMF) for our country's ongoing military operations within Syria raises many questions. The AUMF was born from the need to take immediate and bold action to respond to the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The time has come for Congress to reassert its constitutional role in committing our military resources to global conflicts, and specifically examine whether the President's strategy in Iraq and Syria necessitate additional Congressional authorization.

Reasonable minds will disagree as to what the fate of the 2001 AUMF ought to be, and reasonable minds may very well disagree as to what military operations, if any, we ought to take to address the ongoing threat posed by ISIL, but in order for such disagreements to occur we must first provide the forum for such discussions. As demonstrated by Article I Section 8, the appropriate forum is Congress. The appropriate time is now.

I thank you for your time and consideration of my request and ask for a prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alcee L. Hastings".

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

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