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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6050

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August 12, 2015

The Honorable John M. McHugh
Secretary of the Army
Department of the Army
200 Army Pentagon, Room 3E528
Washington, DC 20310-0200

Dear Secretary McHugh:

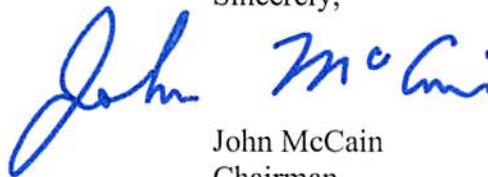
Arlington National Cemetery is our Nation's most revered and hallowed ground where those who gave the last full measure of devotion have been laid to rest since the Civil War. Unfortunately, space at the cemetery is limited, which makes it imperative that we seek all available opportunities to maximize what space remains in and around the cemetery. With the demolition of the Navy Annex, additional land is now available for the expansion of the cemetery once Columbia Pike is realigned through the Defense Access Road program.

It has recently come to my attention that efforts to work with Arlington County and the Virginia Department of Transportation have stalled because of their insistence on an alignment that would reduce the number of interment sites and allow the county to construct a bus maintenance facility. I am sure you would agree that we should instead pursue an alignment that maximizes the number of interment sites and places restrictions on the remaining property that ensure whatever is built reflects the solemnity of this national cemetery.

It would be shameful to have to tell the family of a fallen American hero that there is no space available at Arlington National Cemetery, because rather than expand its grounds, Arlington County and the Virginia Department of Transportation decided to build a bus maintenance facility. As things stand today, it is estimated that the cemetery will run out of interment sites in less than 10 years. However, including the adjacent properties would extend the life of the cemetery and allow another 7,600 interment sites to be added.

As you proceed with discussions on this matter, as well as the transfer of property at Fort Monroe, I encourage you to pursue a solution that maximizes property for the cemetery and restricts incompatible use, and to use whatever tools available to you to ensure this outcome.

Sincerely,



John McCain
Chairman