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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6050

June 25, 2010

RICHARD D. DeBOBES, STAFF DIRECTOR
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The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-6050

Dear Carl:

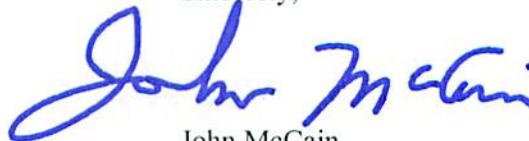
As Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, we share the responsibility for annually marking up, debating, and reporting from our Committee the largest single source of discretionary spending in the Federal Government. While our Committee and Congress as a whole have made efforts to increase the transparency of earmarks, I continue to believe that further measures can and must be adopted to ensure the transparency of all earmark requests to be included in the National Defense Authorization Act.

In his 2010 State of the Union Address, President Obama called for Congress to establish a unified and searchable database on a public website to identify each earmark request, its dollar value, the individual Members of Congress making the request and the intended beneficiary of such spending. To achieve this objective, a bipartisan group of 23 Senators including eight members of our Committee have co-sponsored S. 3335 which would create such a website within six months after the date of enactment. An earmark request would be entered on the website within five days after the request is submitted to a committee and the information would be updated based on action taken as the request proceeds through congressional consideration to final enactment.

I ask that if you have not already done so to join me in cosponsoring S. 3335, and I ask each of you to notify me whether you would be willing to comply with the requirements set forth in S. 3335.

The Constitution gives our Committee and Congress enormous power over Federal spending. The American people are demanding we exercise this power with a level of responsibility and due diligence that is commensurate with the importance of the decisions we make. I ask you to join me in supporting S. 3335 in response to President Obama's request that we improve the processes and procedures that enhance the transparency and accountability of our decisions.

Sincerely,



John McCain
Ranking Member