

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

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SENATOR

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3204

August 13, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write with great concern over recent comments by the Deputy National Security Adviser, Lieutenant General Douglas Lute, which suggest that a military draft "has always been an option on the table." Since raising the prospect of a draft contradicts the previously stated policy of your Administration, I ask that you clarify your current policy regarding the possibility of re-instituting a military draft.

Our volunteer military is the best in the world and has been performing heroically under difficult circumstances in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. As you proclaimed in 2003 on the 30th anniversary of the all-volunteer force, "For the last 30 years, we have been fortunate to have a military composed entirely of volunteers... Since that time, our volunteer Armed Forces personnel have upheld the finest traditions of our military and our country." A year later, Department of Defense spokesman Lawrence T. Di Rita, said, "It is the policy of this administration to oppose a military draft for any purpose whatsoever. A return to the draft is unthinkable. There will be no draft."

While our forces, in particular the Army and Marine Corps, are under strain, re-establishing a draft is not the answer.

The seeds of many of the problems that continue to plague our mission in Iraq were planted in the failure to adequately plan for the conflict and properly equip our men and women in uniform. Whether the problem has been inadequate body armor on the ground in Iraq or inadequate treatment for injured soldiers at Walter Reed, there has been a deeply disturbing trend: a failure to serve the men and women who signed up to serve our nation. Rather than raising the specter of a draft, the administration has a duty to focus on providing our current service members with the equipment and benefits they need and deserve.

In previous years, when asked about a draft, your Administration has stated that it is the Administration's policy to oppose a military draft and support the all-volunteer force. Given

Lieutenant General Lute's comments last week, I ask that you clarify whether there has been a change in your Administration's opposition to reinstating a draft.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hillary Rodham Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Hillary Rodham Clinton

CC: The Honorable Stephen Hadley, National Security Adviser  
The Honorable Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense