

The Honorable Elton Gallegly
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gallegly,

We are responding on behalf of the President to your letter dated May 3, 2012, which urges development of a comprehensive strategy to combat the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and the trade in materials to manufacture them.

IEDs are a weapon used by those who would cause harm to innocent civilians and our military forces and other government personnel at home and overseas, and continue to pose a significant and enduring threat to U.S. interests. Recognizing this continuing threat, and reemphasizing our commitment to protect our troops in the field, the Administration recently updated the United States' policy for Countering IEDs. Pursuant to the updated policy, we are enhancing our effectiveness in countering IEDs by:

- Leveraging, integrating, and aligning domestic, transborder, and international activities and lessons learned across the U.S. Government;
- Emphasizing our responsibility to protect American lives and interests at home and abroad; and
- Promoting cooperation with state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, with our allies, partner nations, and multilateral organizations, and with private sector partners to advance awareness of the IED threat and enhance our collective counter-IED knowledge and capabilities.

As part of the recent policy update, the Administration identified specific and enduring counter-IED capabilities and enabling technologies that are a priority to be developed or preserved, including engagement with domestic and international partners; exploitation and sharing of information and materials; innovative intelligence and information analysis; deployable counter-IED capabilities; screening, detection, and protection; safeguarding explosives and selected precursor materials; coordinating and standardizing training and equipment; and operational plans for IED contingencies.

In addition, the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Education, and Health and Human Services; the National Institutes of Health; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the Institute of Medicine; Veterans Service Organizations; academia; and civilian health care agencies continue to collaborate on the emergency and long-term medical requirements of wounded, ill, or injured Veterans and Service members, including those who sustain IED injuries in the line of duty. The Departments of State, Homeland Security, and others, continue to promote and administer international tools such as Program Global Shield, to prevent the diversion of IED precursor chemicals. These departments and agencies are also working with multilateral groups, such as the G8, to develop and implement cooperative counter-IED initiatives.


Departments and agencies are updating existing plans to reflect this broadened policy scope. The Joint Program Office for Countering IEDs, administered by the Attorney General through the FBI, will support the implementation of our comprehensive policy by coordinating, tracking,

and, as necessary, elevating issues identified in the implementation of the new Counter-IED policy through the interagency process established in Presidential Policy Directive 1. We appreciate your interest in this critical issue and look forward to working with you as we continue our efforts to combat the use of improvised explosive devices.



Michael A. Sheehan
Assistant Secretary of Defense
Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict

Sincerely,



Robert A. Blecksmith
Assistant Director
FBI Critical Incident Response Group