

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 1, 2011

Honorable Darrell Issa
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States House of Representatives
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Mike Rogers
Chairman, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
United States House of Representatives
Capitol Visitor Center HVC-304
US Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Howard McKeon
Chairman, Armed Services Committee
United States House of Representative
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Issa, Chairman Smith, Chairman Rogers and Chairman McKeon,

We ask that your Committee immediately begin an investigation with hearings into the issues raised by recent reports alleging that three federal defense and intelligence agency data security contractors, and a leading law firm, planned a "dirty-tricks" campaign that included possible illegal actions against citizens engaged in free speech.

A series of email messages recently published on the Internet indicates that defense data security contractors HB Gary Federal, Palantir Technologies and Berico Technologies (collectively calling themselves "Team Themis") and the law firm of Hunton & Williams planned a campaign to sabotage and discredit critics of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, including U.S. Chamber Watch, the union federation Change to Win, the Center for American Progress, the Service Employees International Union and other organizations.

The published correspondence appears to reveal a conspiracy to use subversive techniques to

target Chamber critics. The techniques may have been developed at U.S. government expense to target terrorists and other security threats. The emails indicate that these defense contractors planned to mine social network sites for information on Chamber critics; planned to plant “false documents” and “fake insider personas” that would be used to discredit the groups; and discussed the use of malicious and intrusive software (“malware”) to steal private information from the groups and disrupt their internal electronic communications.

Given evidence of their proposal to infiltrate computer systems, discredit and disrupt the operations of U.S. advocacy groups, Team Themis and Hunton and Williams may have conspired to carry out or previously carried out actions in violation of federal law, including:

- Forgery under 10 USC §923
- Mail and Wire Fraud under 18 USC §1341 and 18 USC §1343
- Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Computers 18 USC §1030

The possibility that any one of these crimes was committed warrants investigation. It is deeply troubling to think that tactics developed for use against terrorists may have been unleashed against American citizens. The central questions at issue here are:

- Did the government contractors violate any federal laws?
- Are there adequate laws in place to protect American citizens from intrusive and/or unethical electronic surveillance tactics?
- Were government resources inappropriately used to target American citizens?

Possible proof the defense and security contractors may have traded on their government work is inferred by a November 3, 2010, sales proposal from Team Themis to Hunton & Williams: “Who better to develop a corporate information reconnaissance capability than companies that have been market leaders within the [Defense Department] and Intelligence Community?”

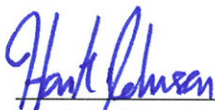
We are prepared to assist the Committee in gathering the necessary and relevant information to conduct appropriate hearings. At a minimum, we submit that the Committee may wish to obtain any correspondence and documents from the parties concerning the planned campaign and any other similar activities, including the government contracts under which the contractors in question have been paid millions of dollars.

Particularly as events continue to develop around the world, we can all agree that free and open debate, discussion and criticism as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution are absolutely necessary to a healthy and vibrant democracy. We must guarantee not just free spoken, print and broadcast media but unfettered Internet and electronic communication as well. Citizens who exercise their rights should not be the victims of illegal and insidious electronic attack any more than peaceful protesters should be the victims of intimidation or physical violence.

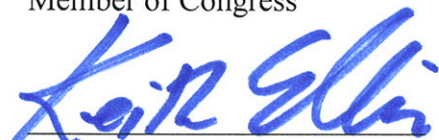
Enclosed you will find a packet of summary information describing the parties and recently revealed events in more detail.

The emails and documents that have come to light thus far provide a window into a deeply concerning set of circumstances, but not all of the facts are known. We believe it is therefore incumbent upon the Committee to investigate this matter thoroughly and with the utmost urgency. We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to working with you.

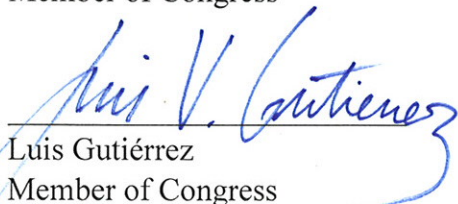
Sincerely,




Hank Johnson
Member of Congress



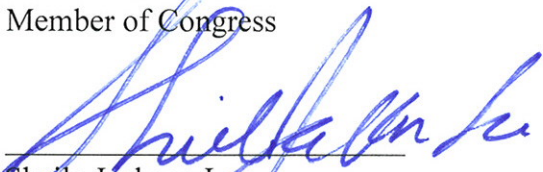
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



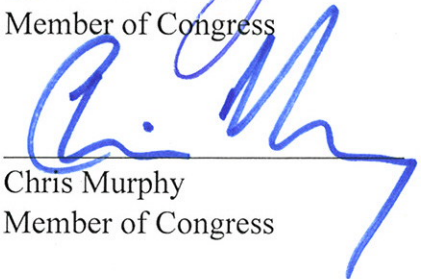
Luis Gutiérrez
Member of Congress



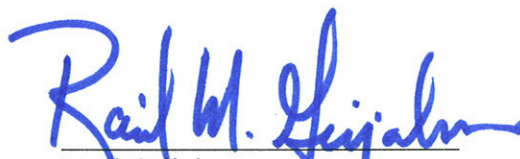
Jesse Jackson, Jr.
Member of Congress



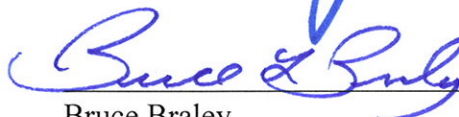
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Chris Murphy
Member of Congress



Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress



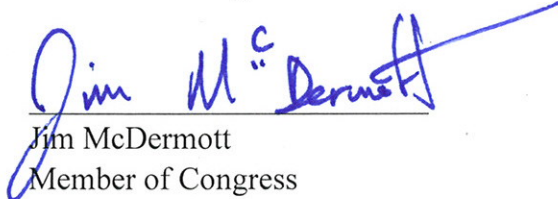
Bruce Braley
Member of Congress



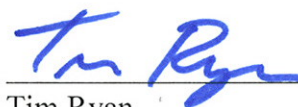
Mike Honda
Member of Congress



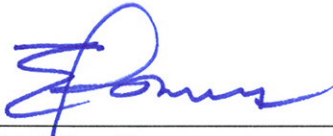
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



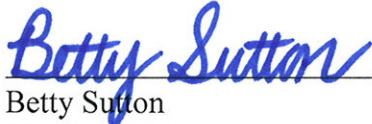
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress

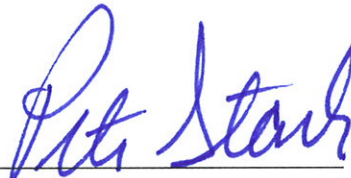


Betty Sutton
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress

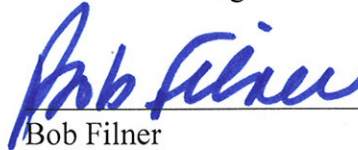
CC: Rep. Elijah Cummings
CC: Rep. John Conyers
CC: Rep. C. A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger
CC: Rep. Christopher Smith
CC: Sen. Patrick Leahy
CC: Sen. Diane Feinstein
CC: Sen. Carl Levin



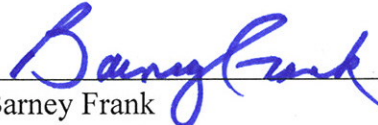
Pete Stark
Member of Congress



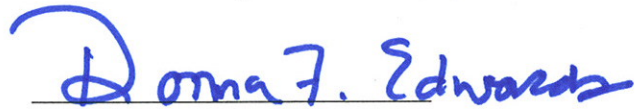
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Bob Filner
Member of Congress



Barney Frank
Member of Congress



Donna Edwards
Member of Congress