

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Pete Visclosky
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Visclosky:

We appreciate the Subcommittee's leadership in including \$47.5 million for joint U.S.-Israel efforts designed to improve subterranean tunnel detection in the FY 2018 Defense Appropriations Bill and respectfully request the subcommittee include robust funding in its FY 2019 bill to continue this vital joint program (PE 0603122D8Z / Combating Terrorism Technology Support).

The subterranean threat to the State of Israel, in particular the prevalence and sophistication of tunnels along both its southern and northern borders, has been a concern for many years, but more recently has become a pressing strategic threat. These tunnels are not simply holes dug into the ground. They are sophisticated networks and in some cases, are lined with concrete, include electricity, communications systems and ventilation. These tunnels have been used to launch rockets, stockpile weapons, and smuggle arms and contraband, as well as for deadly terrorist attacks and penetrating inside Israeli territory. In 2006, Hamas used a tunnel to kidnap Israel Defense Forces soldier Gilad Shalit, and during the 2014 Gaza conflict, Israel destroyed 32 tunnels—14 of which crossed into Israel for the purposes of cross-border attacks. Palestinian terrorist groups have largely rebuilt their tunnel infrastructure, and Hezbollah in Lebanon is undertaking similar efforts. In recent months, Israel has successfully detected a number of cross-border tunnels from Gaza using these new technologies being developed as a result of this critical cooperation.

Our own nation faces similar threats. In Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, ISIS has used subterranean passages to smuggle weapons, avoid detection, ambush troops and launch tunnel bomb attacks, and North Korea is believed to maintain a complex network of tunnels leading into South Korea. Joint U.S.-Israel cooperation is needed now more than ever to ensure the availability and operation of technology to detect and destroy this subterranean threat. U.S.-Israel counter-tunnel collaboration advances U.S. interests by saving lives, preventing conflict escalation, protecting our closest ally in the region, and enhancing our ability to detect tunnels. We urge you to include

robust funding in your FY 2019 Defense Appropriations Bill for this important and cost-effective program, and appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER
Member of Congress



DOUG LAMBORN
Member of Congress



LOIS FRANKEL
Member of Congress



RANDY WEBER
Member of Congress



ALCEE L. HASTINGS
Member of Congress



KEVIN BRADY
Member of Congress



RUBEN J. KIHUEN
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TED W. LIEU
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JODY HICE
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MARK DESAULNIER
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GLENN GROTHMAN
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JOSH GOTTHEIMER
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JACKY ROSEN
Member of Congress



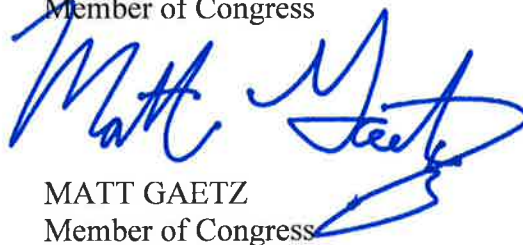
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MATT GAETZ
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DONALD NORCROSS
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