



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

June 10, 2015

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCain:

On behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA), the world's largest organization of psychologists with more than 122,500 members and affiliates, I am writing to thank you for the anti-torture amendment that you and Sen. Feinstein introduced during consideration of the Fiscal Year 2016 defense authorization bill this week. APA strongly supports your amendment, as we supported your earlier amendment to the Detainee Welfare Act of 2005 and the inclusion of its provisions in the 2009 Presidential Executive Order "Ensuring Lawful Interrogations."

APA welcomes the McCain-Feinstein amendment language reaffirming the prohibition on torture of detainees in U.S. custody; 2) limiting interrogation techniques or any treatment related to interrogation to those included in the Army Field Manual; 3) broadening the scope of the prohibition against torture to explicitly include all U.S. government entities; and 4) mandating immediate and then periodic review of the Army Field Manual to ensure it reflects "current, evidence-based, best practices for interrogation that are designed to elicit reliable and voluntary statements and do not involve the use or threat of force."

Our support for your amendment is based once again on APA's fundamental mission to protect and promote human welfare, and to advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives. APA is an accredited non-governmental organization at the United Nations (UN) and is committed to promoting and protecting human rights in accordance with the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Dating back to 1985, APA's policy "condemns torture wherever it occurs" and supports the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Our APA ethics code requires psychologists to respect the dignity and worth of all individuals and to strive for the preservation and protection of fundamental human rights.

As you may also know, APA has held a seat on the U.S. government's High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group (HIG) Research Committee, the mission of which is to bring science to bear on the review and promotion of humane interrogation techniques.

A large number of APA member psychologists serve in scientific and clinical roles within the Department of Defense, and APA has been involved for decades in issues important to military personnel, their families and their communities. We look forward to continued collaboration with you, Sen. Feinstein and your committees on topics critical to both human rights and national security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. B. Anderson', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Norman B. Anderson, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer