AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

October 28, 2005

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sen. McCain:

On behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA), a scientific and professional association of more than 150,000 members and affiliates, I applaud you for offering the amendment to the Senate's Fiscal Year 2006 Department of Defense (DoD) appropriations bill calling for the prohibition on cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment of U.S. detainees and for uniform standards for interrogation within DoD. Our support is based on our fundamental mission to protect and promote human welfare and recognition of the many psychologists working on behalf of our national security interests.

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. In addition, a 1986 resolution of our APA Council of Representatives, the governing body of the association, supports the U.N. Declaration and Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as well as the U.N. Principles of Medical Ethics. More recently, in June of 2005, the Council reaffirmed this resolution and endorsed the report of our APA Presidential Task Force on Psychological Ethics and National Security, again stating that psychologists do not engage in, direct, support, facilitate or offer training in torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. In fact, the Task Force report further directed that psychologists have an ethical obligation to be alert to and report any acts of torture or cruel or inhuman treatment to appropriate authorities.

Members of my staff have worked with your office in the past on issues important to military personnel and their families, as well as the scientific and clinical roles of military psychologists. We look forward to continued collaboration with you and your staff, and again we thank you for your ongoing commitment to human rights and national security.

Sincerely,

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

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