INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL TO STUDY THE JUDGE ADVOCATE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE

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Ser 506/027
8 Dec 10

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
United States House of Representative
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman,

This letter's purpose is to notify you that the Independent Panel Review of Judge Advocate Requirements of the Department of the Navy (the Panel) anticipates that its report will not be completed within the timeframe directed.

Pursuant to section 506 of Public Law 111-84, you chartered the Panel on June 30, 2010, and appointed the panel members on July 19, 2010. Section 506 required that the first meeting of the Panel be held within 60 days of appointment and that a report be submitted within 120 days of the first meeting. The Panel conducted its first meeting on September 1, 2010, making the report due on December 29, 2010.

The Panel has held four public hearings and several information gathering meetings, and has reviewed responses to numerous written requests for information. The Panel's information gathering is complete with the exception of a request to the Department of Defense Inspector General (DoD IG) for a copy of a report titled: Evaluation of Post-Trial Reviews of Courts-Martial within the Department of the Navy (Project No. 2009C007). The Senate Armed Services Committee requested this DoD IG review in its Report on the National Defense Authorization Act for 2010.

One of the key requirements of the Panel's congressionally-mandated manpower study is to "review the judge advocate requirements of the Department of the Navy for the military justice mission...and the performance of the Navy and Marine Corps in providing legally sufficient post-trial processing in general courts-martial and special-courts martial." This element of the study was highlighted in discussions with congressional staff members familiar with both the genesis of section 506 and the issue that triggered the requested DoD IG report.

The DoD IG's staff has informed the Panel that the IG is aware of the importance of the report to the Panel's efforts and is expediting the completion of the report. We understand that the previously issued draft report is now undergoing final review.

The Panel has begun drafting its report. A thorough review and consideration of the DoD IG report in the portion of the Panel's study related to the military justice mission are warranted, but will likely delay the completion of the Panel's work beyond the December 29, 2010 due date. The Panel anticipates that its report will be completed no later than February 15, 2011.

Very respectfully,

DANIEL J. DELL'ORTO
Chairman

Copy to:
HASC (Ranking Member)