

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 6, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We write to express our grave concern about the pending release by your Administration of photographs of detainees captured in the global war on terror and held by American military personnel. We understand that some of the photographs will be released because of an agreement entered into by the Department of Justice in response to a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) while others will be released because of a decision by the Department of Defense (DoD). The President can reverse the agreement and DoD's unilateral decision, and we ask that you do so.

The release of these old photographs of past behavior that has now been clearly prohibited will serve no public good, but will empower al-Qaeda propaganda operations, hurt our country's image, and endanger our men and women in uniform. We know that many terrorists captured in Iraq have told American interrogators that one of the reasons they decided to join the violent jihadist war against America was what they saw on al-Qaeda videos of abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib. That abuse led to the passage here in Washington of the *Detainee Treatment Act*, the *Military Commissions Act*, and a series of executive actions, including some orders you have issued as President, that are all aimed at preventing a repeat of the unacceptable Abu Ghraib behavior or anything like it. Pursuant to these statutory and executive actions, America's soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have made great progress in improving detention and interrogation procedures.

Releasing these old photographs of detainee treatment now will provide new fodder to al-Qaeda's propaganda and recruitment operations, undercut the progress you have made in our international relations, and endanger America's military and diplomatic personnel throughout the world.

We urge you in the strongest possible terms to fight the release of these old pictures of detainees in the war on terror, including appealing the decision of the Second Circuit in the ACLU lawsuit to the Supreme Court and pursuing all legal options to prevent the public disclosure of these pictures.

Sincerely,



Lindsey O. Graham



Joseph I. Lieberman