

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2003

October 17, 2012

His Excellency Raja Pervez Ashraf
Prime Minister
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Dear Prime Minister Pervez Ashraf:

As the women of the United States Senate, we are writing to express our outrage over the barbaric attack on fourteen-year old Malala Yousafzai and two other girls in a senseless act of violence.

All of us—and indeed the world—are horrified at the brazen nature of this attack, which was carried out by Taliban militants who targeted Malala simply because she advocated for and pursued an education for herself and other girls. Even more reprehensible is the Taliban's promise to try to kill her again should she recover from her critical injuries. We applaud the fact that you and many Pakistani citizens have come out forcefully against these despicable extremists, whose cowardice is matched only by Malala's unflinching bravery, and we hope that the Government of Pakistan can pursue and prosecute those responsible to the fullest letter of the law. We also honor the many activists in Pakistan and around the world who, like Malala, work day in and day out to promote open education for both girls and boys.

As beneficiaries of an open education ourselves, we believe strongly that women and girls shouldn't have to risk their lives to go to school. The attack on Malala is a stark reminder that every day, women of all ages face great obstacles in their pursuit of basic human rights, including the pursuit of an education. Malala's courage and determination to go to school in the face of grave danger to herself and her family make her an inspiring symbol for the millions of girls across the globe who are also desperate to get an education.

We believe an attack against Malala represents an attack against all women across the world and must not be tolerated. We hope that the Government of Pakistan will continue to work to confront extremism and heinous violence against its own children. We urge you to ensure that the perpetrators of this violence are brought to justice quickly, and that you might also redouble your own efforts to safeguard and advance girls' access to education and opportunities for them to reach their full potential as contributing and productive citizens.

Countries that promote education for all their children have higher living standards and economic success for all their citizens.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter, and we join you in praying for Malala's swift and full recovery from her injuries. As the women of the Senate, we also reiterate our commitment to work with you in continuing the broader fight for girls and women – in Pakistan and around the world – to pursue an education without fear of violence, intimidation or indignity.

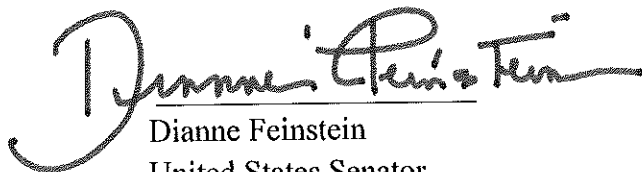
Sincerely,



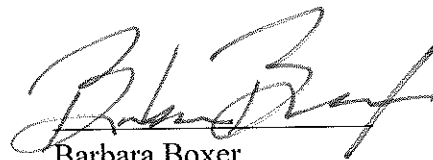
Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



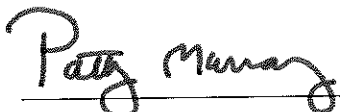
Kay Bailey Hutchison
United States Senator



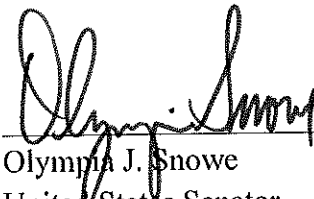
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



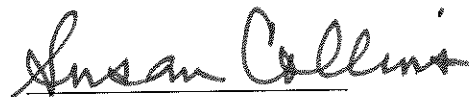
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Olympia J. Snowe
United States Senator



Mary L. Eandrieti
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



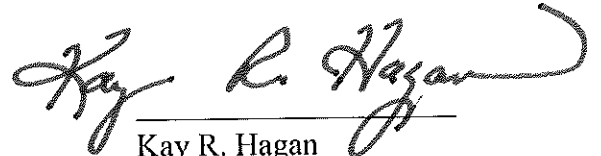
Claire McCaskill
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Kay R. Hagan
United States Senator



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator

CC: Her Excellency Hina Rabbani Khar, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Her Excellency Sherry Rehman, Ambassador to the United States for the Islamic Republic
of Pakistan