



July 11, 2019

The Honorable Stephen Lynch  
2109 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lynch:

I am writing in enthusiastic support of your bipartisan bill to reestablish the Commission on Wartime Contracting, H.R. 3576.

The Project On Government Oversight (POGO) is a nonpartisan independent watchdog that investigates and exposes waste, corruption, abuse of power, and when the government fails to serve the public or silences those who report wrongdoing. We champion reforms to achieve a more effective, ethical, and accountable federal government that safeguards constitutional principles. Your bill is just such a reform. As Pentagon spending has increased—including spending through the overseas contingency operations budget, which the Pentagon uses as a slush fund for other departmental priorities—there is an increased need for oversight and accountability. Further, both Democratic and Republican presidents have asserted expanded powers to use force; this merits closer scrutiny as well. By reestablishing an independent, bipartisan legislative commission dedicated to holding hearings on waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement of wartime contracts, this bill will greatly benefit American taxpayers and our troops.

This Commission would be able to closely scrutinize a number of issues of concern, including the abuse of the classification system to hide information essential for accountability,<sup>1</sup> whether current operations overseas are authorized and in compliance with international law,<sup>2</sup> and whether our military aid to foreign governments is accomplishing its stated goals.<sup>3</sup> A dedicated commission can dig into depth on these issues, and give them the attention they deserve.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. I urge your colleagues to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Danielle Brian  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Project On Government Oversight et al. to Patrick Shanahan, Acting Secretary of Defense about the release of information about the Afghanistan War, May 13, 2019. <https://www.pogo.org/letter/2019/05/civil-society-urges-defense-department-to-release-information-on-afghanistan-war/>

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Rudalevige, “When did Congress authorize fighting in Niger? That’s an excellent question,” *Washington Post*, November 11, 2017. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/11/11/when-did-congress-authorize-fighting-in-niger-thats-an-excellent-question/>

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Exum, “U.S. Arms Sales to the Gulf Have Failed,” *The Atlantic*, June 21, 2019. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/06/us-military-support-gulf-all-backwards/592249/>