

**AMERICAN  
DEFENSE CENTER**  
A PROGRAM OF THE CIVIC COUNCIL

June 30, 2008

Dear SenatorXXXX or CongressmanXXXXXX,

With so much attention focused on the upcoming election and myriad other national and international issues, I am writing to you today to bring attention back to American interests at the Panama Canal.

My hope and request of you today is that you will be a leader in pushing for a Concurrent Resolution to publicly reaffirm America's position at the Canal and our strong belief that the Canal must remain a neutral and open passageway for uninterrupted use by the U.S. for economic and national interest purposes.

A major concern is the decreased American presence at the Panama Canal and the increased presence and control of the Canal by companies with close ties to the Chinese government.

As you know, the importance of American access to and through the Canal for military and economic reasons is vital. A Chinese company (Hutchinson Whampoa) controls the ports at both ends of the Canal, and may be involved in the planned expansion of the Canal, further deepening its influence over the Canal.

Panama has no army to deal with threats to the Canal. Both President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela and Al Qaeda terrorists have expressed an interest in the Canal, the former to 'protect' it, the latter to blow up a lock, an act that would result in months of closure, if not worse.

Again, I am asking you to be a leader in pushing for a Concurrent Resolution that will re-affirm our position as a guarantor of the Canal's neutrality. At a minimum, our country should have a joint force (with Panama) to secure the Canal against very real threats.

America built the Panama Canal at great human and financial cost, and because America was its original guardian, we feel it is crucial that the Canal's strategic importance not be overlooked in this age of international terror and asymmetrical warfare. The dangers to our country are simply too great.

Because we are a non-partisan organization, the American Defense Center welcomes any and all opportunities to assist members of the Congress from both parties in furthering our goal of strengthening our national and economic security.

We would welcome any chance to work with you in drafting a Concurrent Resolution to strengthen and increase our position at the Canal.

Please get back to me at your earliest convenience to let me know your position on our interests at the Canal and whether or not you are willing to sponsor a Concurrent Resolution regarding the Canal.

Respectfully,



Thomas Cromwell  
Executive Director