



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

BILL NELSON
FLORIDA

December 13, 2007

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
The United States Department of Defense
The Pentagon Suite 319
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Gates:

I am deeply troubled by recent reports that at least two women who worked in Iraq under contractors for the Department of Defense were sexually assaulted by male coworkers. Both women have filed lawsuits partly because they feel the criminal justice system has failed them.

I am enclosing a recent press report suggesting that in a 2005 case involving a Texas woman the U.S. Army turned a rape kit over to private security officers rather than to the proper authorities. In addition, the alleged victim in that case published a journal on the Internet suggesting that many other women have been raped in Iraq.

The Inspector General should immediately launch an investigation that thoroughly examines: 1) whether and why the results of the examination in question were turned over to a private company; 2) whether and how many other rape examinations were performed by military doctors in Iraq; and, 3) what steps the Department of Defense has taken, in conjunction with victims and the Departments of State and Justice, to ensure the full investigation and prosecution of these cases under all applicable U.S. laws.

We need to know that there is a thorough and vigorous investigation of any and all of these cases. I also would appreciate a detailed briefing on the Department of Defense's role in investigating, prosecuting and resolving any such cases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.