

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 16, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
The Department of Homeland Security
310 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20528-0150

VIA FACSIMILE

Dear Secretary Napolitano,

We write today regarding the release of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) report entitled "*Rightwing Extremism Current Economic and Political Climate Fueling Resurgence in Radicalization and Recruitment*" and prepared by the Extremism and Radicalization Branch of the Homeland Environment Threat Analysis Division

While we agree that extremists of all varieties represent a potential threat to the United States, we are troubled by some of the statements included as fact in the report titled above.

First, your report states that "rightwing extremists will attempt to recruit and radicalize returning veterans in order to exploit their skills and knowledge derived from military training and combat." Using the DHS rationale, do you also believe that weapons familiarity and tactical training means local, state, and federal law enforcement personnel, and members of the National Guard, are also being recruited? To suggest that a soldier returning from a combat tour is more prone to join an extremist group is unconscionable and insulting to our brave men and women who risk their lives protecting our freedom.

Second, the report states that the millions of Americans who believe in the Second Amendment are a potential threat to our national security. Why? Do you have statistics to prove that law-abiding Americans who purchase a legal product are being recruited by so-called hate groups? If so, please present us with DHS's independent data.

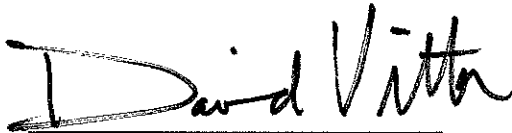
Third, the report identifies those individuals who believe in such issues as pro-life legislation, limited government, legal versus illegal immigration and limited federal government as potential terrorist threats. We can assure you that these beliefs are held by citizens of all races, party affiliations and sex, and should not be listed as a factor in determining potential terror threats. A better way to describe them is as citizens exercising their First Amendment rights.

Also, you listed those who bemoan the decline of U.S. stature and the loss of U.S. manufacturing capability to China and India as being potential rightwing extremists. We would

suggest that the millions of Americans who have lost their jobs in the manufacturing industry to foreign countries are not potential terror threats, but rather, honest Americans worried about feeding their families and earning a paycheck. Once again, to classify Americans who have lost their jobs as potential terror threats does a disservice to millions of Americans.

In closing, we support the mission of DHS in protecting our country from terror attacks and are proud of the many DHS employees who make this possible, in conjunction with our state and local law enforcement. We ask that DHS not use this report as a basis to unfairly target millions of Americans because of their beliefs and the rights afforded to them in the Constitution, and that you provide us with the data that supports the claims listed in the report titled above.

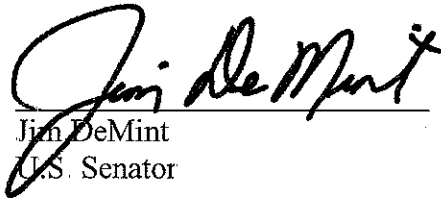
Sincerely,



David Vitter
U.S. Senator




Sam Brownback
U.S. Senator



Jim DeMint
U.S. Senator



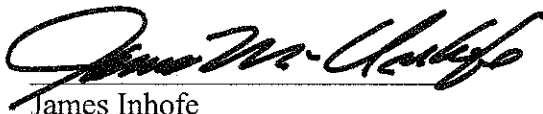
Tom Coburn
U.S. Senator



Richard Burr
U.S. Senator



Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Senator



James Inhofe
U.S. Senator