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March 27, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I write to express my deep concern regarding reports that John Walker Lindh is scheduled to be released from prison this May. I believe that Mr. Lindh continues to be a threat to U.S. national security and should serve the entirety of his 20 year sentence.

Central Intelligence Agency officer Johnny Michael Spann was killed in the Mazar-e Sharif uprising in Afghanistan in November 2001. He was the first American killed in the global war on terrorism. Mr. Lindh, an American who was captured along with Taliban fighters by U.S. forces in November 2001, is believed to have had direct involvement in Spann's death. Mr. Spann's family, residents of Winfield, Alabama, have contacted me to express their concerns about Mr. Lindh's early release.

Mr. Lindh admitted to supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan and pled guilty to those accusations in July 2002. I believe that a 20-year sentence is a small price to pay for his participation in terrorist activities against his own country. Further, I am extremely concerned that upon release, Mr. Lindh will continue his support of terrorist organizations. The National Counterterrorism Center reported that as of May 2016, Lindh "continued to advocate for global jihad and to write and translate violent extremist texts."

Mr. Lindh committed a heinous crime against our country. His activities are deserving of the strongest and strictest punishment, and I believe he should be required to serve the entirety of his 20 year sentence.

I appreciate your immediate attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,


Richard Shelby

cc: The Honorable William P. Barr