

**Pete Visclosky, Chairman of the Defense
Appropriations Subcommittee
US House of Representatives,
2328 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515**



Dear Representative Visclosky,

I am writing on behalf of the Organization for World Peace to draw your attention to a recent funding request from Thomas Alexander, who is currently performing the duties of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. Mr. Alexander has called upon Congress to approve new funds for the Department of Defense in order to better track and prevent civilian casualties in the fight against terrorism abroad. As Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, you are in a unique position that could be used to help save thousands of lives of innocent civilians. Given this, we urge you to support approval of Mr. Alexander's funding request.

This funding could not come at a more fortunate, and important time. As of late, U.S. counter-terror operations have been in the hot seat, and for good reason. Towards the end of last year, civilian deaths in Afghanistan were at an all-time high, with at least 2,500 civilians killed and more than 5,000 injured. More recently, U.S. air strikes in Somalia have killed two civilians, and injuring three more. These examples are reflective of a long history of the United States' disregarding the rights of innocent civilians abroad. Estimates suggest that in the war on terror alone more than 300,000 civilians have died. These are individuals not involved in the ongoing conflicts, and many are women and children. More than that, they are friends and family to many. The toll that these deaths take on communities is unspeakable.

Approving this funding request could be the first step in reducing the path of destruction the United States leaves behind in the war on terror. The appeal calls for new staff to help with monitoring and reporting casualties, and a new database that allows for public claims of civilian deaths to be submitted. More accurate reporting on the number of civilian casualties could be critical in garnering public support for larger steps towards stemming the flow of civilian blood abroad.

Given this, and your long history of voting for and supporting movements and legislation that helps to combat the most egregious effects of war, I am confident you will look further into the issue.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Eckert
Advocacy Team Member, Organization for World Peace

Jonathon Arrell
Vice President, The Organization for World Peace