

January 8, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support from Former Secretaries of DHS for the Nomination of John F. Kelly

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

President-elect Trump has announced that he will nominate John F. Kelly as the next Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"). Each of us has previously served in that role and are intimately familiar with the intense demands of the job. We firmly believe from our experience that John Kelly is an outstanding choice to be the next Secretary of DHS.

General Kelly enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1970. He served our Nation with honor for more than 40 years. Due to his proven leadership abilities, John rose through the ranks to become a four-star General. He knows in a deeply personal way what sacrifice means in order to secure the Homeland. Not only did he risk his life in combat, but John is also a Gold Star father. General Kelly lost his youngest son, Marine 1st Lt. Robert Kelly, in combat in Afghanistan in 2010.

General Kelly took over as Commander of US Southern Command ("SOUTHCOM") in 2012. In that command, General Kelly was responsible for countering a range security threats to the Homeland including intercepting illegal human trafficking, responding to disasters, providing humanitarian relief, ensuring the safe flow of trade routes, and disrupting criminal drug networks based in South and Central America. General Kelly could not have successfully completed these critical missions based on unilateral action. These missions require the skill to engage and effectively coordinate with a multitude of stakeholders including DHS, other US Federal agencies, state and local governments, the US public, foreign powers, non-governmental organizations, etc. As former Secretaries of DHS, we can say with conviction that the skills and abilities that General Kelly demonstrated in his USSOUTHCOM role and throughout his distinguished career have well equipped him for the critical missions he would be responsible for overseeing as Secretary.

In closing, it is important for the safety and security of the Homeland, that any incoming President have his Secretary of DHS confirmed and ready to serve on day one of the new Administration. Delay makes

us all vulnerable. General Kelly is clearly well qualified to assume that important responsibility on that first day. We respectfully urge the Senate to swiftly confirm General John Kelly as the next Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Chertoff", with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michael Chertoff
Former Secretary
Department of Homeland Security

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Ridge", with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Tom Ridge
Former Secretary
Department of Homeland Security