

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2005

Mr. Peter Erben, Program Director
Iraq Out-of-Country Voting Program
Amman, Jordan

Dear Mr. Erben,

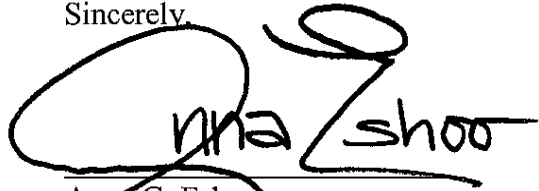
As the Iraq Out-of-Country Voting (OCV) program prepares to conduct Iraq's historic Transitional National Assembly Election, we write to strongly urge you to consider opening additional polling places in the State of California. Doing so will greatly assist the significant populations of Iraqi expatriates residing in California who face a great challenge in taking part in the upcoming elections due to the lack of sufficient polling facilities.

While your organization has worked to accommodate Iraqi expatriate populations in the United States with regional polling facilities in Nashville, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., we are concerned that thousands of eligible Iraqi voters residing on the West Coast will face a significant burden in trying to take part in the election process. The 25,000, predominately Christian-Iraqis living in San Diego, for example, represent the third-largest Iraqi population center in the nation, yet they would have to travel hundreds of miles to take part in their home country's elections. The over 40,000 Iraqi citizens living in California's Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area are at least 400 miles removed from the nearest polling center in Los Angeles. The difficulty in traveling these great distances to register to vote, and to return again days later to vote will discourage eligible Iraqi voters from taking part.

In order to guarantee the largest turnout and fairest election possible, we urge you to open two additional polling facilities in California, one in the city of San Diego and one in Modesto.

We thank you for your attention to this critical matter and look forward to your timely response.

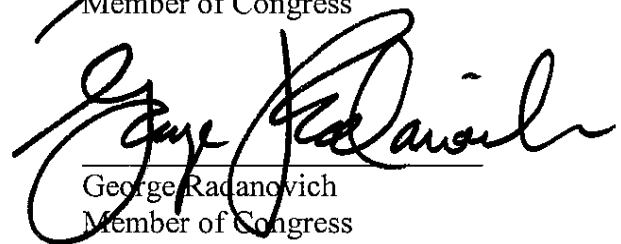
Sincerely,



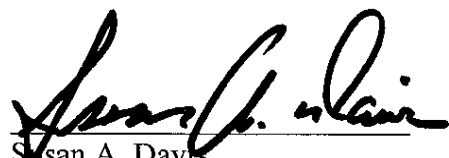
Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



George Radanovich
Member of Congress




Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress



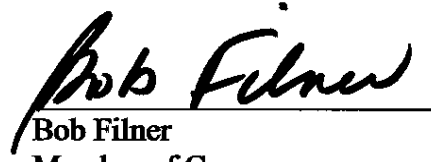
George Miller
Member of Congress



Dennis A. Cardoza
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



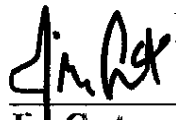
Bob Filner
Member of Congress



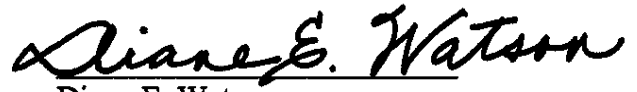
Howard L. Berman
Member of Congress



Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Diane E. Watson
Member of Congress

Cc: Roger Bryant, Head of U.S. Office, Iraq Out-of-Country Voting Program