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## Congress of the United States

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for bringing to my attention the issue of Iraqi prisoners of war relocating in the United States. After reading many recent newspaper articles about this topic, I understand your concern. With such prominent domestic troubles as tackling the federal budget, stories about millions being spent on our enemy's soldiers is surely cause for alarm. All of the information in these recent articles is not entirely correct, however. I hope to give you a better understanding of the reality of this situation.

In response to your comments, I contacted the Office of Refugee Programs at the State Department to find out what has actually happened and what is planned for the future. They assured me that very few of the refugees coming to the United States had actually fought against U. S. troops, and that the vast majority of refugees were civilians or rebels who had fought against Saddam Hussein.

Following a massive United States psychological warfare campaign leading up to Operation Desert Storm, over one hundred thousand Iraqi soldiers surrendered and became prisoners of war. All but four thousand of these soldiers were repatriated after the war was over. These remaining soldiers had a reasonable fear of imprisonment or death if they returned to their country after deserting. Thus, they chose to reject their homeland and joined a larger group of rebels fleeing a failed rebellion against Saddam Hussein, an even larger group of civilians who had fled their homeland. The Saudi Arabian government provided temporary refuge for this population.

When it became evident that this group of refugees would not be able to safely return to Iraq, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) decided that other solutions such as resettlement in third nations must be found. The United States agreed to resettle some of these refugees, as authorized by President Bush after consultations with Congress. Other nations participating in the relocation program include Sweden, Denmark, Iran, Germany, Russia, The United Kingdom, and Canada.

In fiscal year 1992, the United States resettled 3,442 Iraqi refugees and expects to admit 4,600 more in fiscal year 1993. The cost to resettle a refugee ranges between \$5,000 and \$7,000 for fiscal year 1993. It is important to note that refugees must sign a promissory note for their transportation expenses which they then repay when they become self-sufficient members of society. Most refugees achieve self-sufficiency within one year of

their arrival.

Please remember that the Iraqis that are being relocated in the United States are not sympathizers to Saddam Hussein and his administration. These people fled the tyranny