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U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

February 14, 2013

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ROBERT L. SIMMONS, II, STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On October 17, we outlined our concerns about significant arms control violations by the Russian Federation; to date, we have received no response to that letter. We are aware that senior officials of your Administration briefed the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including your current Secretary of State, on this matter this past December, yet, at that time, they offered no further information or plan for how to deal with this significant destabilization of the US-Russian nuclear arms relationship. Moreover, our efforts to schedule a meeting with senior members of your Administration to discuss this significant compliance failure have been unsuccessful. Such failure, in view of your threat to veto the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 over language tying further U.S. nuclear force reductions to Russian compliance with arms control obligations, is especially difficult to understand.

It is clear that the Russian Federation is undertaking both systemic violation and circumvention of a significant arms control obligation to the United States. Such is the reality that confronts the United States, despite four years of your best efforts to "reset" relations with that country.

As we stated in our previous letter, arms reduction treaties rest on a foundation of presumed adherence to those treaties, adherence which the parties monitor through verification procedures. Deliberate violations of treaties, on the other hand, indicate that the other party is not to be trusted and that efforts to pursue further agreements should be abandoned.

As a result, we believe it is time to abandon your policy of seeking U.S. nuclear force reductions. Renewing your pledge to modernize the U.S. nuclear deterrent is now more

The Honorable Barack Obama

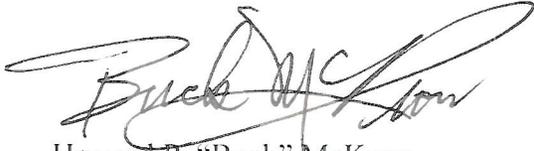
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important and will be a central metric for how seriously you view Russia's illegal conduct. As you said in your April 2009 Prague speech, "[r]ules must be binding. Violations must be punished. Words must mean something."

We look forward to your prompt response to us on this matter.

Sincerely,



Howard P. "Buck" McKeon  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services



Mike Rogers  
Chairman  
House Permanent Select Committee  
on Intelligence

HPM/MR:tm