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DATE: 5-9-02
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER

JAMES P. MORAN
8TH DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
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COMMITTEE
ON
BUDGET
REGIONAL WHIP

May 7, 2002

4/22/02 from meeting P.F.

The Honorable John Ashcroft,
Attorney General of the United States
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Room 4400
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Ashcroft:

As you know, the trials of John Walker Lindh and Zacarias Moussaoui are being held in my Congressional district at the Albert V. Bryan Federal Courthouse. While I understand that these trials are being held in this facility because of their close proximity to the Pentagon and Alexandria's reputation for having the "rocket docket," I do have some concerns due to the fact that directly next door to this building is a large, residential apartment complex, the Carlyle Towers, that houses approximately 1,000 people.

As I understand it, the Department of Justice, through the United States Marshals Service, has agreed to reimburse the City of Alexandria for all expenses incurred to improve security at the Alexandria Detention Center, as well as in and around the Albert V. Bryan Federal Court House, where prisoners are being held and tried in relation to the September 11th terrorist attacks. These improvements include site work and demolition, fencing, gates, barriers, road and parking modifications, landscaping, electrical work, security equipment, and creation of a security access center, that to date, have cost the city \$2.3 million. The city has also incurred \$535,829 in expenses related to the hiring of 9 additional deputy sheriffs to serve as perimeter security staff for the Alexandria Detention Center. These deputies are responsible for screening all pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the front and rear of the Public Safety Complex, which includes the Detention Center. I would appreciate you taking every diligent effort to insure that the city recovers this money.

As I am sure you are aware, currently, the U.S. Marshals Service is working diligently to come up with a security plan that will guarantee the safety of the neighborhood surrounding the courthouse while preventing traffic problems in the area from becoming any worse due to the influx of the media covering the trials. However, outside of these efforts, it is clear that in the climate that exists in our world today, it will be impossible to guarantee that terrorists will not try to disrupt the trials or harm the civilians who live next door.

Because the City of Alexandria, various local government officials, and many of my constituents have approached me on numerous occasions to voice their concerns regarding these

trials, on April 22, 2002, I held a "town hall meeting" to allow them to express their views on this issue. Acting United States Marshal of the Eastern District, John Clark, was kind enough to make himself available to answer questions at this event.

A query that came up repeatedly during this forum, and on which I would appreciate your insight, is why these trials have not been moved to a secure location, such as a military base or facility in the Washington Metropolitan area. Certainly in this type of arena it would be much easier for the Department of Justice to control the safety of the situation.

Furthermore, as I am sure you are aware, because of the security concerns that these trials bring, the U.S. Marshals Service is considering partial closure of streets proximate to the courthouse for the duration of these trials. While most agree that closures of this nature are necessary, many are concerned because it not known how long these trials and their appeals will take, so it is impossible to say how long these streets will have to be closed.

What makes this situation so difficult is that the new Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) buildings are currently under construction next to the courthouse, with the first phase scheduled for completion at the end of 2002. When these buildings open, in addition to the regular vehicular traffic in this area, thousands of PTO workers will be commuting to and from these facilities by way of Duke Street and its arteries. I firmly believe that this traffic situation will preclude the ability of closing off any streets near the courthouse beyond the end of next year and am joined in this opinion by the City of Alexandria. I would appreciate your assurance that any temporarily closed streets would be reopened by the time that the first PTO building is completed and occupied.

Similarly, as I understand it, a determination has not yet been made as to whether future trials of suspected terrorists, other than Lindh and Moussaoui, will be held at the Albert V. Bryan Federal Courthouse. Based on the comments I heard at my town hall meeting, combined with the planned opening of the PTO offices later this year, I would like to strongly suggest that an alternative site be found for future proceedings of this nature, where the government would not have to be responsible for the safety of so many civilians. I would also appreciate hearing your thoughts on this matter.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter and I look forward to working with you in the future to further resolve my constituents' concerns about their safety and well being.

Yours truly,



James P. Moran