



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

MAY 23 2014

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing in response to your subpoena of May 14, 2014, commanding the Secretary of State to appear before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee “to answer questions about [the State Department’s] response to the congressional investigation of the Benghazi attack.” We were surprised that after initially issuing a subpoena on May 1 and subsequently withdrawing it, you felt it was necessary to issue a second subpoena commanding the Secretary to appear on May 29. This second subpoena was issued despite the Department having expressed a desire to accommodate your Committee’s interests and, like the first, it arrived while the Secretary was traveling overseas representing the United States on urgent national security issues and without confirming the Secretary’s availability on that date. We continue to want to find a way to meet the Committee’s interests, even though a new Select Committee has consolidated the responsibility for oversight of Benghazi.

Unfortunately, the Secretary’s schedule will not permit him to appear before the Committee on May 29. He will be fully occupied with critical diplomatic engagements following the May 25 presidential elections in Ukraine. He will also be engaged in important bilateral and multilateral meetings in preparation for overseas travel, including the NATO ministerial in Brussels in early June, a Presidential visit to Poland focused on regional security issues, and other travel in the region where our European partners are engaged with the U.S. on difficult issues from Syria to Libya.

As we have previously communicated to the Committee, we believe there are witnesses better suited to answer questions regarding the Department’s response to Congressional investigations of the Benghazi attacks. However, in the interest of

The Honorable

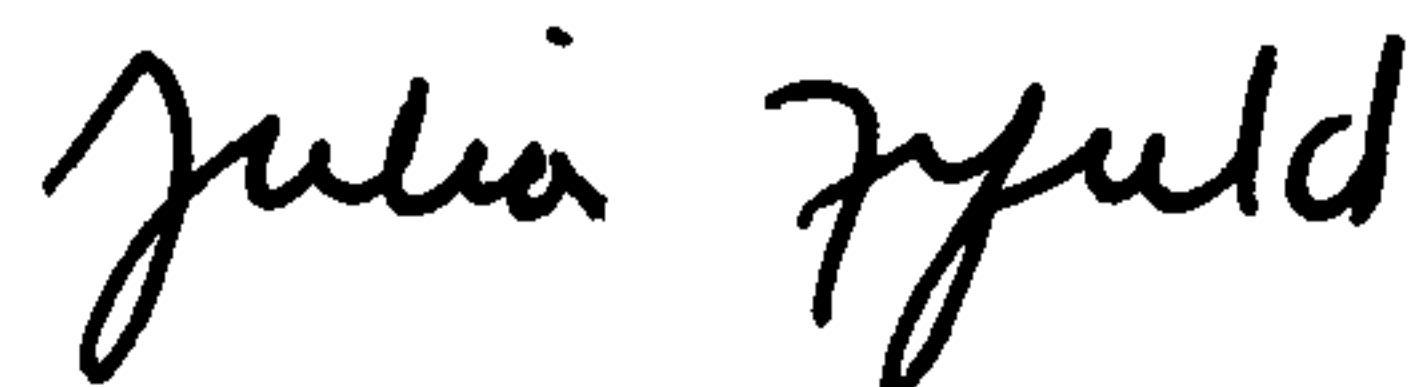
Darrell E. Issa, Chairman,

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform,

House of Representatives.

accommodation and to resolve once and for all any outstanding, relevant questions, the Secretary is prepared to appear before the Committee on June 12 or June 20. In doing so, we believe this would remove any need for the Secretary to appear before the Select Committee to answer additional questions. Given this, we ask that the Committee withdraw its subpoena for May 29 and work with the Department to find a more appropriate hearing date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia Frifield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julia Frifield
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

cc: John A. Boehner, Speaker
cc: Nancy Pelosi
cc: Elijah E. Cummings
cc: Trey Gowdy