

Dear Mr. Danilow,

Thank you for taking the time to contact me to express your concerns regarding the United States' policy toward the terrorist group known as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the danger it poses to our country.

ISIL represents quite possibly the most dangerous terrorist threat that the United States has ever faced. Originally an offshoot of Al Qaeda, ISIL has made clear its intention to establish an Islamic Caliphate throughout the Middle East. In recent months, ISIL has expanded the territory it controls in Iraq and Syria to encompass large swaths of the two countries. ISIL militants have committed horrific atrocities killing and terrorizing thousands of innocent civilians. ISIL has shamelessly displayed its brutal atrocities through social media, proudly demonstrating its barbarism to the world.

ISIL poses a clear threat not only to the Middle East but also to our own people. The danger that ISIL poses to the United States was clearly demonstrated with the brutal decapitations of American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff by ISIL militants. These cowardly acts of violence showed that ISIL has no qualms with targeting Americans. ISIL has pledged to launch attacks beyond territory it currently controls against the U.S. and its allies. They have demonstrated their ability to raise sizable funds through oil revenue and kidnappings, as well as attract thousands of foreign fighters, even some Americans, to join them. These factors make the threat of ISIL impossible for our country to ignore.

The United States should not underestimate the threat ISIL poses to the American people, and we must take decisive action to protect both American interests and the U.S. homeland. The use of airstrikes to degrade ISIL's capabilities in both Iraq and Syria is welcome. However more must also be done to support vetted opposition on the ground in Syria. I support arming the Free Syrian Army and other moderate opposition groups that have been fighting against ISIL and President Bashar Assad in Syria. These measures are imperative if the United States is committed to achieving its goal of ending the threat of ISIL to our nation and our allies. This will not be a short or easy victory, but it is absolutely vital that the U.S. and coalition partners defeat these radical Islamic terrorists.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, I will keep your thoughts in mind as my colleagues and I continue to consider this matter. I will work diligently to ensure the United States remains a safe and prosperous nation.

Sincerely,

Marco Rubio
United States Senator