



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

September 12, 2012

The Honorable Leon Panetta:
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

CC: Bedford County Board of Commissioners
Anthony Holt, Sumner County Executive
Mayor Jo Ann Graves, City of Gallatin

Dear Secretary Panetta:

I write to you asking your full support and action in ensuring that the remains of 11 U.S. soldiers who fought in the Battle of Monterrey, Mexico in 1846 be returned home to Tennessee for proper burial.

During archaeological excavations between 1995 and 2011, Mexico's Institute of National Anthropology and History discovered the bodies of Tennessee Volunteers from General Zachary Taylor's army who fought proudly in the Mexican-American War. The skeletal remains are currently being held by the Mexican government in Mexico City. My hope is that with your assistance, these brave Tennesseans are returned in a timely fashion and properly buried at the Mexican War Memorial in the Gallatin City Cemetery in Gallatin, Tennessee.

I have been working with various stakeholders to make this a reality. We have contacted and requested support from the Army, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, State Department and DoD's Defense Prisoner of War Missing Personnel Office.

My staff and I will do whatever is required to see these soldiers returned to Tennessee. Having heard from many constituents, local journalists and historians about the discovery and desire to see the Tennessee Volunteers brought home, it is our hope that this issue is resolved as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important issue. I await your response with further suggestions and instructions to ensure we bring these men home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diane Black".

Diane Black
Member of Congress