



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

OCT 29 2012

The Honorable Diane Black
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Black:

Thank you for your September 12, 2012 letter regarding the suspected remains of 11 Americans, who died while fighting in the Battle of Monterrey during the Mexican-American War. I appreciate your efforts in this matter as well as your mission to have the remains of these Soldiers returned to American soil.

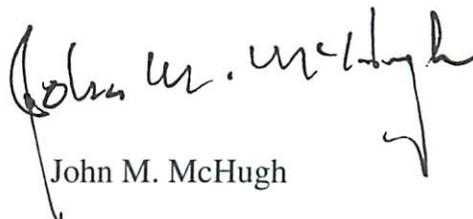
Currently, this is an evolving matter between the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City and the Mexican government; the two parties are diligently working to determine how to proceed under these unique circumstances. The Department of Defense (DoD) is prepared to support whatever decision is reached by the Mexican government, be that providing on-site assistance or receiving the unilateral repatriation of remains. I note there is no guarantee that the Mexican government will agree to return the remains to the U.S. Government.

In the event the remains are turned over to the DoD, the Joint Prisoners of War, Missing in Action Accounting Command (JPAC) is prepared to transport the remains to Hawaii for possible identification. Given the age and lack of detailed information regarding the conflict, identification of the remains may not be possible. For any remains that cannot be identified, the Army is prepared to inter those remains at the Arlington National Cemetery.

The final decision rests with the Mexican government. Communications with Mexico are being worked through U.S. State Department representatives in Mexico City. Specific inquiries concerning the status of those communications should be directed to the Department of State.

I hope this information is helpful. Rest assured that we are committed to the solemn mission of accounting for all of our service members. Thank you for your support of our Soldiers, Families and Veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John M. McHugh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

John M. McHugh