



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

**Pat Quinn**  
GOVERNOR

September 30, 2009

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates  
The Pentagon  
Washington DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Gates:

I am writing you today as the Commander of the Illinois National Guard, which recently had roughly 3,400 heroic men and women serving our country with distinction in Afghanistan and Iraq. These Illinois citizen soldiers in Afghanistan, who trained and mentored forces of the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police, were part of the largest overseas deployment of the Illinois National Guard since World War II. Unfortunately, 18 soldiers from the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team made the ultimate sacrifice in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and that sacrifice will never be forgotten.

As you're well aware, all of our soldiers from all 50 states are exhibiting tremendous bravery and making incredible strides in very challenging environments. In July, thanks to your Department's very kind invitation, I traveled to Afghanistan and Iraq to visit our Illinois soldiers and was amazed by their efforts to ensure the safety and security of the men, women and children in these countries.

It must be our top priority to provide all of our soldiers in combat zones with the best possible protective gear. We owe it to them and to their families. But I was concerned to learn about a recent decision by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) related to the purchasing of this vital equipment.

Infrastructure Defense Technologies (IDT), which is based in Belvidere, IL, is protesting a contract awarded by the DLA for critical military force protection equipment to the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The 18-month competitive bidding process was for Expeditionary Earth Filled Protective Barriers (Solicitation SPM8E6-08-R-0061), which provide perimeter security against threats such as bullets, rocket propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices, at U.S. military bases in Iraq and Afghanistan.

IDT has highlighted that the terms of the solicitation clearly stated that technical factors were significantly more important than cost. Even though IDT's product had DLA's highest technical rating, it awarded the contract to a foreign company that offered a lower price for the first year of the contract. But, after factoring in cost over the life cycle of the contract, IDT strongly believes its bid would deliver a superior product and save taxpayers' money. In fact, the U.S. Air Force's Memorandum of Record showed that IDT's product would cost **58%** less over a five-year period compared to the winning bid.

As Governor of Illinois, I work tirelessly to help companies such as IDT expand and create new jobs, which certainly would've happened if it had received this contract in a part of our state that desperately needs both. But I wouldn't ask DLA to revisit this decision based on the Illinois economy. I just want to ensure the appropriate contracting rules and regulations were followed when making this decision. I know Senator Durbin and Congressman Manzullo also have recently written your Department about this issue as well.

We all realize our country's mothers and fathers, daughters and sons, and sisters and brothers are putting their lives on the line in very dangerous places everyday, and everyone wants to be able to safely reunite them with their families as quickly as possible.

I appreciate your attention on this matter, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Quinn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "P" and "Q".

Pat Quinn  
Governor