Dear Senator Vitter,

I represent a group of your constituents concerned about the White House’s proceedings involving the death of Anwar al-Awlaki, the United States’ drone policy, and the safety of the American people.

President Obama’s executive order commanding al-Awlaki’s violent demise via drones was highly illegal. Although we support the presidential administration’s intentions of removing threats against our country, we do not support his methods. As an American citizen, al-Awlaki maintained the right to a trial by jury and a defense for himself. Killing this man with a drone denied this Constitutional right. Do these actions imply that the United States treats its citizens with less respect, based on where those citizens live? What is preventing the government from repeating this behavior at home if they are so willing to execute this plan on foreign soil? Nevertheless, this order’s most serious infringement is the death of al-Awlaki’s son. The United States government murdered one of its country’s minors because of his association with his father.

Every person has a right to live. The United States’ laws focus on the basic rights and freedoms each citizen possesses. These rights extend to all Americans, even if these citizens live in foreign countries. The United States cannot abandon these principles of freedoms under extreme circumstances, or there would be no reason to have principles at all. The United States government killed al-Awlaki and his son, making our government leaders hypocrites because our usage of drones does not reflect who we are as a nation. Our claim as a nation of equality cannot be supported if the rights of all citizens are not valued equally.

We also have suggestions to modify the United States drone policy, to stop such offensive actions. To prevent collateral damage, the United States could have closely monitored al-Awlaki, and then sent in soldiers to arrest him at an optimal time when he was unaccompanied. Sending United States troops into Yemen to collect a criminal cannot possibly be more drastic than flying a drone over the heads of Yemen’s citizens. Had troops apprehended al-Awlaki he would be forced to stand trial for his crimes, whereas his execution has provided his followers with a martyr for his cause.

Our final concern is the American people’s opinion on this matter. Americans may not feel safe in their own homes knowing that their government violated one of its citizen’s rights. The government was willing to exterminate an American. Will this not cause protests and possibly even riots? The Constitution is what protects this country as a democracy by preserving the rights of its people. If the government defied the Constitution this time, there is no way to predict if they will try again.

Senator Vitter, we beg for action. We need the security of knowing that the government will not infringe upon our rights. We must know that Americans overseas are still regarded as Americans. Finally, we beg for an investigation for the legality of killing al- Awlaki and his son.