

ES/41986

May 31, 2012

Dear Chairwoman Shapiro,

We, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders of Foothills School of Arts and Sciences in Boise, Idaho, are writing in concern over the dire situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over 5 million people have died there from war-related causes since 1996. It is the largest human rights tragedy since WWII. Rebel militias fight to control Congo's mines which are rich in mineral resources. These armed groups use rape, mutilation, and murder to intimidate civilians and control the mines. Profits gained by the rebel groups from stealing these conflict minerals fund more horrific violence. Our school, Foothills, has a sister school called Nkokwe in the North Kivu region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nkokwe students and their families have had to flee their school and villages in the past to escape violence and the situation continues to be unstable and dangerous in their region. As of the writing of this letter there is shelling in their area and we are very concerned for their well-being. We want to do everything we can to help them have a safe environment in which to live and learn.

We are writing to you because legislation has been passed, Section 1502 in the Dodd-Frank Act, that would make it much more difficult for these rebel groups to make money by selling conflict minerals. Without these profits rebel groups will have a much harder time continuing their violent activities. However, we are frustrated that these rules are being held up and watered down in the Security and Exchange Commission. Some people are even calling for the Section 1502 to be repealed because it causes extra expense to American companies. The electronics companies in question are some of the most profitable and innovative in our nation. We are confident that they can afford to support human rights and figure out how to make this process work, even in the very complex situation presented in the DRC. Section 1502 does not restrict any company's choice of minerals. It only demands disclosure of the source of conflict minerals in various products so that American investors and consumers can make informed decisions about what they are supporting with their dollars. We, along with many others, are very willing to pay more for electronics and jewelry that have not been funded by rape, maiming, or murder. Please support Section 1502 in its strongest form. This action will help bring peace and prosperity to the Congolese people. We can't leave them waiting. If we lived there, we would want someone to help us.

Sincerely,

6th, 7th, and 8th Graders and Teachers at Foothills School of Arts and Sciences
618 S. 8th Street
Boise, ID 83702
(208)331-9260

The below signed are Foothills students and teachers who support the 6-31-12 letter regarding the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Thank you!

FIRST AND LAST NAME	Grade
Reed Bender	6th
Sam Care	6th
Jason Wolfe	6th
Emilie Eschbaugh	6
Alex Peterson	7
Maise Prokop	8 th
Kodi	6 th
Walter Gerber	6 th
Brooklyn Williams	6
Peyton Glover	6 th
Gav Shapiro	6 th
Asher Souin	6 th
Ryan Kramer	7 th
Mark Colofranceschi	7 th
Tully Lantzenheiser	7 th
Ali Wolfe	8 th
Lily Zimmer	8 th
Jana Pitzel	6 th
Monique BeHencourt	8 th
Dannah Lard	7 th
Jessica McGinnis	teacher
Diers Lamb	teacher
Kevin Kan	teacher
Alexandra Swerblaff	6 th
Cassey Lynn Helm	6 th