

DEMOCRATS PROTECT OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS

“My single most important responsibility as President is to keep the American people safe.” – President Barack Obama, 5/21/09

Today, the House passed the National Defense Authorization Act, which provides our military the resources it needs to keep Americans safe, reaffirms our support for our service members, and eliminates waste, fraud and abuse in the contracting process. In addition, this legislation includes important provisions on U.S. treatment of detainees:

- **Prohibits transfer of Guantanamo detainees into the U.S.** until 120 days after the President provides a plan for dealing with these detainees and for mitigating possible risk. Also requires consultation with the governors.
- **Requires a report on how any reading of Miranda rights to detainees** impacts, if at all, the conduct of military operations in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, as we continue to defend our Nation from real ballistic missile threats, this legislation includes an important provision addressing missile defense:

- **Authorizes the President’s request for \$9.3 billion to boost our missile defense**, and adds \$900 million to Aegis and THAAD, specifically requested by commanders in the field to address real threats.

In recent weeks, Republicans have been trying to revive the politics of fear. However, on the topics of Guantanamo Bay, Miranda Rights, and missile defense, Democrats have again demonstrated our commitment to the safety of our nation and our policies have the support of a number of experts, including notable Republicans.

Republicans, Military Officials Support Closing Guantanamo Bay

“I think that the closure in a responsible manner...sends an important message to the world, as does the commitment of the United States to observe the Geneva Convention when it comes to the treatment of detainees.” – Gen. David Petraeus, 5/24/09

“The truth is, it’s probably one of the finest prisons in the world today, but it has a taint...The name itself is a condemnation.” – Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, 5/22/09

“[T]he prison has become a symbol throughout the world no matter what the treatment is. The harsh treatment stopped a long time ago but it’s still a symbol out there.” – Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), 6/21/09

“My goal is the same as the president and [Defense] Secretary [Robert] Gates: closing Guantanamo.” – Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), Politico, 5/22/09

“I’m hopeful we can find a pathway forward...Four-hundred thousand German prisoners were housed in the United States during World War II. ... I just don’t buy the argument that our nation cannot deal with 250.” – Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Politico, 5/22/09

Miranda Rights: Experts Set the Record Straight

“[T]here has been no policy change and no blanket instruction issued for FBI agents to Mirandize detainees overseas. For years, FBI agents have been trained to analyze whether Miranda is appropriate to use on a case-by-case basis...if prosecution in the United States may occur.” – FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III, 6/12/09

“Miranda warnings have been provided to Bagram detainees in only a small handful of cases out of more than 4,000 individuals detained and interrogated by the FBI...Several of these Mirandized interviews in Afghanistan took place before Jan. 20, 2009.’ In case anybody missed it, that would be before President Obama was sworn in.” – Justice Department spokesman Dean Boyd, 6/19/09

Democrats Take Action to Address Missile Threats

“I think we are in a good position [on missile defense], should it become necessary to protect American territory.” – Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, 6/18/09

“For too many years we have not taken a balanced approach to missile defense...We have spent far too much money on programs that do not protect us from the threats that truly exist. Democrats support a missile defense system that actually works and will keep Americans safe. Today’s legislation accomplishes that goal.” – Chairman Ike Skelton (D-MO), 6/16/09

“The committee’s bill authorizes \$9.3 billion for the missile defense programs that provide needed capabilities to counter the real ballistic missile threats to the United States, our deployed forces, and our friends and allies...According to testimony from senior defense and intelligence officials, in the near term, North Korea could launch no more than one or two long-range ballistic missiles at the United States at any one time.” – Democratic Members of the House Armed Services Committee: Reps. Tauscher, Skelton, Spratt, Snyder, Sanchez, Andrews, Langevin, Larsen, Bordallo, Shea-Porter, Sestak, and Kissell, 6/23/09

President Won’t Release Detainee Photos

On a related national security issue, which is not dealt with in today’s bill, President Obama has made his policy clear in the face of Republican criticism:

“I will continue to take every legal and administrative remedy available to me to ensure the DoD detainee photographs are not released. Should a legislative solution prove necessary, I am committed to working with Congress to enact legislation that achieves the objectives we share.”
– President Barack Obama, 6/11/09