



U.S. Rep. Jane Harman
Ranking Democrat, House Permanent
Select Committee on Intelligence

PRESS STATEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HARMAN: THIS IS STRONGEST INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION IN RECENT MEMORY

~ Supports a broader public bipartisan inquiry into detention policies ~

WASHINGTON D.C. ---- Rep. Jane Harman (D-Venice) today delivered the following statement in support of The Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006:

“I rise in support of HR 2475, the strongest intelligence authorization bill to emerge from the House Intelligence Committee in recent memory.

“Without the funding authorization in this bill, the brave men and women of the Intelligence Community would not be able to do their jobs, which are so vital to the defense of our country. I have visited these intelligence professionals in some of the most austere places in the world -- and they deserve our gratitude and support.

“I want to thank Chairman Hoekstra and all the members of our Committee for their bipartisanship and hard work.

“In April 2004, all nine Democrats on the Intelligence Committee introduced legislation which became the basis for the 9/11 Commission’s recommendations and the Intelligence Reform legislation passed by Congress last fall.

“That reform dramatically reshaped our intelligence community, unifying all 15 agencies under the leadership of a Director of National Intelligence. This year’s intelligence authorization bill authorizes funds for his office.

“The DNI must succeed in his job – and he deserves our support. He is responsible for ensuring that intelligence is timely, accurate and actionable. To do this, he needs authority to build and execute budgets and move personnel – so I’m pleased that we removed a provision in this bill that would have severely eroded the DNI’s authority to move personnel around the Intelligence Community.

“In the fight against terrorists, intelligence is the “tip of the spear.” Some see this fight as a traditional “war” – requiring war-time emergency budgets and war-time authorities for the President. That was the right approach immediately after 9/11. We fought a war in Afghanistan, and achieved an impressive victory.

“But, the terrorist threat changed. Today, we no longer face a centralized top-down terrorist organization operating out of one country. We face a network of loosely-affiliated terrorist groups which operate as franchises around the world. That’s why I believe we are living in an “Era of Terror.”

“This legislation does some good things to help us achieve victory in an “Era of Terror.”

“First, it ends our reliance on emergency supplemental budgets for counterterrorism. The budget the President sent to Congress funded less than 40% of the Intelligence Community counterterrorism requirements, leaving the rest for emergency supplementals. Supplemental budgeting prevents our intelligence officers from planning operations. Our Committee fixed this problem on a bipartisan basis – and we are now authorizing what we hope will be 100% funding for counterterrorism for 2006.

“Second, this legislation incorporates a Resolution introduced by all 9 Democrats on the Committee urging the new DNI to establish a multi-tier security clearance system to allow patriotic Americans with relatives in foreign countries to obtain security clearances and serve our nation.

“This will help us field officers who can speak the languages and blend in with terrorist groups, penetrate proliferation networks, and recruit spies against the toughest targets, like Iran and North Korea.

“Victory in an Era of Terror will not be achieved by military might alone. Victory will require America to “win the argument” ... for the hearts and minds of the next generation in the Arab and Muslim world. I fear that we are losing that argument.

“The ongoing revelations about abuses at Guantanamo Bay undermine our ability to maintain the moral high ground and be seen as a beacon of democracy and human rights.

“I’m encouraged that our Committee’s new Oversight Subcommittee is investigating abuses that have occurred in our interrogation and detention programs within the Intelligence Community. This is a serious, bipartisan investigation.

“But I also support a broader public bipartisan inquiry into detention policies across the government – so that our efforts to fight the terrorists don’t become a moral black eye for America that undermines our security.

“One area where this legislation can be improved is in its approach to technical systems. The details of these systems are classified and cannot be discussed openly. But I am concerned that we have made sudden, drastic cuts to certain programs that may lead to a gap in our intelligence capabilities and erode the industrial base needed to develop critical capabilities in the future. I am committed to addressing this problem as this bill moves to conference.

“Overall, Mr. Chairman, This is strong legislation that puts us on the right track to achieve victory in an Era of Terror. There’s more – much more – we must do, and we will. The brave men and women of the Intelligence Community deserve nothing less.”

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