



June 15, 2016

Vote to Stop H.R. 5293, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017, from Hindering the Closure of the Guantanamo Detention Facility and Ending Indefinite Detention without Charge or Trial

Vote “NO” on Pompeo Amendment 34, Lamborn Amendment 29, and Hudson Amendment 28

Vote “NO” on Final Passage if the Guantanamo Restrictions Remain in the Bill

Dear Representative:

The undersigned human rights, civil liberties, national security, and religious organizations strongly urge you to vote “NO” on the following amendments to H.R. 5293, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017: Pompeo amendment 34, Lamborn amendment 29, and Hudson amendment 28. The harmful and unwarranted transfer restrictions in the current version of the bill, along with the amendments, will make closing the Guantanamo detention facility much more difficult and continue the practice of indefinite detention without charge or trial. If the Guantanamo restrictions remain in the bill, we urge you to vote “NO” on final passage.

The Obama administration, in its Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) issued this week, included the Guantanamo transfer restrictions as part of its veto threat, stating that “if the President were presented with H.R. 5293, the President’s senior advisors would recommend he veto the bill.” The SAP characterizes the Guantanamo transfer restrictions in the bill as “unwarranted,” “weaken[ing] our national security by draining resources, damaging our relationships with key allies and partners, and emboldening violent extremists;” and in some circumstances, “violat[ing] constitutional separation of powers principles.”

Vote “NO” on the Pompeo amendment, which would prohibit funds to pay for the salaries and expenses for the offices of the Special Envoy for Guantanamo Detention Closure. These offices play a critical role in closing Guantanamo by ensuring the safe transfer of cleared detainees.

Vote “NO” on the Lamborn amendment, which would prohibit the use of funds to survey, assess, or review potential detention locations in the U.S. Given the broad language of the amendment, it could conceivably cover even the inspection of federal courthouses to try detainees.

Vote “NO” on the Hudson amendment, which would entirely prohibit the use of funds to transfer detainees from Guantanamo. This provision would even bar the transfer of the 30 detainees who have already been cleared for transfer by a rigorous process.

The transfer restrictions in the bill, along with the Pompeo, Lamborn, and Hudson amendments, would further the inhumane continued and indefinite detention of men at Guantanamo Bay, squander scarce resources, and—according to top national security officials under both the Bush and Obama administrations—make us less safe. We urge you to vote “NO” on this bill if the onerous Guantanamo provisions are not fixed.

Thank you for your attention to this issue, and please call on any of us with any questions.

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union
Amnesty International USA
Appeal for Justice
The Center for Victims of Torture
The Constitution Project
Council on American-Islamic Relations
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
National Religious Campaign Against Torture
Physicians for Human Rights
Win Without War