

U.S. House of Representatives Passes Revised Defense Bill Preventing Obama from Closing Guantanamo



Washington, November 6 (RHC)-- The U.S. House of Representatives has overwhelmingly passed a \$607 billion defense bill that hampers efforts to close the notorious Guantanamo Bay military prison.

The vote was 370-58 for the National Defense Authorization Act on Thursday that was vetoed by President Barack Obama last month. Obama said on October 22nd after vetoing the bill that it resorted to budget "gimmicks," and wastes money on unnecessary programs and prevents the closure of Guantanamo prison.

The revised bill contains stiff restrictions on transfers of prisoners from the Guantanamo prison at the U.S. naval base on illegally occupied Cuban territory. House Speaker Paul Ryan said inmates held at the military prison should remain at the facility. The bill also includes \$5 billion in spending cuts that were not contained in the previous version.

The U.S. Senate is expected to vote on the measure as soon as next week. The White House said Barack Obama remains opposed to provisions that hinder his ability to transfer the remaining 112 detainees out of Guantanamo and move them to other countries.

Obama had promised to close the Guantanamo Bay prison before his election in 2008, citing its damage to the U.S. reputation abroad. But Obama later dropped his campaign promise due to stiff opposition from Congress.

As many as 775 detainees have been brought to the Guantanamo Bay prison, which was set up after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Washington says the prisoners are terror suspects, but has not pressed charges against most of them in any court. Many detainees have been on hunger strike for months to draw attention to their conditions at the US military prison.

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