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GEORGE W. BUSH

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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
October 17, 2006

Fact Sheet: The Military Commissions Act of 2006

 [President Bush Signs Military Commissions Act of 2006](#)

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"It is a rare occasion when a President can sign a bill he knows will save American lives. I have that privilege this morning. The Military Commissions Act of 2006 is one of the most important pieces of legislation in the War on Terror. ... And now, in memory of the victims of September the 11th, it is my honor to sign the Military Commissions Act of 2006 into law."

- President George W. Bush, 10/17/06

Today, The President Signed The Military Commissions Act Of 2006, Which Will Preserve The Tools Needed To Help Save American Lives. This bill will allow the CIA to continue its program for questioning key terrorist leaders and operatives like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed - the man believed to be the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. This program has been one of the most successful intelligence efforts in American history, and the Military Commissions Act will ensure that we can continue using this vital tool to protect the American people for years to come. With this bill, America reaffirms our determination to win the War on Terror.

The Military Commissions Act Will Also Allow Us To Prosecute Captured Terrorists For War Crimes Through Full And Fair Trials. With this legislation, those believed to have orchestrated the murder of nearly 3,000 innocent people on 9/11 will face justice. We will also seek to prosecute those believed to be responsible for the attack on the USS Cole and an operative believed to have been involved in the bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

The Military Commissions Act Will Allow The CIA To Continue Its Program For Questioning Terrorists

When The President Proposed This Legislation, He Explained That His One Test For The Bill Congress Produced Would Be Whether It Would Allow The CIA Program To Continue - And This Bill Meets That Test. It allows for the clarity our intelligence professionals need to continue questioning terrorists and saving lives. This bill:

- Provides legal protections that ensure our military and intelligence personnel will not have to

- fear lawsuits filed by terrorists simply for doing their jobs;
- Spells out specific, recognizable offenses that would be considered crimes in the handling of detainees - so that our men and women who question captured terrorists can perform their duties to the fullest extent of the law; and
- Complies with both the spirit and the letter of our international obligations.

The CIA Program Has Saved American Lives

Were It Not For This Program, Our Intelligence Community Believes Al-Qaeda And Its Allies Would Have Succeeded In Attacking The American Homeland Again. Information from terrorists in CIA custody has played a role in the capture or questioning of nearly every senior al-Qaeda member or associate detained by the United States and its allies since this program began. The CIA program helped us:

- Gain vital intelligence from Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi bin al Shibh - two of the men believed to have helped plan and facilitate the 9/11 attacks;
- Break up a cell of 17 Southeast Asian terrorist operatives being groomed for attacks inside the United States;
- Uncover key operatives in al-Qaeda's biological weapons program - including a cell developing anthrax to be used in terrorist attacks;
- Identify terrorists who were sent to case targets inside the United States - including financial buildings in major cities along the East Coast; and
- Stop a planned strike on U.S. Marines in Djibouti, a planned attack on the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, and a plot to hijack passenger planes and fly them into Heathrow Airport and Canary Wharf in London.

The Military Commissions Authorized By This Legislation Are Lawful, Fair, And Necessary

With The Military Commissions Act, The Legislative And Executive Branches Have Agreed On A System That Meets Our National Security Needs. In the months after 9/11, the President authorized a system of military commissions to try foreign terrorists accused of war crimes. These commissions were similar to those used for trying enemy combatants in the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and World War II. After the legality of this system was challenged and the Supreme Court ruled that military commissions need explicit authorization by Congress, the President asked Congress for that authority - and Congress provided it.

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