

**Washington, D.C.** - The U.S. House of Representatives today enacted a series of new measures to rein in the government's use of private security contractors as part of its annual bill to authorize Department of Defense operations. Congressman David Price (D-NC) strongly applauded the measures, several of which closely parallel legislation authored by Price in the 111th Congress.

"Contractors need to be accountable, and that means more transparency is necessary," Congressman Price said. "We need to ensure that contractors operate within the bounds of the law and that sensitive operations like the interrogation of detainees are conducted by our military."

The North Carolina congressman has been at the forefront of congressional efforts to promote greater transparency and accountability in the government's use of private security contractors, which has expanded dramatically in recent years. Federal laws and regulations have failed to keep pace with this expanded use, and the consequences of this legal vacuum have been evident in a series of high-profile incidents involving contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the 111th Congress, Price has sponsored two major contractor reform bills: the Transparency and Accountability in Security Contracting Act (H.R. 2177), which would establish a comprehensive set of rules and procedures governing U.S. contractors throughout the world; and the Transparency and Accountability in Intelligence Contracting Act (H.R. 963), which pertains specifically to the operations of intelligence contractors. He will soon be introducing an updated version of his legislation to extend U.S. legal jurisdiction to contractors overseas, an earlier version of which was approved by the House in 2007 by a large bipartisan majority.

The FY 2010 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2647) would build upon these efforts by establishing new safeguards against the outsourcing of governmental functions, enhancing the Pentagon's ability to deny contracts to companies with rogue employees, and prohibiting contractors from performing certain sensitive activities. Specifically, the bill will:

- Prohibit the interrogation of detainees by contractors. Both of Price's contractor reform bills, as well as his Interrogation and Detention Reform Act (H.R. 591) contain a similar prohibition.

## PRICE APPLAUDS CONTRACTOR REFORMS IN DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

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- Require better recordkeeping on contractors. The bill would require the Department of Defense to include information in its annual budget request about the amount being requested for contract services and the number of contractors employed.
  
- Authorize the Department of Defense to deny contracts to companies found to jeopardize the health or safety of government personnel.

"This is an important next step in this effort," Rep. Price said, "but in the end what is needed is a comprehensive solution that applies to all U.S. contractors overseas, regardless of where or for whom they work. I am committed to moving forward on this issue, and I look forward to advancing my own stand-alone, comprehensive legislation later this Congress."

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