

Washington, D.C. - The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence last night passed an amendment authored by U.S. Rep. David Price (D-NC) to H.R. 2701, the fiscal year 2010 Intelligence Authorization bill. The amendment was offered during the committee mark up of H.R. 2701 by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), chair of the House Intelligence Subcommittee on Terrorism/HUMINT, Analysis, and Counterintelligence.

Rep. Price has taken a leading role in Congress to reform and improve our human intelligence capabilities and to prohibit the conduct of interrogations from being contracted out to private firms. The Thompson-Price amendment would require the Director of Intelligence to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the state of interrogation training, analysis, and research and report to Congress on any shortcomings. The amendment stems from comprehensive reform legislation introduced in February by Rep. Price, Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), and other cosponsors.

"The current debate over what constitutes torture is obviously of great moral importance, but there are significant practical questions as well," said Rep. Price. "We must determine what interrogation practices are effective, how best to train our interrogators, and how to avoid any tactics that do not represent the fundamental values of America."

Intended to be an annual reauthorization, H.R. 2701 would specifically authorize all intelligence activities by the Department of Defense and other intelligence agencies for the upcoming year. It is hoped that the new administration of President Obama and larger Democratic majority in the Senate will allow H.R. 2701 to be the first annual intelligence reauthorization actually signed into law since fiscal year 2005.

The full text of the amendment is copied below.

REPORT ON INTERROGATION RESEARCH AND TRAINING.

(a) Requirement for Report- Not later than December 31, 2009, the Director of National Intelligence, in coordination with the heads of the relevant elements of the intelligence community, shall submit to the congressional intelligence and appropriations committees a

report on the state of research, analysis, and training regarding interrogation and debriefing practices.

(b) Content- The report required by subsection (a) shall address—

(1) the quality and value of scientific and technical research into interrogation and debriefing practices that has been conducted by institutions or individuals both independently and in affiliation with the U.S. Government, and the identification of areas in which additional research could potentially improve interrogation practices;

(2) the state of interrogation and debriefing training in the intelligence community, including the character and adequacy of the ethical component of such training, and the identification of any gaps in training;

(3) the adequacy of efforts to enhance career path options for intelligence community interrogators and debriefers, including efforts to recruit and retain career personnel; and

(4) the effectiveness of existing processes for studying and implementing lessons learned and best practices regarding interrogation and debriefing; and

(5) recommendations for improving the intelligence community's performance regarding the issues described in paragraphs (1) through (4).