

Statement on the Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006

December 30, 2005

The Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006 provides funds for our troops who are fighting the war on terror in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. This funding will help us continue to hunt down the terrorists, pursue our strategy for victory in Iraq, and make America more secure. In addition, it provides resources to help citizens of the Gulf States recover from devastating hurricanes, and helps protect Americans from a potential influenza pandemic.

The legislation also addresses the legal framework for U.S. detention and interrogation activities. The detention and interrogation of captured terrorists are critical tools in the war on terror. It is vital that our government gather intelligence to protect the American people from terrorist attacks, including critical information that may be obtained from those terrorists we have captured. At the same time, the Administration is committed to treating all detainees held by the United States in a manner consistent with our Constitution, laws, and treaty obligations, which reflect the values we hold dear. U.S. law and policy already prohibit torture. Our policy has also been not to use cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, at home or abroad. This legislation now makes that a matter of statute for practices abroad. It also requires that the Defense Department's treatment of detainees be codified in the U.S. Army Field Manual.

These provisions reaffirm the values we share as a Nation and our commitment to the rule of law. As the sponsors of this legislation have stated, however, they do not create or authorize any right for terrorists to sue anyone, including our men and women on the front lines in the war on terror. These men and women deserve our respect and thanks for doing a difficult job in the interest of our country, not a rash of lawsuits brought by our enemies in our own courts. Far from

authorizing such suits, this law provides additional liability protection for those engaged in properly authorized detention or interrogation of terrorists. I am pleased that the law also makes provision for providing legal counsel to and compensating our service members and other U.S. Government personnel for legal expenses in the event a terrorist attempts to sue them, in our courts or in foreign courts. I also appreciate the legislation's elimination of the hundreds of claims brought by terrorists at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, that challenge many different aspects of their detention and that are now pending in our courts.

I will continue to work with the Congress to ensure that the United States can effectively fight the war on terror while upholding its commitment to the rule of law.

George W. Bush

The White House,
December 30, 2005.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006

December 30, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 3010, the "Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006." This Act appropriates funds for key domestic programs, including programs to protect America's workers, help educate America's youth, and guard Americans against potential bioterrorism or epidemics.

The executive branch shall construe certain provisions of the Act that purport to require congressional committee approval for the execution of a law as calling solely for notification, as any other construction would be inconsistent with the constitutional principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in *INS v. Chadha*. These