

Ted Cruz Tears Into President Obama's Detainee Plans

Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz released the following statement Tuesday afternoon in response to President Obama's announced plan to close the Camp Delta detention facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base:

"We have to stop the president's blind pursuit of politically correct progressive ideals that are damaging our country. We do not have to bring terrorists to our shores to prove how enlightened we are. The fact is that GTMO is an indispensable detention facility for radical Islamists who wanted to kill us before 9/11, who tried to kill us on 9/11, and who will go back to trying to kill us if we release them or bring them here. Just last week there were media reports that Ibrahim al Qosi, an inmate released by the Obama administration in 2012 to Sudan, has taken up arms again as a top al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula commander. We have to stop giving these terrorists additional opportunities to wage jihad against us.

"It is laughable to think that the most spendthrift president in our history has suddenly become a fiscal conservative over the money we spend to detain the worst of the worst at the Guantanamo Bay detention center. Make no mistake: He's not doing this to save taxpayer dollars. He's doing this to satisfy his far-left-wing base who won't even utter the term 'radical Islamic terrorism,' let alone admit it is a problem.

"GTMO is not a bargaining chip the president can use in his dangerous game of rapprochement with Fidel and Raul Castro. It has been a key American strategic asset for more than a century. The detention facility is only the most recent of a series of vital functions it has filled, and it is a necessary tool that we should be using to protect our country. As President Reagan famously said of the Panama Canal, we built

it, we paid for it, it's ours, and we're going to keep it. We cannot allow President Obama to abandon it simply to pursue his foolhardy ideological fantasies. Our commander in chief has abandoned his duty to safeguard our homeland. Congress must now do what is necessary to keep the American people safe."

Sen. Cruz has introduced or supported the following legislative efforts to prevent the closing of the Guantanamo Bay detention center:

- Sen. Cruz introduced legislation (S. 2510) in 2014 to temporarily ban the transfer of detainees until the details of the Taliban 5 transfer were explained. The bill would also have required each transfer receive the personal approval of the President, instead of delegating responsibility for national security and detainee recidivism to the Secretary of Defense.
- Sen. Cruz introduced an amendment to the FY2016 National Defense Authorization Act that would have prohibited the transfer of detainees to those countries which the State Department deems unsafe for American citizens and are therefore issued travel warnings. There were exceptions to this for travel warnings that were issued for medical, natural disaster or criminal reasons.
- Sen. Cruz introduced an amendment to the FY2014 National Defense Authorization Act to authorize the Department of Defense to transport medical supplies and required personnel to GTMO for any medical care. While this amendment did not pass, it further demonstrated Sen. Cruz's commitment to keep detainees at GTMO.
- Sen. Cruz is also a cosponsor of S. 165 – the Detaining Terrorist to Protect America Act of 2015, and was a cosponsor to a FY2016 amendment by Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.) to prohibit the transfer of detainees to Yemen which was adopted in the final Defense Authorization Act of 2016.

Additionally, Cruz opposed the release of detainees from GTMO in:

- A June 9, 2014 floor speech opposing on Cruz legislation regarding Prohibition on Transfer of GTMO Detainees;
- A June 18, 2014 letter to Majority Leader Harry Reid;
- A June 19, 2014 letter to President Obama;
- An op-ed titled “President Obama, How Does Releasing Terrorists Make Us Safer?”