



H.R. 1678 – Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2007

Floor Situation

H.R. 1687 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. The bill was introduced by Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) on March 26, 2007. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs approved H.R. 1678 by voice vote on March 27, 2007.

The bill is expected to be considered on the floor on April 25, 2007.

**Note: During the 109th Congress, the House of Representatives passed similar legislation (H.R. 2017) reauthorizing torture victims relief for two years, FY2006 and FY2007. It was signed into law (P.L. 109-165) by President Bush on January 10, 2006.*

Summary

H.R. 1678:

- Reauthorizes funding for domestic and international programs and centers specializing in treating the victims of torture for FY2008 and FY2009.
- Provides the following authorization levels:
 - \$25 million for each of the fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for Department of Health and Human Services in support of domestic treatment centers.
 - \$12 million for each of the fiscal years 2008 and 2009 in support of international treatment centers and programs.
 - \$12 million for each of the fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

Background

H.R. 1678 supports domestic and international programs that treat the physical and psychological effects of torture as well as programs that provide social and legal services for the victims of torture. The United States has joined 141 other nations in ratifying the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

While the authorization levels for HHS and the international treatment centers are equal to or less than previous years, the authorization level for the United Nations Voluntary Fund for

Victims of Torture is increased to \$12 million for both FY2008 and FY2009 from \$7 million for FY2006 and \$8 million for FY2007.

Cost

The CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1678 would cost \$22 million in 2008 and approximately \$97 million from 2008-2012.

Staff Contact

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