

WASHINGTON, DC – The House of Representatives approved legislation today that included an amendment authored by Congressmen Earl Blumenauer (D – Ore) and Edward Markey (D – Mass.) prohibiting the use of funds for the torture of detainees in American custody and for sending detainees to countries that practice torture. The amendment was included in the final version of the Iraq emergency supplemental appropriations bill passed by the House of Representatives today.

“I am appalled by continued revelations in the media regarding the torture of detainees in American custody, over a year after reports from Abu Ghraib prison first broke,” Blumenauer said. “We must make sure that torturing of detainees never happens again. We can do that if we commit to not spending any more money on this incomprehensible practice.”

The amendment offered by Blumenauer and Markey was included in the final conference report of the \$82 billion emergency supplemental appropriations request made by President Bush earlier this year. Over 93% of the supplemental money approved would fund continued military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Blumenauer and Markey offered their amendment in the wake of recent press accounts detailing how the United States government has deliberately sent detainees to foreign countries for the purpose of torture.

Blumenauer continued, “The use of torture and rendition is morally reprehensible and puts American troops at risk by degrading the moral and legal leverage we need to prevent its use against our men and women in uniform. Furthermore, it’s an ineffective way of obtaining reliable intelligence information in our fight against terrorism. Put simply, we set back the cause of democracy through these actions.”

According to reputable media reports, the CIA and other participating agencies use a multimillion-dollar Gulfstream V jet to transfer detainees to foreign countries, a process known as rendition. This jet is registered to a shadowy – and possible illegal – dummy front company, Bayard Foreign Marketing, LLC, based in Blumenauer’s hometown of Portland, Oregon. Dummy front companies such as Bayard Foreign Marketing are used to hide the true scope and breadth of the rendition program. As a member of the House International Relations Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Blumenauer has called for a Committee investigation into the torture of detainees as part of the United States’ foreign policy.

Blumenauer Amendment Prohibiting Torture Included In Final Supplemental Appropriations

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H.R. 1268, "The Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, of 2005," is expected to be considered by the United States Senate as early as next week. If it is passed, as expected, the bill will be sent to the President for his signature.