

U.S. House Votes that Guantanamo Bay Will Not Close



Washington, May 15 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The House of Representatives rejected a proposal on Thursday to close down the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay.

The proposal aimed to make an amendment to the annual National Defense Authorization Act—which details the budget and expenditures of the U.S. Defense Department—and would provide a framework for shutting down the controversial military detention camp by 2017, The Hill reported. The proposal failed on a vote of 174-249, making it the second time an amendment to close the prison has not passed.

Current legislation dictates that Guantanamo Bay detainees can neither be transferred to nor be provided housing on U.S. soil. "We have the facilities. We have the ability to hold them safely here," stated Democrat Representative Adam Smith, author of the proposal.

For Republicans, who have been resisting the closure of the military prison since President Obama took office in 2009, the issue is said to come down to a matter of financial expenses the closure would entail. "I struggle to understand why we would close the Guantanamo Bay detention camp only to finance the incarceration of enemy combatants within the United States," Republican Representative Mike Coffman said.

Shutting down the prison of Guantanamo Bay was one of Obama's presidential campaign promises in 2008. However, almost seven years into his presidency, Obama failed to follow through on his promise citing resistance from the U.S. Republican lawmakers who oppose the closure of the prison.

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