

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 15, 2009

The Honorable Tim Kaine
Office of the Governor
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Kaine:

In January 2009, President Obama announced his decision to close the detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Few countries have responded to our government's requests to accept these detainees. In closing this facility, detainees will have to be released or housed elsewhere. Based on unbiased analysis of possible military federal holding facilities by the House Armed Services Committee in 2007, we believe there is a strong possibility that detainees housed at a facility or locality within the United States would be held in Virginia.

As the Obama Administration continues to plan on closing the Guantanamo Bay facility, we will oppose efforts to relocate Guantanamo detainees to Virginia. Many other state delegations are seeking to do the same. Relocating these detainees to Virginia will make a tempting target for those wishing us harm. We do not doubt that our security personnel are capable of protecting such facilities, though we see no justification that warrants moving a tempting target from the island nation of Cuba to a city or town in the United States, putting security personnel and citizens at risk. The relocation sites in Virginia are especially problematic as they are within minutes of military bases and ports, hospitals, nuclear power plants, our children's schools and the neighborhoods in which we live.

Federal legislation, H.R. 1638, is currently pending to prevent the federal government from housing or transferring detainees from Guantanamo to Virginia. The relocation of detainees to Virginia would increase the risk of terrorist activity, require significant security increases at those facilities, and cause unnecessary anxiety and unrest in the affected locality. We respectfully ask that you stand with us in opposition to transferring and housing any of the detainees at any locality or facility in Virginia as we make our case to Congress and the Department of Defense. We thank you in advance for considering this very important issue to Virginia.

Sincerely,






