



Greater Lansing Network Against War and Injustice

Joining Together to Challenge the Military Commissions Act of 2006

The Greater Lansing Network Against War and Injustice asks Congress to repeal and/or amend the Military Commissions Act of 2006. This Act codifies human rights violations in the United States and suspends the right of *habeas corpus*, allowing anyone to be labeled an “unlawful combatant” without judicial oversight. It endangers our troops by setting inhumane standards for the treatment of prisoners. It endangers our nation by degrading its moral standing in the world. Please join with us to ensure 1) that our representatives in Congress repeal the unconstitutional aspects of the Military Commissions Act of 2006 and 2) support legislation to ensure accountability, so that all branches of the US government follow the Geneva Conventions against torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners. **For information on local actions, go to www.glnawi.org.**

What is the Military Commissions Act of 2006?

The Military Commissions Act of 2006 became law when George W. Bush signed it on October 17, 2006. Among other provisions, the inadequate and unacceptable components of this act are outlined below:

- It gives the Executive Branch authority to label individuals as "unlawful enemy combatants," with no judicial oversight. The “unlawful enemy combatant” label can be applied to a broad range of people, including U.S. citizens and permanent residents of the United States.
- Once detained as “unlawful enemy combatants,” individuals can be imprisoned indefinitely. Any hope for a trial is left up to the Executive Branch.
- The right to challenge one’s detention is known as the right of *habeas corpus*. This concept has been recognized as a basic human right since 1215, with the English Magna Carta. The US Supreme Court upheld the constitutional right of *habeas corpus* in its recent Hamdan vs Rumsfeld decision. The Military Commissions Act of 2006 conflicts with this crucial provision of the US Constitution.

In cases where the Executive Branch permits a trial:

- Military Commissions will allow secret evidence, which defendants cannot hear or challenge. The use of secret evidence does not meet basic standards of fairness or accuracy.
- Evidence obtained through coercion will be allowed at judicial discretion. Military and intelligence professionals agree that coerced evidence is inherently flawed and can be dangerously misleading.

What is not addressed in the bill?

- While the Military Commissions Act of 2006 left language of the Geneva Convention unchanged, there is no defined process of accountability if these conventions are broken. This allows ambiguity. Our government might say it does not torture, while its policies encourage torture. There must be a process for accountability if there is to be any hope for justice.
- The practice of extraordinary rendition sends people who are suspected to be terrorists or terrorist supporters to countries outside the United States for detention and interrogation – without trial. The US has **NO** need to remove suspects to other countries for interrogation. Extraordinary rendition has generated reports of torture, permitting “torture by proxy.” Our government must take responsibility and stop extraordinary rendition.

GLNAWI promotes nonviolent solutions to international conflicts and advocates policies that promote human rights and civil liberties to ensure a just and democratic world. <http://www.glnawi.org>

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