



## *Support* H.R. 4678

# The United States Naval Station Guantanamo Bay Preservation Act

**Background:** The United States has maintained the Naval Station at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for more than a century. This base plays an important role in the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

As senior military commanders have testified, “the strategic capability provided by U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay remains essential for executing national priorities throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and South America” and “...support[s] a layered defense to secure the air and maritime approaches to the United States.” The base also played key roles in the U.S. response to two humanitarian crises in Haiti, caused by a coup in 1991 and an earthquake in 2010.

The Constitution expressly grants Congress the power to provide for the common defense, provide and maintain a Navy, and “dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.” In addition, in signing the lease for Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, President Teddy Roosevelt specifically cited an act of Congress that required “the sale or lease by Cuba to the United States of lands necessary for naval stations.” Later treaties specify that the lease shall run until the U.S. and Cuba agree to modify it or the base is abandoned.

Since seizing power, the Castro regime has consistently demanded the United States return the base to Cuba. These calls have increased since the Obama Administration’s outreach to the Castro regime and re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba.

### **This Bill:**

- Highlights the importance of U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.
- Acknowledges the key role that Congress played in establishing U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.
- Prohibits the President from returning U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay to Cuba without congressional action.