

From: Hayden Grooms
To: Danny Varat <DannyVarat@scstatehouse.gov>
Date: 2/15/2017 10:16:06 AM
Subject: RE: Clips 2-15

SENECA — U.S. Sen. Tim Scott joined Republican colleagues Monday in a letter urging President Donald Trump to keep and expand the Guantanamo Bay detention facility in Cuba. Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay, or Gitmo, houses suspected terrorists for an indefinite time. Former President George W. Bush's administration formed Gitmo after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The senators' letter encourages Trump to grow Gitmo after former President Barack Obama shrunk the number of detainees when efforts to close the detention facility failed. Scott and his colleagues consider Gitmo vital to national security.

"As we continue to engage in conflicts and combat operations around the world, the critical mission that Gitmo serves in detaining terrorists who threaten the lives of not only our servicemen, but all Americans cannot be stressed enough," said the letter, dated Feb. 9, 2017. "As you know, we cannot afford additional risk to our national security, and we are committed to working with you to strengthen and reinforce the policies that make Gitmo an invaluable asset in the fight against terrorism and defense of our nation."

The two-page letter signed by 11 Republican senators said that Congress "has continuously opposed and prohibited" closing Gitmo and transferring detainees to the U.S. Obama campaigned as a presidential candidate in 2008 on closing the facility.

"There is also no question that Guantanamo set back the moral authority that is America's strongest currency in the world," Obama said in May 2009. "Instead of building a durable framework for the struggle against al Qaeda that drew upon our deeply held values and traditions, our government was defending positions that undermined the rule of law.

"Indeed, part of the rationale for establishing Guantanamo in the first place was the misplaced notion that a prison there would be beyond the law — a proposition that the Supreme Court soundly rejected."

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that U.S. law and the Geneva Conventions made holding military war crimes trials in Gitmo illegal. And the Court rejected in 2004 Bush's claim that the president has authority to detain terrorism suspects and deny them access to courts.

Scott and his colleagues told Trump that the Obama administration showed a disregard for the safety of America and will of Congress by transferring almost 200 detainees to foreign nations. The senators cited Director of National Intelligence James Clapper's conclusion in 2015 that over 30 percent of released detainees continued terrorist activities since 2002. About 1 percent of released detainees, or 1 out of 115, continued terrorist activities after 2009, according to the director's unclassified summary report.

In addition to expanding Gitmo, the senators asked Trump to suspend and review the Periodic Review Board that the Obama administration formed in 2011 to oversee transfers. And they want to put a hold on five current detainees' transfer eligibility.

"The standard and threshold by which the PRB has made their determinations to transfer detainees ... is dangerously flawed by subjectivity and broad interpretation," the senators said. "We also encourage a full and judicious review of the PRB's role and responsibilities by examining the insufficient criteria that informs the inadequate standard and threshold to transfer Gitmo detainees."

Trump campaigned on reversing Obama's policy by increasing the number of detainees. The Associated Press reported that a Trump administration draft order on GITMO supports both expanding the facility and adding more CIA holding sites outside the U.S.

The senators praised Trump in their letter for his campaign promise.

"During your campaign and transition to the presidency, we were pleased to learn you share our perspective that enemy combatants affiliated with ISIS, al Qaeda, the Taliban or other foreign terrorist organizations captured during conflicts involving our Armed Forces should be housed at Gitmo," the letter said.

The White House said the draft order on Gitmo is unofficial.

From: Danny Varat
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 10:13 AM
To: Hayden Grooms
Subject: RE: Clips 2-15

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- Sen. Scott and 11 other senators send letter to Trump asking that he expand Guantanamo Bay
<https://upstatetoday.com/2017/02/scott-asks-trump-to-grow-gitmo/>

From: Hayden Grooms
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 10:09 AM
To: Danny Varat <DannyVarat@scstatehouse.gov>
Subject: Clips 2-15

- Rep. Joe Neal passed away last night
<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article132805919.html>

-Trump to visit Boeing Friday for the rollout of the 787-10.
<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article132646064.html>

- Article on the shifting around of money in the state budget to finance the flawed pension system
<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article132735509.html>

- Today at the statehouse. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee to take up S.131, a bill to provide a delineated list of what constitutes "disturbing schools".
<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article132819629.html>

- Sen, Tim Scott could be deciding vote on Adnrew Puzder, the nominee to secretary of labor. Puzder has a questionable history of racial discrimination.
<http://www.thestate.com/latest-news/article132742099.html>

- Southeastern Wildlife Exhibition this weekend in Charleston. The event pumps anywhere from \$35-\$65 million into the local economy every year. Coyote becoming a threat to Southeastern Wildlife.
http://www.postandcourier.com/sewe/nuisance-coyote-new-target-at-southeastern-wildlife-exposition/article_baedbec4-d908-11e6-967e-3b198d884513.html

- Aiken infrastructure costs total close to \$33.6
http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/aiken-infrastructure-total-costs-closer-to-million/article_653a6e72-f2b8-11e6-9d31-5f74b314c9d6.html

-Quote from Lt. Gov. Bryant on Pastors day. No video yet.
<http://wach.com/news/local/pastors-from-across-south-carolina-meet-with-legislators>

- Sen. Scott and 11 other senators send letter to Trump asking that he expand Guantanamo Bay
<https://upstatetoday.com/2017/02/scott-asks-trump-to-grow-gitmo/>

- BMW supplier, Schedl to open factory in Duncan
<http://www.goupstate.com/news/20170214/bmw-supplier-schedl-to-open-facility-in-duncan>

-680 immigrants arrested in raids last week. That total number includes 190 from GA, SC, and NC. 127 of the 190 were convicted criminals.
<http://www.goupstate.com/news/20170214/dhs-arrested-680-immigrants-in-week-long-roundup>