

(Washington) – Rep. Rush Holt, Chairman of the House Select Intelligence Oversight Panel and a senior member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, today issued the following statement in response to published reports on the apparent end of the investigation into the destruction of CIA detainee interrogation tapes:

“It is unfortunate that this serious episode is allowed to pass without anyone being held accountable for actions detrimental to good intelligence operations and even detrimental to overall national security. Also, the destruction of the tapes was a flagrant affront to Congress.

“One reason the Special Prosecutor apparently was unable to bring charges against those who destroyed interrogation tapes is because there is no explicit legal requirement that the CIA retain such tapes. When the House passed the annual Intelligence Authorization legislation earlier this year, it included my provision to require the CIA to retain interrogation tapings, making their destruction a clear-cut violation of law. This would maximize intelligence derived from interrogations and help prevent detainee abuses such as occurred at Abu Ghraib.

Unfortunately, Senate Republicans blocked the inclusion of the provision in the final version, so it was not included in the bill that President Obama signed into law. This episode is another reminder of why we need a bipartisan commitment to effective and meaningful Congressional oversight of the intelligence community.”

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