

February 1, 2010

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) -- Today, U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) sent a letter to President Barack Obama expressing his opposition to trying 9/11 terrorists in civilian courts in western Pennsylvania. Altmire stated in his letter that he will strongly and actively oppose any effort to try 9/11 terrorists in western Pennsylvania, which could result in increased security costs and risks for local residents.

“Prosecuting the 9/11 terrorists in U.S. civilian courts would cost taxpayers millions of dollars and has the potential to jeopardize our national security,” Altmire said. “I have repeatedly voted against bringing these terrorists to the U.S. for civilian trials, and I will continue to do everything in my power to fight any attempt to try these terrorists in western Pennsylvania.”

The full text of Congressman Altmire’s letter is pasted below.

February 1, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As your administration plans for the trials of suspected terrorists, such as alleged September 11 conspirator Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, I urge you not to bring terrorists into the continental United States for civilian trials.

As you know, there has been a surge of bipartisan opposition to prosecuting the suspects accused of involvement in the September 11, 2001 attacks in a Manhattan civilian court. The cost for achieving adequate security for the trial of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed in Manhattan has been estimated at more than \$200 million a year. Moreover, the inconvenience for local residents and economic impact for the surrounding area would be immeasurable. These same concerns apply to holding the trial in other civilian courts in different areas of the country.

I strongly and actively oppose any effort to move this trial to western Pennsylvania, which could result in increased security costs and risks for my constituents.

Finally, I'd like to note my concern with a provision in the fiscal year 2011 budget you proposed today. The proposed budget states, “The administration further anticipates working with the Congress to identify additional funding and other resources that may be needed in 2010 to address extraordinary federal, state and local security requirements associated with the

terrorism trials that may begin in 2010.” I have repeatedly voted against bringing Guantanamo detainees to the continental U.S. for trial and will continue to oppose spending any additional taxpayer dollars on a forum for civilian trials.

I urge you to take fiscal responsibility and security considerations into account as you weigh options for the location of Guantanamo Bay detainee trials.

Sincerely,
Jason Altmire