

House 9/11 Commission Bill Creates White House Non-Proliferation Coordinator:

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House 9/11 Commission Bill Creates White House Non-Proliferation Coordinator:

Non-proliferation Measure Written and Introduced by Rep. Ellen Tauscher

Washington, DC – Today the House of Representatives debated, and is widely expected to pass, H.R. 1, The 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007. The legislation, a major component of Democrat’s New Direction for America and First 100 Hours Agenda, will contain language authored by Rep. Ellen Tauscher and introduced in the previous Congress in a bill entitled The 9-11 Commission Combating Proliferation Implementation Act. The language creates a Coordinator for the Prevention of WMD Proliferation within the White House. The Coordinator would have both the budget authority over all nonproliferation programs and would also be responsible for designing and implementing a strategic plan to address threats posed by weapons of mass destruction. The bill also recommends creating a similar office in Russia to improve cooperative efforts between the both countries which, together, have most of the world’s nuclear weapons.

Rep. Tauscher delivered the following statement on the House floor today supporting both H.R. 1 and continued efforts to improve non-proliferation efforts.

Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007

Rep. Ellen O. Tauscher

Mr. Speaker,

I rise in strong support of the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007.

Congress has reformed the intelligence community to better identify global threats and defend the United States. But for too long, we've had a gaping hole in our security — eliminating the threat of weapons of mass destruction. For too long the Bush administration and their Congressional allies have left nonproliferation on the backburner.

The bill before us today provides the tools we need to fight the spread of the world's most dangerous weapons.

In the last Congress I introduced the 9-11 Commission Combating Proliferation Implementation Act, along with my colleagues John Spratt and Marty Meehan.

The central provision in our bill, contained also in the bill before us today, creates a Coordinator for the Prevention of WMD Proliferation within the White House.

The Coordinator would have both the budget authority over all nonproliferation programs and would also be responsible for designing and implementing a strategic plan to address the current threat levels posed by weapons of mass destruction.

Currently, nonproliferation efforts are overseen by the Departments of Energy, Defense and State. While they all have had some success, these three large agencies are not guided by an overall plan or supported by a single individual who has the ability to ensure accountability. Because of the lack of high-level attention and leadership, some programs have either lapsed or been burdened with unrelated restrictions.

Such a coordinating function has been recommended several times, including the 1999 Deutch Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Government to combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

As the 9-11 Commission warned "The greatest danger of another catastrophic attack in the United States will materialize if the world's most dangerous terrorists acquire the world's most dangerous weapons."

We know the threat. Now we have to act. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

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