

Brady Applauds Weapons-sites legislation

Congressman Brady Applauds New Legislation to Enhance Federal Oversight of Nuclear Weapons-Related Sites

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Philadelphia --- Congressman Robert A. Brady (D., PA) today commended President Bush for signing into law new legislation that will improve national security by examining problems raised by using private contractors to guard nuclear weapons-related sites. A member of the House Armed Services Committee, Congressman Brady called the legislation an important step in bringing the nuclear complex in line with the security needs of today.

"The 2008 Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4986) renews support for our troops and their families while improving military readiness in many important ways," said Congressman Brady. "In addition, it begins the long-overdue process of determining the most effective way to guard the sensitive sites where nuclear weapons are assembled. We cannot afford the shoddy practices demonstrated by some private security contractors who currently guard these vital facilities."

The act signed by President Bush requires the Government Accounting Office (GAO) to examine the security systems at the multiple sites that make up the nuclear weapons complex, and report its findings to Congress in six months. It also directs the Department of Energy, which runs the facilities, to determine the most cost-effective and secure manner to guard them. Private security contracts cost hundreds of millions annually, with \$300 million going to a single company, Wackenhut. The studies will determine whether this money might be spent more wisely on government-run security.

"The fact is that protecting our nuclear arsenal is the government's business, not a handout for private contractors," said Congressman Brady. "We need to ensure that all of those who have a stake in providing our security are working in sync with each other, to ensure our nation's safety. This can only be done by the federal government."