

Wyden urges Bush to declassify CIA report on 9/11

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Washington, DC -- Believing that the American people have a right to know how the CIA performed prior to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-Oregon), a senior member of the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, this week offered an amendment that would require the Director of the CIA to declassify the Executive Summary of the CIA Inspector General's report on 9/11. The CIA report is the only major 9/11 government review that has not been made public.

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-Oregon)

Wyden's amendment to the "Improving America's Security by Implementing Unfinished Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007" (S.4) is cosponsored by U.S. Senators Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) and Kit Bond (R-MO), the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Senator Wyden's remarks offering the amendment are below:

"Mr. President, the purpose of the legislation before the U.S. Senate today is straightforward: to apply what has been learned from one of the greatest tragedies in American history in order to protect the American people in the days ahead. One of the tragic lessons of 9/11 is what we don't know can hurt us, and hurt us badly.

"Because of the outstanding work of the 9/11 Commission extensive information about what went wrong has been made public. The national security community has learned from a number of its mistakes and is today taking concrete steps to make sure what happened on September 11, 2001 does not happen again.

"There has been a variety of reports that have been issued, critical to our understanding of what happened that tragic day. The bipartisan 2002 Joint Congressional Inquiry, on which I was privileged to serve, is one example, as well as the Department of Justice's report on FBI accountability.

"There is one essential report, Mr. President, that has remained classified.

“Nearly two years ago, the CIA Inspector General submitted a report detailing CIA accountability and the run-up to the 9/11 attacks. I am sure that some may and will consider a number of the Inspector General’s findings unsettling, perhaps embarrassing; but the report is both high quality and comprehensive. The CIA Inspector General has provided this country with an important perspective on one of the defining moments in American history. I believe that the public has a right to know what went wrong at the CIA, so that we can make sure those mistakes are not repeated.

“I have spent more than a year working on a bipartisan basis with our friend from Missouri and the previous chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Senator Roberts to make an unclassified version of this report available to the public. I have repeatedly asked the intelligence community to redact any sensitive national security information from the report’s Executive Summary, so that it could be declassified. I have been joined in these efforts in addition to the assistance that Senator Bond has provided by the current chairman Senator Rockefeller, and I have already mentioned the help of Chairman Roberts for some substantial length of time. Multiple CIA directors, as well as the former Director of National Intelligence regrettably have not been willing to cooperate.

“Why the leaders of the CIA have been so reluctant to cooperate is not clear to me, Mr. President. Neither former Director Goss, or Director Hayden, or Ambassador Negroponte have ever provided a valid reason for keeping the report—the entire report—classified. In fact, there is no good reason why the CIA cannot declassify this report. The Executive Summary is concise and it contains little information about CIA sources and methods. It could be redacted and released quickly and that information is in the interest of the American people.

“The bipartisan amendment that we offer today would require the Director of the CIA to declassify the Executive Summary of the Inspector General’s report on 9/11, removing only that information which must be redacted to protect this country’s national security. The amendment requires that the Director do this within 30 days, but I think anyone who has read the report would agree that this is more than enough time. I am very pleased that the bipartisan leadership of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Senator Rockefeller and Senator Bond join me as cosponsors of the legislation.

“The American people have a right to know what is in this report. Some of the findings may be unpleasant—others may be a source of pride—but at the end of the day the American people have a right to know about how the Central Intelligence Agency performed at this critical moment in this country’s history. We need that information made public so as to ensure that there is true accountability. September 11, 2001 is part of this country’s history, and to hide the truth from the American people is unacceptable. I

urge the adoption of this amendment. I see my friend from Missouri here and thank him again for his patience during the many hours that our staffs have been working on this on a bipartisan basis.â€•

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