

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MILITARY JUSTICE
OPPOSES AUTHORIZING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATIONS OF ATTORNEYS
REPRESENTING GUANTANAMO DETAINEES

May 27, 2010

Washington, D.C. The National Institute of Military Justice supports the American Bar Association's call on Congress not to include a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 directing the Department of Defense Inspector General to investigate attorneys representing Guantanamo detainees.

ABA President Carolyn B. Lamm sent a letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee saying that this legislation, if passed, "will have a severe chilling effect on the ability of lawyers to provide zealous advocacy and effective assistance of counsel to their clients."

NIMJ President Eugene R. Fidell said, "The American legal system requires zealous and effective counsel." While lawyers who engage in wrongdoing should be subject to appropriate professional discipline (with attendant procedural protections), "it is most unwise for Congress to require the inspector general of the Department of Defense to investigate those lawyers," said Mr. Fidell.

NIMJ was organized in 1991 to advance the fair administration of justice in the armed forces and to foster improved public understanding of the military justice system. NIMJ is affiliated with American University Washington College of Law. NIMJ does not represent individuals.

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