

Battle rages around McDade-Murtha 'Citizens Protection Act of 1998'

Lobbying efforts are intensifying on Capitol Hill, both on the part of those seeking passage of the Citizens Protection Act of 1998, and of those determined to block it at all costs. The bill, H.R. 3396, was introduced on March 5 by Representatives Joseph McDade (R-Pa.) and John Murtha (D-Pa.), and is designed to clean up prosecutorial abuses by the permanent bureaucracy in the Department of Justice and other government agencies (see "Exonerate LaRouche to Stop America's Political Lynchings," *EIR*, May 15, 1998). As of June 18, the bill has 167 Congressional co-sponsors, out of 218 that would be required to force the Congressional leadership to hold hearings.

The Schiller Institute has sponsored several delegations of dignitaries from around the country, to meet with Congressmen and their aides, and to press for passage of the bill. They are insisting that the case of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. be placed at the center of Congressional hearings on the matter. As *EIR* reported on June 5, the railroad prosecution of LaRouche and his associates manifested nearly all the areas of prosecutorial misconduct that the bill covers, including indictment without probable cause; failure to promptly release information that would exonerate a person under indictment; intentional misleading of a court as to the guilt of any person; intentional or knowing misstatement of evidence, etc.

This mobilization has drawn opposition from the Department of Justice and its advocates. The National Association of U.S. Attorneys has not only sent out a letter opposing McDade-Murtha, but is descending upon Congressional offices to lobby against it.

Attorney General Janet Reno, at her weekly press conference at the Justice Department on June 18, denounced the bill, and said she would advise the President to veto it, should it pass the Congress.

In response to a question on McDade-Murtha, Reno said:

"Well, I think the sponsors of this bill are trying to solve a problem that really doesn't exist. I've had a chance to review on a regular basis the complaints that are received, and they are few and far between, considering the thousands of lawyers within the department. They are—the lawyers of this department are really extraordinarily dedicated. I have watched them in action. I've seen the results of their work.

And I think that the standards they exhibit don't require something like this in the least.

"The bill constitutes, I think, an unjustified and an unwarranted interference with lawful and effective Federal law enforcement. I think it would interfere with that effort, and if the bill passes, I'm going to strongly urge the President to veto it."

Asked what is "driving" this bill, she continued:

"I don't know exactly what's driving it, but my message to everyone is that we're committed to ensuring that our attorneys and our employees conform to the highest standards of conduct. We have a formal disciplinary proceeding for attorneys, which is administered by the Office of Professional Responsibility. The department's law enforcement agencies have their own Office of Professional Responsibility or are reviewed by the inspector general. The department has an extensive training program in legal ethics, and each United States Attorney's office has at least one professional responsibility officer whose job it is to provide guidance and advice. I think there is a good procedure in place.

"I think one of the points that has been raised is that it would—in a multi-jurisdictional drug case which involved ten different states, it would require that the lawyer decide if he was in compliance with the disciplinary rules and rules of professional responsibility in one state, then the next state, then the next state. And I just don't think that that contributes to effective law enforcement.

"The bill would create a misconduct review board with unprecedented power to obtain and make public information concerning ongoing investigations, classified material, and other confidential information. It could be read to suggest that in the middle of a prosecution, if someone wanted to interfere with that prosecution, this board could bring it to a screaming halt.

"There is a mechanism, a very clear mechanism, that we have relied on for 200 years of our history, in which the parties are in a court. A judge decides the case. They have the right to take an appeal, and they have other appellate procedures. I think that the system of justice has worked well, and I think it would be a terrible mistake to affect it in this way."

The following are the co-sponsors of the bill, so far.

Alabama
 Robert Aderholt (R)
 Spencer Bachus (R)
 H.L. (Sonny) Callahan (R)
 Earl Hilliard (D)
 Bob Riley (R)

Alaska
 Don Young (R)

Arizona
 Ed Pastor (D)
 Bob Stump (R)

Arkansas
 Jay Dickey (R)

California
 Brian P. Bilbray (R)
 Ken Calvert (R)
 Tom Campbell (R)
 Gary A. Condit (D)
 Christopher Cox (R)
 Randy (Duke) Cunningham (R)
 John T. Doolittle (R)
 David Dreier (R)
 Vic Fazio (D)
 Elton Gallegly (R)
 Stephen Horn (R)
 Duncan Hunter (R)
 Jay Kim (R)
 Jerry Lewis (R)
 Matthew G. Martinez (D)
 Ron Packard (R)
 Nancy Pelosi (D)
 Richard W. Pombo (R)
 Dana Rohrabacher (R)
 Esteban E. Torres (D)

Colorado
 Joel Hefley (R)
 Dan Schaefer (R)

Connecticut
 Rosa DeLauro (D)
 Nancy L. Johnson (R)

District of Columbia
 Eleanor Holmes Norton (D)

Florida
 Michael Bilirakis (R)
 Mark Foley (R)
 Tillie K. Fowler (R)
 Porter Goss (R)
 Alcee Hastings (D)
 Carrie P. Meek (D)
 John L. Mica (R)

Dan Miller (R)
 Joe Scarborough (R)
 E. Clay Shaw, Jr. (R)
 Clifford B. Stearns (R)
 Karen L. Thurman (D)
 C.W. Bill Young (R)

Georgia
 Mac Collins (R)
 Jack Kingston (R)
 Charlie Norwood (R)

Idaho
 Helen Chenoweth (R)
 Michael Crapo (R)

Illinois
 Danny Davis (D)
 Harris Fawell (R)
 Ray LaHood (R)
 William O. Lipinski (D)
 Donald Manzullo (R)
 Bobby Rush (D)

Indiana
 Steve Buyer (R)
 David M. McIntosh (R)
 John Hostettler (R)
 Peter J. Visclosky (D)

Iowa
 Jim Nussle (R)

Kentucky
 Anne Northup (R)

Louisiana
 William Jefferson (D)
 Chris John (D)
 Bob Livingston (R)
 Billy Tauzin (R)

Maine
 John Elias Baldacci (D)

Massachusetts
 Joe Moakley (D)

Maryland
 Elijah Cummings (D)
 Wayne Gilchrest (R)
 Albert Wynn (D)

Michigan
 Vern Ehlers (R)
 Dale Kildee (D)
 Joe Knollenberg (R)
 Lynn Rivers (D)

Minnesota
 Bill Luther (D)

Mississippi
 Mike Parker (R)
 Charles Pickering (R)

Bennie Thompson (D)
 Roger F. Wicker (R)

Missouri
 William (Bill) Clay (D)
 Pat Danner (D)

Montana
 Rick Hill (R)

New Jersey
 Rodney P. Frelinghuysen (R)
 Frank A. LoBiondo (R)
 H. James Saxton (R)
 Chris Smith (R)

New Mexico
 Bill Redmond (R)
 Joe Skeen (R)

New York
 Sherwood Boehlert (R)
 Michael P. Forbes (R)
 Benjamin A. Gilman (R)
 Amory Houghton (R)
 Sue W. Kelly (R)
 Peter T. King (R)
 Rick A. Lazio (R)
 Tom Manton (D)
 Gerald B.H. Solomon (R)
 James T. Walsh (R)

North Carolina
 Cass Ballenger (R)
 Bill Hefner (D)
 Charles H. Taylor (R)

Ohio
 Paul Gillmor (R)
 David L. Hobson (R)
 Marcy Kaptur (D)
 Steven C. LaTourette (R)
 Bob Ney (R)
 Deborah Pryce (R)
 Ralph S. Regula (R)
 Louis Stokes (D)
 Ted Strickland (D)
 James A. Traficant (D)

Oklahoma
 Tom Coburn (R)
 Ernest Jim Istook (R)
 Wes Watkins (R)
 J.C. Watts, Jr. (R)

Oregon
 Robert (Bob) Smith (R)

Pennsylvania
 Robert A. Borski (D)
 Robert Brady (D)
 Mike Doyle (D)

Philip S. English (R)
 Chaka Fattah (D)
 Bill Goodling (R)
 Jim Greenwood (R)
 Tim Holden (D)
 Paul E. Kanjorski (D)
 Ron Klink (D)
 Frank Mascara (D)
 Joseph McDade (R)
 Paul McHale (D)
 John P. Murtha (D)
 John Peterson (R)
 Joseph R. Pitts (R)
 Curt Weldon (R)

South Carolina
 James E. Clyburn (D)
 Lindsay Graham (R)
 Floyd D. Spence (R)

Tennessee
 Bob Clement (D)
 John J. Duncan (R)
 Harold Ford (D)
 Zach Wamp (R)

Texas
 Ken Bentsen (D)
 Henry Bonilla (R)
 Tom DeLay (R)
 Chet Edwards (D)
 Gene Green (D)
 Ruben Hinojosa (D)
 Sheila Jackson Lee (D)
 Silvestre Reyes (D)
 Ciro Rodriguez (D)

Utah
 Merrill Cook (R)
 James V. Hansen (R)

Virginia
 Thomas J. Bliley, Jr. (R)
 Bob Goodlatte (R)
 Jim Moran (D)
 Owen Pickett (D)
 Robert C. (Bobby) Scott (D)
 Norman Sisisky (D)

Washington
 Norm Dicks (D)
 Jennifer B. Dunn (R)
 Doc Hastings (R)
 George R. Nethercutt, Jr. (R)
 Adam Smith (D)

West Virginia
 Alan B. Mollohan (D)
 Nick J. Rahall (D)