

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16), a member of the House Armed Services Committee and the Judiciary Committee, issued the following statement after Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani was acquitted on more than 280 counts, including the top counts of murder and murder conspiracy, in the first civilian trial of a Guantanamo Bay detainee:

“The Obama Administration’s decision to give a foreign terrorist the same rights and privileges as American citizens has proven to be disastrous, and this verdict sets a terrible precedent. Foreign terrorists absolutely do not deserve the same rights in a court of law as American citizens. The constitutional and legal standards for evidence-gathering and prosecution in a civilian case are simply not adequate for the trial of an enemy combatant.

“As a former military prosecutor, I strongly believe that trying enemy combatants in military tribunals at Guantanamo Bay is the best approach. These tribunals are fair, provide due process for the accused, but also protect critical intelligence officials and evidence. I hope this verdict will convince President Obama to join us in a bipartisan manner to hold terrorists accountable, keep them out of the United States, and prevent them from rejoining the fight.”

Rooney, as a member of the U.S. Army JAG Corps, served as Special Assistant U.S. Attorney on Fort Hood. He later taught constitutional and criminal law at West Point, and he now serves on the House Armed Services Committee and Judiciary Committee. He sponsored the “Detainee Trials at Gitmo Act,” which would require all detainees currently held at Guantanamo Bay be tried in military commissions at Guantanamo Bay.

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