



HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE DUNCAN HUNTER, CALIFORNIA – CHAIRMAN

PRESS RELEASE

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OPENING STATEMENT OF DUNCAN HUNTER *Markup of H.R. 1815, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007*

Washington, D.C. – We have a very long day ahead of us with votes and floor activity contributing to our challenge, so I will keep my opening remarks very brief.

The committee once again meets to provide a policy and funding blueprint for the vast national security activities of the Departments of Defense and Energy. We do so during a time of the ongoing Global War on Terrorism, transformation, and Quadrennial and Congressional Defense Reviews.

This committee takes these responsibilities very seriously and I want to thank each and every member for their contributions and participation in the countless hearings, meetings and discussions that got us to this point in putting forth this legislation. In addition to the work on this authorization bill, I would like to thank our members for the significant amount diligent work on our Congressional Defense Review. We will continue our plan to complete the CDR as soon as we complete our important work on this defense bill.

The legislation that we mark today contains hundreds of different policy and budget initiatives, all important in their own right. However, I want to briefly highlight a few that I believe to be of particular importance and worthy of mention.

First, this legislation continues to fully provide the material and budget resources to our troops presently fighting the war on terror. Not only do we continue the aggressive push for more effective solutions to protect our forces in the field, we also ensure that the necessary budget resources are available to reset and recapitalize our military forces so that they remain ready and fully capable to perform their difficult mission.

Second, this legislation continues the committee's commitment in growing our ground combat forces in the Army and the Marine Corps to deal with today's operational demands and realities.

Third, this legislation continues to fully resource and selectively expand the range of compensation and support programs for our most valued resource – the brave men and women of our armed forces.

Again this year, we continue our long term effort to fundamentally change how the Department of Defense conducts major weapons acquisition. Last year, we focused on the initial solutions to the exploding

costs of next generation weapon systems through modifications to Nunn-McCurdy. This year, we continue this campaign with expansion of our Defense Challenge Program and increased cost accountability in execution of programs.

Despite our warnings over the dramatic growth in the cost of military products the services continue to migrate toward increasingly expensive “super platforms.” The DoD continues to cash in force structure and limit the ability to deploy these more expensive systems in sufficient numbers to sustain operational needs. This committee will insure that we are making the right trade offs between cost, new technology and deployable numbers.

I will defer to each subcommittee to detail the important work they have done in this and other areas and commend the Chairmen and Ranking members of each for putting forth solid recommendations.

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