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U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE STEVE BUYER, JANE HARMAN AND TILLIE FOWLER FOLLOWING THE COURT MARTIAL VERDICT OF STAFF SERGEANT DELMAR G. SIMPSON

Washington – Military Personnel Subcommittee Chairman Steve Buyer (R-IN) and Representatives Jane Harman (D-CA) and Tillie Fowler (R-FL), the three National Security Committee members tasked to lead the committee's investigation into the issue of sexual misconduct in the military services, today released the following statement on the court martial verdict of Staff Sergeant Delmar G. Simpson:

"Today's verdict underscores the serious task the Committee on National Security, the House committee with responsibility for Department of Defense policy and tasked by Speaker Gingrich to investigate sexual misconduct in the military, has in the months ahead. Staff Sergeant Simpson was found guilty of several charges of sexual misconduct – including 18 counts of rape – and pleaded guilty to numerous charges of improper sexual relationships with trainees, many of whom were under his instruction. Such misconduct is completely unacceptable from our military leaders.

"The extensive charges of sexual misconduct at Aberdeen Proving Ground, and the details of this misconduct that have been discussed in the courts martial are very disturbing and of tremendous concern to the National Security Committee and the U.S. Congress.

"When the allegations of extensive sexual misconduct at Aberdeen were first disclosed several months ago, Chairman Floyd Spence and Ranking Member Ron Dellums asked us to lead the committee's effort on this serious matter. In that capacity, we have begun a bipartisan, systematic and thorough effort to understand the causes and contributing factors that led to events at Aberdeen Proving Ground and at other training centers and bases around the world.

"We have made a dedicated commitment to direct and personal involvement in this critical task. As such, we have already visited with Army trainees and drill instructors at Aberdeen and have met with Secretary of the Army Togo West. We also have met with Major General Richard Seigfried, chairman of the Army's Senior Review Panel on Sexual Harassment and have received briefings on the

investigations at Aberdeen, the military's criminal investigative procedures and the military justice system. In addition, we have met individually with soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines in Korea and Japan, including Okinawa, as well as on board the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy.

“In the coming weeks and months, we plan visits to several other training facilities, including the Navy's Great Lakes Training Center, Air Force basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Marine Corps basic training and the Army's advanced training center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. In early May, we plan to visit Fort Leonard Wood, a drill instructor and basic training center for the Army.

“We will conduct appropriate Congressional hearings on various aspects of this important issue. We expect to receive testimony on the findings of the Army's Senior Review Panel on Sexual Harassment, as well as from each of the military services on the specific actions they have taken to enforce their sexual misconduct policies and to prevent future misconduct. Additionally, we will thoroughly review the Army Inspector General report on sexual misconduct in the Army, once that report is released, as well as the findings of the Army Criminal Investigative Command's internal review into allegations relating to the use of coercive investigative tactics by Army investigators.

“Our investigation will be a thorough and deliberate one designed to help the Services ensure their misconduct programs are comprehensive and effectively enforced. The individual men and women serving in our armed forces deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and to work in an environment that is safe and free from criminal and improper conduct. We are committed to ensuring that they receive the treatment they so rightfully deserve as members of our nation's fighting force.”

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