



HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE DUNCAN HUNTER – CHAIRMAN

PRESS RELEASE

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Hunter Calls on Kerry to Apologize to U.S. Troops

Washington, D.C. --- U.S. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-CA) today called on U.S. Senator John Kerry (D-MA) to apologize to all of the brave men and women of the Armed Services who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“Senator Kerry should apologize to all of the Americans who have served admirably in Iraq and Afghanistan,” said Hunter.

“Many of these brave men and women volunteered to serve in the military because of their patriotism and love of America. My own son quit his high-tech job following the 9/11 attacks, joined the Marines and volunteered for two tours in western Iraq,” Hunter continued. “Joe Wilson, Todd Akin and John Kline—all members of the House Armed Services Committee—have sons who have served and are serving honorably in Iraq as well.”

“The men and women fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan today are the most educated in our history. Nothing less than a full apology to them and their families is acceptable,” concluded Hunter.

Yesterday while speaking about education in California, Senator Kerry stated, “You know education, if you make the most of it, you study hard, you do your homework, and you make an effort to be smart, you can do well. If you don’t you get stuck in Iraq.” (*NBC 4’s Website, www.nbc4.tv*)

Hunter pointed to the following statistics to counter Senator Kerry’s inaccurate claims:

- Of the men and women who have served and are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, 97.2% have held a high school diploma or more. In fact, more than 213,000 of the 1.4 million who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan hold bachelor’s, master’s or Ph.D. degrees.

- The individuals who volunteer to serve our country come from the upper level of high school graduates and routinely score above average on qualifying tests. Nearly two-thirds of today's recruits are drawn from the top-half of America in math and verbal aptitudes.
- Virtually all active duty and reserve accessions (99%) had a high school diploma or equivalent, well above the civilian youth proportions (80 percent of 18-24 age group).
- Ninety-two percent of active duty officer accessions and 96 percent of the officer corps held college degrees, with 15 and 38 percent of those degrees being advanced degrees, respectively.
- Many of the graduates from the United States service academies continue to serve their country following graduation. The service academies are renowned for their exceptional and robust academic standards, as well as the rigorous competition for the limited number of available slots per year. For example, 9,601 individuals applied for admission to the Air Force Academy's 2009 class and only 1,390 were admitted. Of that group, the average SAT score was 1295. Comparably, the average SAT score for all college-bound seniors in 2005 was 1028.
- Many of the members of the National Guard and Reserves who have deployed recently are lawyers, doctors, nurses, teachers, principals, journalists—to name just a few professions—in their civilian lives.

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