

**For Immediate Release:** *April 16, 2010*

***Military Members Introduce Resolution in Response to Westboro Baptist Church and Protests of Fallen Soldiers***

**Washington DC** – Congressman Duncan Hunter joined Congressman John Boccieri today to introduce a resolution to uphold current state laws that allow the families of fallen service personnel to grieve privately.

“Service members who make the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our nation – as well as their families – deserve our unending respect and appreciation,” said Congressman Hunter, a combat veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. “Those who attempt to discredit their sacrifice by hurling insults and engaging in other offensive behavior bring great shame to themselves. The right to free speech is one of our nation’s most fundamental and protected rights, but it’s unfortunate when certain individuals or groups think it’s appropriate, for the purpose of creating controversy, to publicly malign our fallen heroes and disrupt such an important moment for their families. It’s my hope is that the Supreme Court will move to uphold existing laws that allow these families to mourn the loss of their loved ones without disturbance.”

“The right to free speech ends where the privacy of a family mourning the loss of a service member begins,” said Congressman Boccieri, a C-130 pilot flying missions during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. “While our law doesn’t restrict hate groups from spewing their venom, it forces them to do it at a respectful distance from the grieving family. This is personal for me after flying wounded and fallen soldiers out of Baghdad. Not only do we fight for the right to free speech, we fight for the right to privacy as well.”