For Immediate Release: *May 17, 2011*

Washington D.C.— Congressman Duncan Hunter was notified by the Navy that the last of the 14 Lewis and Clark-class cargo ships under construction in San Diego will be named after Cesar Chavez. In response, Hunter suggested the ship be named after Marine Corps Sergeant Rafael Peralta, who was killed in Iraq and nominated for the Medal of Honor.

Click here to read Congressman Hunter's letter to the Secretary of the Navy.

“This decision shows the direction the Navy is heading," said Hunter. "Naming a ship after Cesar Chavez goes right along with other recent decisions by the Navy that appear to be more about making a political statement than upholding the Navy’s history and tradition.

“If this decision were about recognizing the Hispanic community’s contribution to our nation, many other names come to mind, including Marine Corps Sergeant Rafael Peralta, who was nominated for the Medal of Honor for action in Iraq. Peralta is one of many Hispanic war heroes—some of whom are worthy of the same recognition.

“And we cannot forget about John Finn, a lifelong San Diego resident who won the Medal of Honor for what he did during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Finn is another worthy candidate that was evidently overlooked in the selection process.”