

For Immediate Release: *May 25, 2011*

Washington D.C.—The House of Representatives passed an amendment today offered by Congressman Duncan Hunter, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, directing the Secretary of the Navy to name the next available ship after Marine Corps Sergeant Rafael Peralta. Hunter offered the amendment during House consideration of the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act.

“Sergeant Peralta was wrongfully denied the Medal of Honor for giving his life for this country,” said Congressman Hunter. “The Department of Defense’s review of the Medal of Honor nomination determined the Navy Cross was more fitting, despite the fact that Sergeant Peralta’s actions were consistent with the nation’s highest award for military valor.

“The decision, which has been tenuously defended by the Secretary of Defense, also contradicts the eye-witness accounts of the Marines who were next to Sergeant Peralta. Naming a ship after Sergeant Peralta is certainly not the Medal of Honor. But it’s a step toward correcting a terrible error in judgment on the part of the Defense Department and providing Sergeant Peralta and his family an honor that is worthy of such an extraordinary sacrifice.”

When notified last week of Congressman Hunter’s intention to offer the amendment, Icela Donald, sister of Sergeant Peralta, said, “We are truly thankful and honored. This is a way to keep my brother’s legacy alive. After everything we’ve been through, this means so much to the entire family.”

Supplemental information added – 3/1/2012: [Letter to Mabus](#) and [Di Maio Report](#)