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Washington DC—Today, U.S. Congressman Duncan Hunter voted against the latest debt limit proposal due to the likelihood that the special committee created under the plan will fail to reach an agreement and therefore “trigger” \$600 billion in defense budget cuts. Hunter voted in support of the previous two debt limit proposals originating in the House—The Cut, Cap and Balance Act and Speaker Boehner’s debt limit reduction plan.

“Right now, the U.S. military is facing large equipment shortfalls and growing reset burdens while engaged in three wars,” said Congressman Hunter, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. “When we should be talking about what our military needs to keep us safe and prepare for future threats, there’s a misconception that security spending is what put the country in this fiscal sinkhole and the only way out is to cut national defense.

“The future of U.S. security should not be handed over to a 12-person super panel. Its decisions or inability to reach an agreement could ultimately break our military or bring it very close to that point.

“From a historical perspective, current defense spending is at dangerously low levels. Under President Kennedy, defense spending was at nine percent of Gross Domestic Product. It was six percent under President Reagan. Today, it’s below four percent and with \$400 billion in additional cuts, military readiness will continue its steady decline.

“And we cannot overlook what a \$400 billion cut in defense means for jobs. It’s estimated that every billion in defense spending supports 8,000 jobs nationwide. Any sizeable cut in the defense budget would mean more lost jobs at a time when job growth is almost non-existent and a record number of Americans remain out of work.

“There’s no substitute for a strong national defense. America’s fiscal outlook is serious, but we know what’s straining the budget and it’s not defense.”