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Wittman Response to President Obama's Final State of the Union

WASHINGTON – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) released the following statement today after President Obama appeared before a joint session of Congress to deliver his final State of the Union address:

"Before the President's State of the Union address tonight, I said that I hoped he would deliver a cogent, comprehensive strategy for defeating ISIS. I was disappointed to hear him double down on this administration's failed national security policies. Even as the President spoke tonight, 10 American sailors remained in Iranian custody. The situation is still unfolding, but Iran has a known history of dangerous provocation. The President says and I believe that priority number one has to be protecting the American people and going after terrorist networks. But I believe, as history has shown, that success takes direct, decisive and unambiguous action, not false hope and unfulfilled promises. It takes a clear view, an honest assessment of the challenges we are facing, and a strategy that fully addresses the readiness shortfalls we are still dealing with as a result of sequestration. Our troops deserve that. The American people deserve that.

"I find it unfortunate that during the hour that the President spoke, he mentioned our Veterans only once. Virginia has a significant Veteran population, and every day, I hear from men and women who have sacrificed to defend the homeland, only to be met with bureaucratic red tape or outright dismissal as they try to claim the benefits they've earned. That's not good enough. Congress has made headway in addressing the failures of the VA under this administration, but so much more remains to be done. It is unconscionable that the President would refuse to address those failures and offer his plan to make sure that our Veterans are getting the hero's treatment they deserve.

"The President had a lot to say tonight about unity and about his hopes for the future. I share some of those hopes, and I have my own vision of unity. Our nation embodies the best and brightest of the human condition, and we are a people of infinite possibility. But prosperity takes hard work. For the past seven years, this administration has been making promises that it can't keep. It has promised energy growth while handicapping traditional energy resources. It has promised economic growth while creating barriers for small businesses. And it has promised bi-partisanship while refusing at every turn to work across the aisle, governing instead by executive action and leaving Congress out of the equation. The future can be bright, but the next ten months are a turning point. I hope the President will do what he has promised and work with Congress to get things done. I will be working hard every day to make sure America is moving forward."

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the 1st District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural

Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee, where he is Chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee.

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