New Report Underscores Failures of Nation-Building Efforts

WASHINGTON, DC - A new report released today that questions the success of U.S. nation-building efforts is further evidence that America can no longer play the role of world policeman and should reassess its entire foreign aid program, U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Fla, said today.

"America is broke and we are still spending billions of dollars halfway around the world that serve no vital national interest," Buchanan said. "This new study finds that our nation-building efforts in Afghanistan have had only limited success and may not even survive an American withdrawal. "We can't be the global cop. It's time to put America first and not waste any more taxpayer dollars on overseas ventures that serve no strategic interest."

The two-year study, prepared by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, describes Afghan nation-building programs as "unsustainable." Among other things, the report states that "most U.S. aid bypasses the Afghan Government in favor of international firms. This practice can weaken the ability of the Afghan state to execute its budget, lead to redundant and unsustainable donor projects, and fuel corruption."

The report also warns that the Afghan economy could suffer a severe economic depression when foreign troops leave in 2014 citing that "97 percent of Afghanistan's gross domestic product (GDP) is derived from spending related to the international military and donor community presence." The United States alone spends roughly $300 million per month in Afghanistan; $18 billion over the past 10 years.

The Afghan report comes on the heels of President Obama's proposal to provide billions of dollars in aid to help democratize Arab countries. Buchanan strongly criticized the President's new foreign aid plan saying "instead of using our tax dollars to spur business investment in Tunisia, let's use the money to create jobs in America."

Buchanan recently appeared on the nationally syndicated Fox News program "Your World w/ Neil Cavuto," discussing the need to reassess all foreign aid. The interview can be viewed here

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The full report can be viewed at http://foreign.senate.gov/