Buchanan calls for full investigation into dumping of soldiers' remains in landfill

WASHINGTON, DC - Responding to a Washington Post report that Air Force personnel dumped the remains of at least 274 U.S. troops in a garbage dump, Congressman Vern Buchanan called for a full investigation and said those responsible should be fired immediately.

"This is a national disgrace," said Buchanan, who represents more than 90,000 veterans in southwest Florida. "Members of the United States Armed Forces who make the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country deserve to be treated honorably, both in life and death. This is an outrage and those responsible should be immediately fired."

Records indicate that 976 fragments from 274 service members were incinerated and discarded in a Virginia landfill between 2004 and 2008. The Washington Post article today said the number of bodies involved was far more than initially acknowledged.

According to reports, the landfill disposals were never officially authorized under military policies or regulations. Family members were also never notified of this horrendous practice.

Earlier this year, the Air Force disciplined three senior officials related to the incidents, but they were allowed to keep their jobs.

"A slap on the wrist is unacceptable," said Buchanan. "Those involved must be fired today and a congressional investigation should leave no stone unturned in finding out how this happened, who was responsible and how it can be prevented in the future."

"The men and women who bravely serve this country deserve all the care and respect a grateful nation can offer," said Buchanan.