

December 4, 2007

NATIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TIERNEY COMMENTS ON NIE ON IRAN

WASHINGTON, DC — Chairman John F. Tierney (D-MA) made the following statement on the unclassified key judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran's nuclear program, released by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence:

“It is apparent to anyone who reads the unclassified judgments from the National Intelligence Estimate on Iran's nuclear capabilities that the Administration's overheated rhetoric on Iran is simply not supported by the intelligence community's assessment. This report shows us that there are both time and options other than military action to deal with Iran. Our intelligence community does not foresee Iran having enough weapons-grade material for two to seven years — or more. Moreover, the NIE confirms what numerous experts at our oversight subcommittee hearing series on Iran have told us — that a combination of sustained multilateral cooperative efforts and meaningful negotiation holds promise in stopping Iran's nuclear weapons development.

In addition, in view of this Administration's now repeated misinterpretation of conditions in the Middle East, it appears pertinent to ask why the issue of locating missile defense components in controversial locations-creating heated contention with parties, like Russia, whose cooperation in ongoing negotiations on Iran's situation is critical — was put forward at the time and in the manner it was. After all, the purported rationale for introducing that issue with such immediacy was the Administration's erroneous assessment of Iran's nuclear capacity at a time when it now seems it did know or should have known their assessment was wrong, or at best exaggerated. This matter should be reviewed in greater detail.

In the coming months, we will continue to conduct vigorous oversight of the Administration's policy towards Iran and explore the various options for US policy going forward.”