Royce Statement on Annual Terrorism Report
Hearing Examines the State Department's 2004 Report on Terrorism

WASHINGTON, D.C. - - Today, the House Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation (ITNP) held a hearing to review the State Department's annual report on terrorism. ITNP Chairman U.S. Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA-40) issued the following opening statement:

"The State Department's last two editions of its yearly report on international terrorism have been mired in controversy. The 2003 edition had to be reissued after significant errors were detected - errors that underreported the number of terrorist attacks for 2003. This year, the State Department issued its 2004 report minus its traditional annex statistically reporting on the number of terrorist attacks worldwide.

"This change leaves us with two documents: a *Country Reports on Terrorism*, produced by the State Department, and *A Chronology of Significant International Terrorism*, produced by the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). We used to have one report: *Patterns of Global Terrorism*.

"*Patterns* had been around since 1983. It was widely used throughout the world, because it was authoritative and comprehensive. In truncating this document, a good brand name was jettisoned. Post-9/11, when we are finding that much of what we have been doing for years in the terrorism field has been ineffective, it is an odd time to play with success.

"The new *Country Reports on Terrorism* is a bit like a one-sided baseball card. We have the terrorist's picture on the front. We see what team he is on. What is missing are the statistics on the back. In this case, it is the grisly statistics of attacks committed and deaths, injuries, and damage inflicted. Looking to next year, I would ask the Administration to revisit its decision to split this report in two. One report makes sense.

"I am not concerned, as are some, about the change in methodology that the NCTC is undertaking. There is room for improvement in classifying terrorist attacks, which is not an easy task. If the Administration needs a legislative fix to allow NCTC to input new statistics into a revived *Patterns* report, many of us would want to help. But, I should comment that after the problems with the 2003 report, in which Members of this Committee were very interested, I do not understand why the Committee was not consulted as the decision to alter *Patterns* was made. To some this may be just a report, but it is a congressionally mandated report dealing with the central security challenge facing our nation.

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"Regarding some of the rhetoric surrounding this debate, the spike in terrorist attacks from 2003 to 2004 is not proof that we are losing the battle against terrorism. The Administration invited this charge though when it trumpeted its initial set of 2003 *Pattern's* numbers to claim that we were winning the battle. Let's get some perspective.

"The struggle against terrorism goes beyond the statistics of *Patterns*. Terrorism is a complex phenomenon. Key to fighting it is countering anti-Americanism, militant Islam, and various creeds that inspire terrorism and create a climate conducive to terrorist operations. *Pattern's* statistics said nothing about this crucial effort. This is not to disparage *Patterns*, as some have who call its statistics bad or worthless. This report is, or at least was, a useful tool. But again, it is not the ultimate scorecard in the battle against terrorism. It is not that simple. My hope for this hearing is that we examine the issues and look ahead. A commitment from the Administration to work with Congress on producing the best possible report on international terrorism would be a good start."

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