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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 23, 2004

LARSON STATEMENT ON PENTAGON'S COMANCHE ANNOUNCEMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) today issued this statement in response to reports that the Army seeks to cancel the RAH-66 Comanche helicopter program.

"The Comanche is the only innovative, next-generation defense program that exists within the army and current military operations clearly illustrate the need for the reconnaissance and stealth capabilities the Comanche would provide," said Larson. "The reasoning behind the effort to cancel the Comanche is unclear in light of the program's success and the future aviation needs of the military. The program is a key to the Army's planned force transformation, designed to maximize future military strength. The main question to be answered if Army is recommending the cancellation this program, is where do they intend to go from here? They have not made a case that warrants the conclusion they are putting forward.

"The nation's taxpayers have already invested \$7.9 billion in the program and it has been fully funded by Congress for the past two fiscal years. Terminating the program at this stage is highly questionable, both financially and strategically and without a more comprehensive long-term plan, it will negatively impact the Army's future force structure and thousands of workers. I will continue to work with my colleagues and the Army to seek answers to the many questions this proposal raises. I hope to discuss this situation with the companies and workers involved to hear their views firsthand as this situation develops."

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Congressman Larson Serves on the House Armed Services Committee