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GAY SOLDIER KILLED IN ACTION IN IRAQ

SANTA BARBARA, CA, February 24, 2010 – Congressman Jim Moran read a letter on the floor of the House of Representatives today from an active duty soldier in Afghanistan. Congressman Moran stated that the soldier had, “learned that a fellow soldier was also gay, only after he was killed by an IED in Iraq. The partner of the deceased soldier wrote the unit to say how much the victim had loved the military; how they were the only family he had ever known.” The soldier originally provided the letter in response to an inquiry for the Pentagon’s current study of “don’t ask, don’t tell.”

This is the second publicly known case of a gay soldier killed in action during the current wars in the Middle East. The first was U.S. Army Major Alan Rogers, who died while on patrol in Iraq in January, 2008. Statisticians have estimated that more than 200 gay and lesbian service members have perished since the onset of the conflict. Military leaders this week suggested in Congressional hearings that gay and lesbian troops disrupt the force.

Dr. Nathaniel Frank stated that, “It is important to honor the sacrifice of all American troops, and we do so today and always.” Frank is Senior Research Fellow at the Palm Center.

NOTE: In a previous version of this release, we mistakenly reported the soldier as having been in Afghanistan. That error has been corrected here.

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The Palm Center is a think tank at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Since 1998, the Center has been a leader in commissioning and disseminating research in the areas of gender, sexuality, and the military. For more information visit www.palmcenter.ucsb.edu.