

**(WASHINGTON, D.C.)** – Congressman Mike Coffman (R- Colorado), a Member of the House Armed Services Committee and its Defense Acquisition Reform Panel, used today's briefing by Defense Secretary Robert Gates on proposed changes in defense budgeting to caution against any decisions that might dangerously move our military away from its historic abilities to face all adversaries.

"Our military has historically had a 'peace through strength' doctrine that has kept America safe by maintaining strong forces across the entire possible spectrum of engagement as well as acted as a deterrent to our potential adversaries," Coffman said. "We need to ensure we never myopically focus on today's threat environment at the expense of maintaining the conventional capabilities necessary to deter tomorrow's potential threats to U.S. security interests by Iran, North Korea, China, and Russia."

The proposed defense budget changes come two days after North Korea successfully launched a Taepodong-2 ballistic missile that ended up in the Pacific Ocean.

Coffman concluded, "Rogue states like North Korea and Iran are brandishing their nuclear weapons and missile development programs, and we need to continue to develop our missile defense efforts. THAAD and the Aegis program are vital, and I am glad the Secretary recognizes their benefits. But the recent activities of Iran and North Korea are just the current threats. Our enemies can and may move beyond rogue status. We must also be able to respond to the threats of tomorrow and, given the complexity of the science and engineering challenges, that requires investment now."