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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Impassioned Congressman Steve Buyer fires parting shots at Washington colleagues

MILWAUKEE (Sept 1, 2010) -- In what, he says, may be his last public speaking appearance before retirement from Congress, Rep. Steve Buyer (R-Ind.) used the American Legion convention in Milwaukee Wednesday as a platform for criticism of what he characterized as a partisan, hypocritical and misguided Congress.

The nine-term Congress-man and Army veteran opened his address with nostalgic tales of a boyhood in and around his father and uncle's American Legion post in Monticello, Indiana, of which Buyer is a life member today. His talk soon turned to business, however, as he contrasted a previous generation of lawmakers with those serving today,

"If God had given me the ability to choose my years of service to the nation in Congress," Buyer said, "I would have chosen 1948 to 1964, because the individuals who served in Congress at that time...had served the nation in World War II and Korea. They understood the American character. They understood the character that was forged in the crucibles of very difficult times…to go to foreign lands, to go to places they had never been and fight for people they had never met and to leave freedom in their footsteps."

He continued, "They understood something very powerful, something more powerful than party labels, something more powerful than being a Republican; something more powerful than being a Democrat. How about those in Congress being an *American* for once?"

Buyer then took Congressional colleagues to task for, in his view, claiming to care deeply for wounded and disabled veterans while enabling their plight by ignoring the needs of active duty war fighters. "When somebody enters the military," said Buyer, "you make sure that they are properly trained, properly equipped so you don't *have* to care of them the rest of their lives."

Despite remarks sometimes tinged with bitterness, Buyer ended his 32-minute speech with a prosaic, handwritten message of hope about America and Americans.

"I believe," said Buyer, "that in each of us in an indomitable spirit, born free and armed with an insatiable desire and undaunted courage with which to discover new frontiers...with the hope that there is a better future just over the horizon.

"I believe America is the land of opportunity," he continued, "…a place where it is okay to dream big. I also believe that there is a nostalgic vision for our nation of decent and determined Americans who are guided by their faith, their virtues and their values and who have opinions and beliefs that can improve life. I also believe among us that there is a vibrant sense of nationhood that mocks the prophets of evil, doom and ruin."

The veteran congressman announced in January that he would not seek a tenth term. At the time, he cited his wife's diagnosis with "incurable autoimmune disease" and said his decision was based on what he believed was "best for her."

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