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MEDIA ADVISORY - Harrell Calls on Carter to Repudiate Letter, Congressional Challenger Tells Opponent to Set the Record Straight

(Killeen) Democratic Congressional Nominee and Soldiers' Mom, Mary Beth Harrell, is calling on incumbent Republican Congressman John Carter to publicly repudiate the claims made in his July 6th fundraising letter to his "faithful supporters". Harrell emphatically stated, "I have not and will not support any policy that squanders our son's service in Iraq or diminishes our family's proud military tradition." Harrell denounced the claim in Carter's letter that "she (Harrell) has joined with national liberals who call for a cut and run policy in the War on Terror."



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She continued, "My husband defended our country for 23 years in the Army. We just put our oldest boy on a plane back to Iraq to finish his tour of duty with the 4th Infantry Division from Fort Hood. In fact, my opponent knows our oldest son - he met him during his trip to Iraq in April. Our son also served in Bosnia."

Harrell suggested that our country's experience in Bosnia "has taught us that we must have a broad UN Coalition of international forces in Iraq to reconcile ancient religious and ethnic feuds. We did it successfully in Bosnia and we must do it in Iraq." Harrell also countered Carter's letter in which he claimed that "my opponent is an attorney from New York who now lives in Killeen."

Harrell stated "My husband and I have been Texas residents since 1987. We moved to Texas in 1987 when my husband was first stationed at Fort Hood. I supported my husband during his 23 years of military service. I was able to realize a life-long dream by attending St. Mary's Law School in San Antonio when my husband retired from the Army. I graduated law school and passed the BAR exam in 1998. My law practice has always been located in Texas."

"My opponent's letter - and reality - don't measure up," and Harrell continued, "like many Central Texans I wasn't born in Texas, but as they say, I got here as fast as I could. By the way, my husband and I actually live on a beautiful little place just outside of Gatesville."

Harrell also took exception to Carter's claim that she "attacked him for securing money for soldiers and family members on Fort Hood." "As an Army family, we lived and worked on Fort Hood. Our youngest boy attended school on Fort Hood," Harrell said, "And yes, I strongly disagree with my opponent's proposal to waste nearly seven million dollars on a seventh gym for Fort Hood when soldiers, their family members, and veterans urgently need more money for health care. There's something patently wrong with the federal government's spending priorities when Fort Hood currently does not have enough money to pay its bills, or repair and return equipment needed in Iraq."

And finally, Carter claimed that Harrell attacked him "for inheriting stock from my father who worked his entire life to accumulate these assets to provide for his family's security." "Well, that's ridiculous," Harrell responded, "I'm holding my opponent accountable for his voting record. He chose to hold a press conference at a Shell gas station to talk about high gas prices while choosing not to discuss his million-dollar trust fund of ExxonMobil stock. Carter chose to vote against taxing his own Big Oil stock dividends and he voted against closing tax loopholes enjoyed by Big Oil companies. Those taxes could have been used to fund the research, production and marketing of alternative fuels such as hydrogen, biomass, and biodiesel."

When asked how she got a copy of the letter, Harrell responded, "Several of my Republican friends called me after receiving the letter. They were shocked and disappointed by my opponent's claims because they know me - and they knew the claims weren't true. So they sent the letter to me."

Harrell concluded, "Of course, the real irony is that my opponent accused me of running a 'nasty campaign'." Harrell is asking Carter to publish a written a repudiation of the claims made in his fundraising letter. Harrell is also calling on Carter to agree to a series of debates in the District. Harrell is challenging Carter for the 31st Congressional District in Texas, home to Fort Hood.

Paid For By The Mary Beth Harrell For Congress Committee

