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Blue Dog Leaders Respond to President Obama's Remarks

Washington, DC – Today, leaders of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition released the following statement in response to President Barack Obama's remarks before tonight's joint session of Congress.

“After 8 years of reckless fiscal policies and misleading budget gimmickry, it is refreshing to hear President Obama's clear and honest talk about the state of affairs as it pertains to our economic and fiscal outlook,” said **Rep. Charlie Melancon** (D-LA), Blue Dog Co-Chair for Communications. “We are in a deep fiscal hole. However, with the right tools – including statutory PAYGO budgeting – we can reverse this dangerous trend and begin to put the country back on a fiscally sustainable path. The Blue Dogs look forward to working President Obama to accomplish this goal.”

“The President was refreshingly frank about the challenges our great nation faces,” said **Rep. Baron Hill**, Blue Dog Co-Chair for Policy. “One of those challenges – addressing long-term fiscal reform and paying down the deficit – is something the Blue Dogs will certainly work with President Obama to confront and tackle.”

After years of unrestrained spending, budget gimmicks and rampant waste, fraud and abuse in federal spending, it's clear we cannot continue along the same fiscal path,” said **Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin** (D-SD), Blue Dog Co-Chair for Administration. “In the opening weeks of his administration - including a meeting he held with Blue Dogs late last month, at yesterday's fiscal responsibility summit and tonight during his speech – President Obama has demonstrated his support for principles Blue Dogs hold dear, including long-term fiscal responsibility, honesty and transparency in budgeting and a serious commitment to cutting the deficit. I'm particularly pleased that the President has shown a willingness to reach across the aisle for constructive input, because the challenges we face are both too large, and too important for politics as usual.

“I was pleased to hear President Obama give an honest account of our nation's financial future -- an honest reckoning that was long overdue” said **Rep. Heath Shuler** (D-NC), Blue Dog Whip. “The Blue Dog coalition looks forward to working closely with him to restore America's fiscal health and put an end to the budget deficits that threaten future generations.”

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 49 members of the Blue Dog Coalition. For more information, visit the Blue Dog Website at <http://www.house.gov/ross/BlueDogs/>.

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