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**For Immediate Release**  
April 20, 2007

## TAUSCHER CONCERNED ABOUT THIRD SITE TESTING

Washington, DC - At a missile defense conference at The Atlantic Council yesterday, Representative Ellen Tauscher (D - CA) stated her concern that the Missile Defense Agency still has not completed successful end to end testing of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) interceptor system -- a requirement included in last year's Republican defense bill. She stated this was not a question of Republicans and Democrats, but called for a multilateral discussion.

This action by Democrats signals both their concern about technical issues with the system, but especially their displeasure with the lack of Administration consultations with the Congress and with Allies.

Representative Tauscher summed up here position by saying, "As the Chairman of the subcommittee which oversees missile defense and a consistent advocate for strengthening transatlantic relations, I fully support increasing missile defense cooperation with out allies. But we need a better and more inclusive approach which places missile defense within a strong and durable NATO framework and provides all of our European allies with an equal level of protection from a system that actually works."

She is concerned that the Administration is moving forward on a bilateral basis, outside of an overarching NATO framework. She is also concerned that the proposed shield would not cover all of Europe, that other more mobile systems have not been examined and that the system has not demonstrated the capability to defend Europe or the US against an enemy attack under realistic operational conditions.

The Bush Administration is discussing with Czech and Polish governments the establishment of a US ballistic missile defense site in Europe to enhance protection of the US and Europe from ballistic missiles fired from the Middle East, especially from Iran. Current plans call for a midcourse radar to be established in the Czech Republic and interceptor missiles to be based in Poland.

The Atlantic Council's missile defense conference focused on the ballistic missile defense site being discussed for Europe, and brought together leading experts from inside and outside the Administration, the Czech Republic and Poland to discuss the issues associated with building a third site and European reactions to the initiative, especially those of Russia.

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