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REYES STATEMENT ON THE SELECTION OF LEON PANETTA TO SERVE AS THE NEXT DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Washington, DC - *House Permanent Select Committee Chairman, Silvestre Reyes (D-TX), issued the following statement regarding recent media reports that Leon Panetta has been selected by President-elect Obama to serve as the next Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA):*

“I have known and worked with Leon Panetta and believe his selection would be a sensible choice that would provide strong leadership and effective management to the Central Intelligence Agency.

“Leon Panetta is highly qualified to serve in this critically important national security position. He has been a long-time consumer of intelligence as a Member of Congress, the White House Chief of Staff, and as a member of the Iraq Study Group. His knowledge of what is expected from the intelligence agencies will help him guide the CIA’s mission.

“His time-tested and proven management experience is unparalleled. He values excellence and when combined with a strong operational Deputy and leadership staff, he will be able to continue the CIA’s return to preeminence.

“His ability to build coalitions and work across all elements of government will make him a good partner for the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). Enhanced by his legislative experience in the House, he will be a sought-after advisor by the DNI as work continues to strengthen the Intelligence Community, and any adjustments that may be needed to the 2004 Intelligence Reform legislation.

“If Leon Panetta is the final choice for Director of CIA, I look forward to his quick confirmation and to working with one of the most loyal public servants this country has known.”