

September 17, 2009

**AKIN STATEMENT CRITICAL OF PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT TO ABANDON
CURRENT PLANS FOR MISSILE DEFENSE**

Washington, DC – Congressman Todd Akin (R-Mo), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Expeditionary Forces, released the following statement today after the Administration announced its decision to cancel the current plans for missile defense sites in the Czech Republic and Poland and instead deploy shorter range SM-3 missiles, probably off of Navy AEGIS ships, to provide missile defense coverage to our NATO allies:

"The President's decision to back away from our plans to put missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic effectively abandons two of our allies who had worked hard and taken political risks for the sake of European and American security. The Administration has sent a clear signal to our central and eastern European allies that the United States, under this President, cannot be counted on to stand by our commitments.

"With the Iranian regime continuing its aggressive pursuit of nuclear weapons and Russia's commitment to reassert its regional hegemony, the United States must strengthen, not weaken, their commitment to the safety of our friends and allies around the world. The technology changes proposed may be of some merit, but the Administration needs to fully brief the Congress and our NATO allies before proceeding with this dramatic change in course.

"Given our desire and need for a stronger commitment by our NATO allies in Afghanistan, President Obama's decision to abandon our Polish and Czech allies will only make that effort all the more difficult."

"It is troubling that this recent decision comes as one in a series that threatens to weaken our national security."

