

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (VA-03) issued the following statement today on the helicopter crash in eastern Afghanistan that occurred during an overnight military operation:

"This helicopter crash in Afghanistan marks the single deadliest event in our decade-long presence in Afghanistan, killing 31 U.S. service members and seven Afghan troops. Early reports suggest that this was an intentional act by insurgents to shoot down the Chinook helicopter, making this not only a tragedy but a vicious massacre. Early reports also suggest that many of those involved in this operation – and killed – were Navy SEALs based out of Hampton Roads.

"Our men and women in uniform put their lives on the line every day to protect and defend the United States and our democratic way of life. They do this out of love for our nation and the strong sense and desire to protect and defend it just as those who came before them. They, and their families, make sacrifices every day to protect the values that we hold dear and make the world a safer place. Today, the 31 U.S. troops who died made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country. We owe these service members, and their families, a tremendous debt of gratitude. Our fallen heroes leave behind a safer and freer nation because of their ultimate sacrifice.

"Words cannot express the deep sorrow and sadness that we feel as a result of this brutal act and excessive loss of life. But our service members have not died in vain. Their courage and sacrifices will never be forgotten by a grateful nation that will honor and remember the heroic actions of these brave Americans.

"I also offer my condolences for their Afghan counterparts.

"My thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the fallen, and I commend our military on its strength and perseverance in protecting and defending our democratic way of life."

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