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"I was incredibly proud to learn that many of the vehicles at the MRAP facility I visited were produced in North Mississippi," said Congressman Travis Childers. "Seeing some of the damaged equipment first hand gave me a greater understanding of the strategic military importance of our West Point factory. The vehicles manufactured there play a major role in ensuring the safety of our troops overseas."

The Congressman recently helped pass the National Defense Authorization Act of 2009, which authorizes an additional \$2.6 billion in fiscal year 2009 funding to procure, sustain, transport, and field MRAP vehicles for American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Congressman Childers later voted on the supplemental budget package with an amendment to provide an appropriation of \$1.7 billion for the vehicles. In addition, the amendment, championed by fellow-Mississippian Congressman Gene Taylor (D-MS), continues to require the Department of Defense to report to Congress on a series of issues relating to armor technology, the MRAP program, and explosively formed projectiles.

"While I wasn't yet in office during the negotiation of the Defense Authorization Act, I did have the opportunity to vote for it," said Congressman Childers. "It is essential that we provide our soldiers with the protective equipment they need. Those brave men and women who put their lives on the line every day to defend our freedoms deserve to be protected in return."

Congressman Childers had the opportunity to meet and personally thank armed services members from North Mississippi. He will continue his travels in the Middle East and return home to celebrate the Fourth of July in the First Congressional District.

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