



## **Senior State Dept. official to testify before Wartime Contracting Commission June 6**

ARLINGTON, VA, June 2, 2011 – Ambassador Patrick F. Kennedy, Under Secretary of State for Management, will appear before the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan on Monday, June 6, to testify on critical issues in the multi-billion-dollar contracting support of U.S. contingency operations in Southwest Asia.

The hearing will begin at 9 a.m. on Monday, June 6, in Room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building in Washington, DC. Commission Co-Chair Christopher Shays will preside. The hearing will conclude by 11 a.m.

Co-Chair Michael Thibault said Ambassador Kennedy has been asked to discuss State Department contracting in U.S. contingency operations. “The State Department is adding thousands of contractor employees in Iraq to maintain and expand its presence there as the U.S. military works toward the year-end target for withdrawal of essentially all U.S. troops,” Thibault said. “The Department will face similar transition issues as the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan begins to decline this summer.”

The Commission has issued two special reports raising concerns about the planning, coordination, and contract oversight for the Defense-to-State transition.

Shays said, “We are particularly interested in State’s position on three topics. First, we will review State responses, as we did with Department of Defense and U.S. Agency for International Development witnesses, to the recommendations for contracting reform in our February 2011 second interim report, ‘At What Risk? Correcting over-reliance on contractors in contingency operations.’ Frankly, some of their responses struck us as perfunctory, and others involved differences of opinion that need more elaboration.

“Second,” Shays said, “we want to revisit the rather cursory treatment of contracting in the Department’s ‘Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review’ issued early this year. And third, we want to get a status report on transition issues in Iraq and Afghanistan as they affect State’s mission and its contract-management responsibilities.”

Since its creation in 2008, the independent, bipartisan Commission has conducted 24 formal hearings, participated in more than 1,000 meetings, and made repeated fact-finding trips to theater. The Commission has published two interim reports and four special reports to Congress. The [www.wartimecontracting.gov](http://www.wartimecontracting.gov) website has electronic copies of all Commission reports. A final report to Congress will be issued at the end of July 2011.

The Commission has eight members: Michael Thibault and Christopher Shays, co-chairs; and Clark Kent Ervin, Grant Green, Robert Henke, Katherine Schinasi, Charles Tiefer, and Dov Zakheim. They are supported by 40 professional and administrative staff managed by Executive Director Robert Dickson.