(WASHINGTON) ---- Congressman Allen West (FL-22) released this statement today:

"The situation that occurred off the coast of Somalia is nothing short of a brazen attack on our fellow countrymen by a group of terrorists.

Piracy is nothing new in this region. One cannot forget the First Barbary War of 1801 between the U.S. and the North African Muslim states known as the Barbary States.

The disturbing trend of more frequent and violent attacks by Somali pirates in this current period of time is something that the free world must take seriously.

This horrific tragedy is a reminder that the United States must continue funding and supporting a strong Naval-Maritime force to maintain open sea lanes of transit and ensure the safety of all ships that cross these routes.

I pray for the those who were lost, and for comfort for their loved ones left behind."

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