

## (February 16, 2007): Congressman Lipinski Offers a New Approach to Iraq

### Joins a Bipartisan Majority in Opposing the President's Troop Surge

Washington, DC - During a speech delivered on the floor of the House of Representatives late Thursday night, Congressman Dan Lipinski laid out his plan for achieving stability in Iraq. Earlier this week as the House began a week-long debate on the President's troop surge, Congressman Lipinski introduced H.Res. 152 outlining this plan. That debate came to a conclusion today as the House passed H.Con.Res. 63, supporting American troops and disapproving of the President's plan.

"It is painfully clear that a change in strategy in Iraq is needed now," said Lipinski. "We need a new plan for bringing stability to Iraq and bringing our troops home. Unfortunately, the President's plan to add over 20,000 additional combat troops does not provide this, and therefore I must support this resolution (H.Con.Res. 63)."

Congressman Lipinski cited the President's failure to provide clear benchmarks for success or a timeframe by which the surge can be expected to yield positive results as some of the reasons for his opposition to the President's plan. He also argued that force alone would not solve the conflict in Iraq.

"The President continues to place too much emphasis on a military solution when it is clear that force alone will not solve this crisis," said Lipinski. "Solutions must support broad international engagement to promote stability and reconstruction in Iraq, and must address political, economic, and religious issues. Because of the need for such a plan I introduced H.Res. 152."

Congressman Lipinski's resolution calls on the President to

(1) Encourage achievement of important goals in national reconciliation, security, and governance by arranging a peace conference for Iraq's ethnic and religious factions, similar to the conference that led to the Dayton Accords. One possible option for a venue is El Salvador.

(2) Seek international cooperation to develop solutions for Iraq; this should include calling an international conference that will work on putting together a peacekeeping force and setting up an international reconstruction program.

(3) Give Congress detailed reports on the situation in Iraq so that informed decisions can be made regarding funding for Iraq's reconstruction and deciding when American forces can be redeployed.

"If these recommendations are followed, I believe American troops can begin redeployment in 2007, leaving a secure, stable Iraq," stated Lipinski.

The Congressman concluded his remarks by urging continued support and prayers for U.S. troops.

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