

(September 10, 2007) Rep. Lipinski Calls for Bipartisan Solution to Stabilize Iraq,

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Bring Troops Home

Co-hosts Discussion with Panel of Experts at the

Chicago Council on Global Affairs

[WASHINGTON, D.C.] Today, Congressman Lipinski (D-IL) and Congressman Mark Kirk (R-IL) co-hosted a panel of experts at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs to discuss bipartisan options for drawing down the war in Iraq in a responsible and safe manner. With General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker set to deliver their reports on the situation in Iraq to Congress this week, and with Congress expected to consider a number of pieces of legislation related to Iraq in the coming weeks and months, today's event provides a timely and important discussion of Iraq policy options.

"Americans are frustrated with the partisan gridlock in Washington that has failed to affect change in Iraq policy," said Rep. Lipinski. "I am hopeful that today's discussion will play a meaningful role in the larger process of building bipartisan consensus towards responsibly and safely bringing our troops home from Iraq. Towards this end, I believe legislation implementing the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group offers the best way to change policy in Iraq immediately while setting a goal of next spring for the completion of a withdrawal of most U.S. troops."

Joining Rep. Lipinski and Rep. Kirk in discussion were participants from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs as well as the following guest experts:

Ambassador Henry A. Crumpton - served in the Central Intelligence Agency for 24 years including stints as Deputy Chief of the International Terrorism Operations Section (1998-1999) and leader of the CIA's Afghanistan campaign (2001-2002). Additionally, Mr. Crumpton served as the Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the U.S. Department of State from August 2005 until February 2007.

Ambassador Robert Gelbard - a career Foreign Service Officer, served as Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State for the Balkans, 1997-1999. Mr. Gelbard was responsible for the development, coordination and implementation of U.S. policy for the Dayton Peace Accords.

Paul Hughes - a senior program officer in the Center for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) where he led the Iraq Study Group's Military and Security Expert Working Group.

"Our troops have done everything that we have asked them to do and more, but it has been painfully clear for some time that a new direction in Iraq is needed," said Rep. Lipinski. "I look forward to building off of today's discussion to find bipartisan solutions that will change the status quo in Iraq and begin bringing troops home."